University-Funded Research Awards

Rice-funded awards that are made to faculty through a competitive process (such as the Faculty Initiative Fund, the Enhancing Rice Through Information Technology program, the Shell Center and similar seed funding programs managed by different units at Rice) will be established in Banner as University (U) funds. Note that if the awards are funded as part of externally sponsored grant (i.e. foundation, another university, federal agency, industry), the award will be recorded as an R fund.

Each award will have a unique U fund number and be established in Banner in the home org of the recipient. The Controller’s Office establishes the U funds and the U fund number is included in the award notice to the recipient of the award. If there are questions about whether a U fund is appropriate, please contact Crystal Davis (x2478 or crystal@rice.edu)

Characteristics of U Funds

1) Each established U fund has the following characteristics:
   a. U funds will not allow spending to exceed available funds/budgets. Recipients of U funds will be notified about insufficient funds/budgets and be requested to provide another source of funding for the amount in excess of available funds.
   b. U funds are either funded in advance or funded in arrears.
      i. U funds that are funded in advance by the sponsor have funds transferred in at the start.
      ii. U funds that are funded in arrears receive a budget entry and then funds are transferred, based on direction of the sponsor, into the U fund to cover allowable expenses. Sponsors should in these cases clearly define the rules and communicate these through an agreement with award recipients. Any charges that were not part of the approved budget are not automatically approved, and if not approved, they are the responsibility of the investigator.
   c. U funds provide inception-to-date activity within the fund, which avoids the need to scroll between Banner windows for each fiscal year.
   d. U funds support runs from program start date through the program end date set by the sponsor. The project end date can only be a changed by approval of the award sponsor in response to a written request explaining the circumstances that require extension. Expenses expected after the end date must be encumbered before the end date so that there is no new activity after the end date.

2) If it is necessary to make funds available to a collaborator who is a Rice employee, the preferred approach is to transfer expenses from the collaborator to the U fund so that all activity is contained in a single U fund. Another option, if the sponsor agrees, is to request another U fund for that purpose. If the collaborator is not employed at Rice, the collaborator should be a subaward and payment should be charged to the U fund for subaward costs.

3) At the closing date of the award, unspent funds will revert back to the sponsoring fund and org unless an exception is requested and granted by the sponsor.

U-fund Awards Must be Input into Cayuse
Institutionally funded research requires assurance that compliance issues are identified. Award recipients must complete a Cayuse record and submit the form to the Office of Sponsored Research. The form can be found at: http://osr.rice.edu/Forms.

Click here for the Cayuse website http://cayuse.rice.edu