

Overview of Sponsored Research

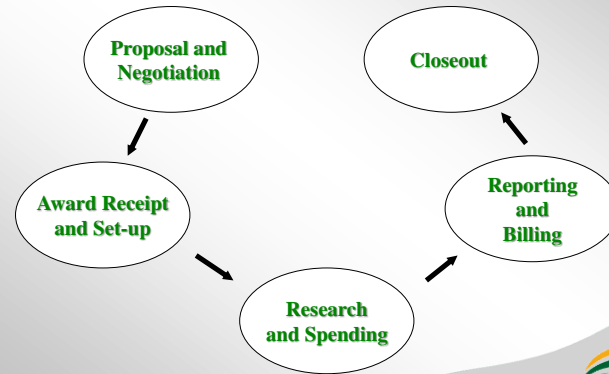
Mike Laskofski, Associate Vice President Research Services

September 17, 2019



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Lifecycle of a Sponsored Project



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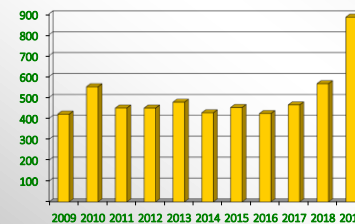
George Mason Research Portfolio



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Sponsored Program Proposals

Total Value of Proposals, FY 2009 - 2019



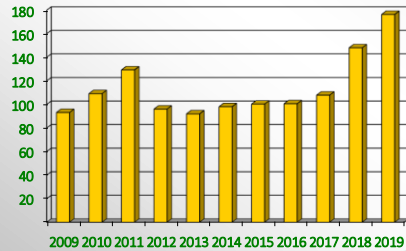
Year	Amount	No.
2009	\$420M	988
2010	\$551M	1026
2011	\$449M	1012
2012	\$449M	1037
2013	\$477M	1098
2014	\$426M	1167
2015	\$452M	1231
2016	\$423M	1165
2017	\$464M	1172
2018	\$566M	1219
2019	\$884M	1246



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Sponsored Program Awards

Total Value of Awards, FY 2009 - 2019



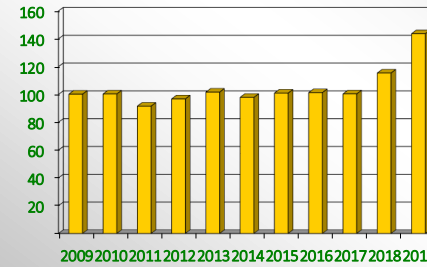
Year	Amount	No.
2009	\$93M	769
2010	\$109M	781
2011	\$129M	951
2012	\$96M	869
2013	\$92M	908
2014	\$98M	951
2015	\$100M	906
2016	\$101M	907
2017	\$108M	917
2018	\$148M	957
2019	\$176M	924



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Sponsored Program Expenditures

Total Value of Expenditures, FY 2009 - 2019



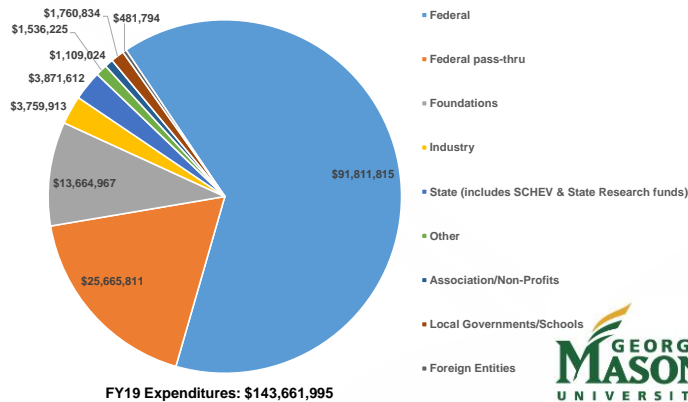
Year	Amount
2009	\$100M
2010	\$100M
2011	\$92M
2012	\$97M
2013	\$102M
2014	\$98M
2015	\$101M
2016	\$101M
2017	\$100M
2018	\$115M
2019	\$144M



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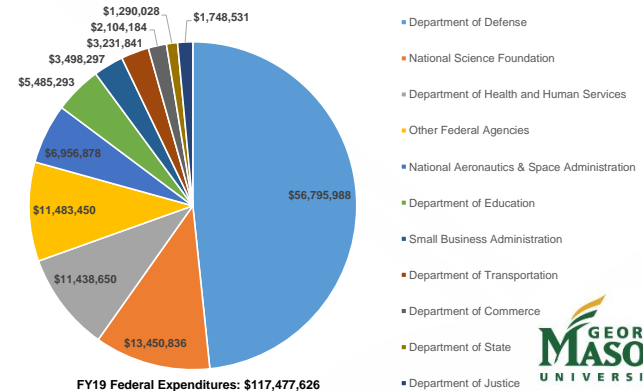
Sponsored Expenditures by Type

FY19 Sponsored Expenditures by Sponsored Type



Federally Sponsored Expenditures

FY19 Sponsored Expenditures by Federal Agency (including Federal Pass-Thru)



George Mason Research Strategy

2014 - 2024

Elevate Research

- Achieve Carnegie Very High Research
- Improve research infrastructure
- Increase PhD graduates and decrease time to degree

Research of Consequence

- Invest in research areas of great societal, economic and global consequence
- Create at least five multidisciplinary institutes
- Translate discoveries to society

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Carnegie Research Classification

- Three research categories: Highest Research, Higher Research and Moderate Research
- Evaluation and updates for research occurs approximately every 5 years
- 115 institutions in the Highest Research category also known as Research 1
- George Mason moved into the Highest Research category in February 2016

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Current Challenges

- Increased competition for funding
- Competing priorities and tight budgets
- Different types of funding sources may result in challenging negotiations
- Inconsistent sponsor requirements and systems
- More stringent reporting requirements
- Closer audit scrutiny from sponsors

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Regulatory Environment and Reducing Administrative Burden

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Regulatory Environment

- OMB published “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards” December 2014
- National Science Board March 10, 2014 report, “Reducing Investigators’ Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research”
- National Academies Report June 2016, “Optimizing the Nation’s Investment in Academic Research”
- GAO Report June 2016, “Opportunities Remain for Agencies to Streamline Administrative Requirements”



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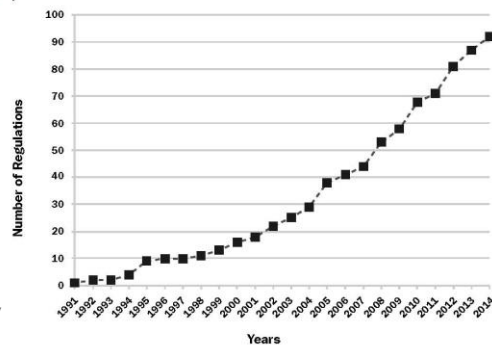
Federal Demonstration Partnership

- FDP began in 1986 and is a cooperative initiative among 10 federal agencies and 155 research institutions; Mason joined FDP in 2008
- FDP is focused on reducing the administrative burdens associated with research
- 2005 FDP survey of over 6,000 faculty reported that 42% time on federal awards spent on administrative tasks
- 2011 FDP survey of over 13,000 faculty similar results



National Academies of Sciences Report Scrutinizes Regulatory Burden

Cumulative Number of Regulatory Changes Applicable to Research Institutions (since 1991*)



Source: Optimizing the Nation’s Investment in Academic Research: A New Regulatory Framework for the 21st Century: Part 1, 2015, by the National Academy of Sciences

* The year of the implementation of the 26 percent cap on administrative costs in the F&A Cost stipulated under OMB Circular A-21 (Cost Principles for Educational Institutions). This graf should not be read as implying that there were zero regulations prior to 1991. Compilation of this data began in response to the implementation of the cap. It would be difficult to collect a complete list for years prior to 1991, as some regulatory changes might have affected only a small segment of research and, therefore, may easily be overlooked.

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Reducing Admin. Burden for PIs

FDP Pilot on Payroll Certification

- Mason was the first of 4 universities to pilot an alternative to effort reporting in 2011
- Concept is intuitive and implementation required minimal investment and training
- NSF/HHS audit of payroll certification started in 2013 and finalized Nov 2015
- Significant reduction in administrative burden (90% reduction in the number of certifications) while at the same time strengthening controls
- Big win for Mason and the research community



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Research Policies and Compliance

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George Mason Research Policies

- 4001 - Conflict of Interests
- 4002 - Copyright in University Works
- 4003 - Patenting University Inventions
- 4004 - Occupational Health and Safety Program for Animal Care and Use Personnel
- 4005 - Cost Transfer Policy
- 4006 - Sponsored Programs Administration
- 4007 - Misconduct in Research and Scholarship
- 4008 - Private Sector and Foundation Funding to George Mason University and the GMUF
- 4009 - Subrecipient Monitoring Policy
- 4011 - Ownership and Maintenance of Research Records
- 4012 - Principal Investigators
- 4013 - Fixed Price Agreements
- 4015 - Payroll Certification on Federally Sponsored Projects
- 4016 - Cost Sharing
- 4017 - Research Involving Human Subjects
- 2108 - Direct and Indirect Cost Allocations Under OMB Uniform Guidance
- 2114 - Reconciling Departmental and Sponsored Fund Accounting Records

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Compliance

- Sponsored funds are not ours, so we are accountable to sponsors, taxpayers, Congress, etc.
- Need to make sure sponsored funds are being used for their intended purposes
- Nobody wants to see Mason on the front page of the newspaper related to the inappropriate use of research funds
- We all have a role with ensuring compliance with project requirements

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Roles and Responsibilities

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Roles and Responsibilities

- We all have a role in managing sponsored projects:
 - Principal Investigator
 - Deans, Associate Deans and other College Personnel
 - Department Administrators
 - OSP
 - RDIA
 - HR
 - Fiscal Services
 - ITS
 - Other Central Offices

- Roles and Responsibilities Matrix

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Research Administration at Mason

Trying to do more with less resources

Some examples of initiatives at Mason to improve research support, streamline processes and increase efficiencies:

- Focus on professional development
 - Incentive program for OSP staff completing the national Certified Research Administrator program (12 successfully completed over the past 5 years)
 - Reduced turnover in OSP
- Increased efforts on outreach and training across Mason
- Investment in technology
 - 50% reduction in award setup time
 - Elimination of redundant data entry and automate routine tasks
 - Reallocate resources to more value-added activities

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OSP Reorganization – Why did we Change?

- Efficiency: Combined pre and post award teams eliminates unnecessary handoffs across teams.
- Collaboration: Teams work more closely with the academic units to better understand unit specific policies. OSP and units work together to develop a working model that best serves the faculty and is sustainable as research grows.
- Retention and Career Growth: Provides an opportunity for the top performers to take on more responsibility and grow professionally without having to leave OSP.
- Consistency: Allows faculty to work with the same core group of administrators.

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OSP Roles and Responsibilities

Proposal Management

- Proposal preparation and submission
- Ensure proposals comply with sponsor and university policies
- Institutional Certifications
- Current and Pending
- Non-Financial post award activities such as no-cost extensions, increment requests, PI changes and transfers

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OSP Roles and Responsibilities

Award Management

- Award set-up
- Funding changes for sponsored funds
- Expenditure review
- Guidance on sponsor and award requirements

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OSP Roles and Responsibilities

Contracts

- Negotiation of subcontracts
- Subrecipient monitoring
- Prepare agreements such as NDAs, Teaming Agreements, MOUs, etc.
- Review terms and conditions
- Maintain records of award negotiation and status in database

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OSP Roles and Responsibilities

Reporting and Billing

- Financial reporting
- Billing
- Closeout

Training and Outreach

Systems Administration and Reporting

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College Perspective: Purpose

- Advance and support academic excellence: teaching, research and service by faculty
- Secure external resources
- Provide opportunities for students
- Raise profile of the university & region
- Recruit/retain faculty, staff & students
- Create vibrant research and scholarly community

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College Perspective: Faculty

- Intrinsic rewards – satisfy curiosity, desire to learn, understand, contribute, teach, mentor
- Extrinsic rewards – academic excellence, recognition, P&T, community of scholars
- Encourage - conversations about scholarly interests, seed funds, RD, recognition, admin infrastructure to support their work

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College Perspective: Organization

Colleges are organized differently, some common elements may include:

- Associate Dean for Research
- Pre-Award: Budget development, liaison with departments/OSP
- Post-Award: Key leadership with departments/OSP on fiscal/policy matters

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College Perspective

How do we accomplish our work?

- The department administration is critical
- Department admins work closely with their faculty and with their Dean's Office
- A good understanding of RA best practices and university procedures helps to achieve goals and manage projects effectively
- Department admins' knowledge and skill help PIs and grant teams achieve fiscal compliance

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College Perspective

Department Challenges and Opportunities

- Stay current with fiscal policies and procedures of the university and sponsors
- Pre-award: budget development/project expenses
- Post-award: monitor expenditures, reconcile funds, keep proper documentation, track due dates
- Proactively work with Dean's Office and OSP
- Ensure clear communication on grant related matters

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Final Thoughts

- Research administrators play a critical role in the research mission of the university
- Hard work, flexibility, perseverance, attention to detail, good communication skills and reliability are qualities found in successful research administrators
- Understand your areas of responsibility
- Develop good communication with your PIs
- Know what tools and resources are available
- Commitment to continuous learning and training is the key to success!

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Questions



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