

University of Colorado at Boulder

Guidelines for DA-ICR Distribution: Co-Rostered Faculty and/or Shared Proposals

Preface

In the Spring of 2008 a campus working group was convened to provide guidance on the distribution of departmental administrative indirect cost recovery (DA-ICR) in situations where faculty from different units collaborate on sponsored research activities. *Guidelines* have emerged from a campus-level review of DA-ICR policies and agreements. In recognition of the widely variable research cultures that exist in units on our campus, and the unique relationships that exist between certain units, **it should be emphasized that these *guidelines* are not intended to supplant existing DA-ICR distribution agreements on which participating units currently agree and are satisfied with.** Rather, the guidelines are being presented in an attempt to provide clarity to the process by which DA-ICR distribution decisions are made.

DA-ICR Distribution Principles and Guidelines

Multiple faculty members at the University of Colorado are rostered in more than one unit, and/or participate in grant proposals that draw upon the faculty and resources of multiple units. Such collaborative relationships are beneficial to CU-Boulder faculty and students, but also require agreements that specify the distribution of DA-ICR among the relevant departments and institutes.

This document describes general guidelines for such agreements.

The guiding principles of this document are that DA-ICR allocation should account for:

- a) the costs of grant preparation and administration;
- b) a unit's investment in start-up costs or support for a given faculty member;
- c) where the work is being done, and where the physical resources are that support the project; and
- d) the intellectual and professional value of co-rostered appointments.

Based on analyses of DA-ICR use across multiple units, it is clear that no one formula will meet all situations. However, the following percentages are suggested ^a for DA-ICR splits in a given grant proposal:

- 1) A minimum of 25% of the DA-ICR is allocated to the unit administering the proposal. It is expected that if there are unusually high administrative costs associated with the research activities (such as chartering a plane) that the percentage will be higher. *(The suggested range is ~25-50% depending on the special circumstances associated with the research operations of specific units).*
- 2) The percentage of the DA-ICR that is allocated to the unit in which the faculty member is rostered and/or the unit that has made significant investments in that faculty member (e.g. start up costs, summer salary support, graduate student support) should usually be around 25%. However, in cases where the investments are unusually small (less than \$50k) or unusually large (more than \$250K) this percentage should be adjusted accordingly. In cases where such investment was shared among units, this portion of the DA-ICR allocated to each unit should reflect that split. ^b

- 3) Up to 50% of the DA-ICR should be allocated based upon the location of the work, as well as the location of the physical resources that are being provided to support the research. *(The suggested range is ~25-50% depending on the special circumstances associated with the research operations of specific units).*
- 4) Because of the value and expense associated with co-rostered appointments, a minimum of 6.25% should be allocated to the partnered unit. This means that if the allocations determined in 1-3 above add up to 100% for one unit, 6.25% is still allocated to the other unit.

These percentages can be applied in both single and multiple PI proposals, as follows. There are three main situations to consider.

- 1) Single PI. The above percentages are applied.
- 2) Multiple PI's, Divided Budgets. In many cases, PI's on a collaborative grant wish to create separate budgets for each PI. In this situation, the DA-ICR splits are simply applied to each budget separately, following the single PI guidelines.
- 3) Multiple PI's, One Budget. In other cases, PI's wish to administer the grant as a single account. Here, 25% of the DA-ICR should be allocated to the administering unit. The remaining 75% is split according to the percentages of the grant budget associated with each PI. Those percentages are to be determined in good faith by the PI's during the budget preparation. Once set, those percentages effectively determine "separate budgets" for each PI, for which the DA-ICR allocation proceeds as in case 2. The only difference is that because the grant is administered as a single account, 25% of the total DA-ICR goes to the administering unit.

This approach allows resources to track individual PI's even in multiple unit, multiple PI proposals, and still allows the PI's to choose if they wish to create separate budgets or operate under a single account.

^a These percentages were derived from approximations of 'typical' arrangements in natural sciences research. They may not be appropriate for 'atypical' arrangements, or situations that exist in the social sciences, arts and humanities, or professional schools.

^b As per ^a above, this suggested percentage may not be appropriate for units in which the size of faculty investment (eg start ups) is very small or very large. For example, if a department provides a small start up investment in an institute faculty member, the DA-ICR allocation to that unit should be appropriately adjusted to reflect that contribution. Units participating in this type of arrangement should also agree on a reasonable time period over which a small/modest investment would entitle a unit to such a DA-ICR allocation.

Appendix to **Guidelines for DA-ICR Distribution:**

Clarification and examples of factors that may be considered in determining DA-ICR splits.

From the proposed model:

#1. A minimum of 25% of the DA-ICR is allocated to the unit *administering the proposal* (*The suggested range is ~25-50% depending on the special circumstances associated with the research operations of specific units*).

Examples of what constitutes administration of a proposal:

- Grant proposal preparation
- Responsibility for the grant budget oversight
- Responsibility for personnel appointments (hire assistants, postdocs, etc.)
- Preparation of reports to funding agencies
- Responsibility for ordering research materials (equipment, datasets, imagery, off-site lab analyses, etc.)

#2. The percentage of the DA-ICR is allocated to the unit in which the faculty member is rostered and/or the unit that has made significant investments in that faculty member (e.g. start up costs, summer salary support, graduate student support, etc.) should usually be around 25%. However, in cases where the investments are unusually small (less than \$50k) or unusually large (more than \$250K) this percentage should be adjusted accordingly. In cases where such investment was shared among units, this portion of the DA-ICR allocated to each unit should reflect that split.

NOTE: Units may elect to pro-rate this portion of ICR splits to initially (5-10 yrs?) reflect startup sources and allow some cost recovery for those funds, after which a “maintenance” split would be more appropriate (accounting for investment in the faculty member on a long-term basis).

Examples of initial investments in a faculty member:

- Start-up funds (reflecting the split between units, if applicable)
- Seed money grants
- Support of graduate students (TAship for example) or postdocs (salary or research funds)
- Salary paid to faculty member that is funded by the unit
- Summer salary paid to the faculty member by the unit

#3. Up to 50% of the DA-ICR is allocated based upon the **location of the work**, as well as the **location of the physical resources** that are being provided to support the research. (*The suggested range is ~25-50% depending on the special circumstances associated with the research operations of specific units*).

Examples:

- Location of the lab
- Location of the primary office (the secondary office would be a shared office in the other unit)
- Computer facilities used for research
- Specialized equipment used for the research (not in the primary lab)
- Specialized research infrastructure and/or databases

DA-ICR Working Group, 2008

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