



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Match Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated 4/07/2008

1. What is match?

A key requirement of OTREC's federal funding is that all expenses are matched 100% from **non-Federal** sources. Matching funds (cash and in-kind) must be used to accomplish program objectives and the purpose of the grant. **All match will need to be documented in an auditable way, either through accounting processes at partner universities or by external sponsors.**

There are some exceptions to the non-federal requirement. Match may include funds provided to a recipient under sections 503, 504(b), or 505 of Title 23, United States Code. Those sections refer to the technology deployment, local technical assistance, state planning and research (SPR) and federal cooperative research programs managed by the Transportation Research Board (e.g., NCHRP and TCRP). Sponsors providing these funds (often ODOT) will know if their funds fit these exclusion categories.

2. What can be used as match?

Some examples of expenses that can be used as match are:

University Match – considered “in kind”

- Faculty salary and benefits for a reasonable percentage of FTE plus indirect costs at the approved federal rate (indirect costs are also known as Facilities and Administrative costs or F&A)
- Student salary and benefits (graduate assistants, and hourly) plus F&A
- Tuition (note that indirect or F&A is not charged on tuition)
- Supplies plus F&A
- Domestic travel plus F&A
- Scholarships (note that F&A is not charged on scholarships)
- Equipment (note that F&A is not charged on equipment) with prior approval
- International travel plus F&A with prior approval

Indirect Cost Return (also called “F&A”)

At some campuses and in some units, Indirect Costs received by the university on grant expenditures are returned to academic units for re-investment. In these cases, these funds are considered to be non-Federal cash match, and may be used.

External Cash or In-Kind Match

Any of the categories listed above for external grant funds may also be match (for example, faculty and student salary, OPE and F&A, as long as it's documented and auditable). Most external match will be “cash,” but “in-kind” is also allowed, as long as it is documented in an auditable way. A sample letter committing match to a project is available on the [OTREC website](#).

3. Where can I find more guidance on match?

OTREC operates under federal guidelines found in the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-110 Subpart B 23:

(<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html#23>).

OTREC staff and partner university research office staff can also assist.

4. What expenses are *not* allowed on OTREC grant budgets?

You should avoid proposing to use OTREC funds to purchase equipment (unit cost of \$5,000 or more), international travel, or non-compensation stipends for international students. If a substantial need can be generated, in rare cases, OTREC is required to obtain special advance approval from RITA *prior* to grant award.

Expenses for items normally considered already covered by university overhead (phones, office space, admin, etc.) should not be included in the budget grant request.

5. Can I use expense items for match that are typically not allowed as OTREC grant expenses (for example, equipment or international travel)?

Maybe, but *prior* approval must be obtained. Our sponsor guidelines note that, “any restriction on the use of Federal funds applies equally to non-Federal matching funds.” This would include equipment and international travel. However, rare exceptions can be made with *prior* approval and if these expenses are used to *accomplish program objectives and the purpose of the grant*, are completely auditable and can be tracked through the life of the grant.

Expenses for items normally considered already covered by university overhead (phones, office space, admin, etc.) should not be included in the match budget.

6. How far back can I go to use match?

OTREC expects that PIs will NOT go back beyond the project year for match. However, if needed PIs can use match back to 12/1/06. PIs cannot go back past 12/1/06 due to federal law.

7. Can my project proposal be for more than one year?

No. Due to the nature of OTREC's funding, OTREC can only commit to one year's funding at a time. And, OTREC is performance driven and needs to show yearly results to our federal sponsor. Therefore, we request project proposals of only one year in duration. Funding for Phase 2 of a project may be considered, but is not guaranteed. PIs will need to submit Phase 2 for a subsequent RFP, and proposals will go through peer review and compete with all submissions each cycle. PIs are encouraged to submit proposals and budget with reasonable tasks and budget for a one year time frame.