**Internal Competition**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**Last updated: August 20, 2018**

**Setting up a competition**

1. What is an internal competition?
	1. An internal competition is one that college / school / unit creates and manages with the intention to fund research, typically as a competition. Funds in support of the program could include ASU funds and/or external funds previously awarded to ASU. A grant competition within the college / school / unit will determine the awarded faculty / investigator(s). Each award may have an account (cost center) to track and monitor expenses, with reporting requirements.
2. What type of funds comprise an internal competition?
	1. Funds could be any of the following: ASU funds, other collaborators, external awards that were previously accepted and processed by ASU, internal grants anticipated under external funds not yet awarded to ASU.
3. Who will see your internal competition?
	1. Entries will be posted in InfoReady and may be advertised in Funding.asu.edu, both under the link titled “internal competitions”. These updates are sent to a subscriber list on a weekly basis.
4. What tools or resources are available to run your internal competition?
	1. All internally funded competitions are strongly encouraged to use InfoReady, an online proposal management system managed by the Research Development team within the Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development (OKED). Contact the Limited Submission staff (Limited.Submissions@asu.edu) for assistance to set up and manage the competition in InfoReady, and to post the opportunity under “internal competitions” in the funding.asu.edu website.
5. How do I apply for an internal competition?
	1. Owners of the internal competition can determine the pool of applicants. The owner can decide that eligibility is restricted to a specific college, school, research topic area / discipline, or other more restrictive eligibility criteria. The owner may also allow applicants from across the university or even allow other institutions to apply, particularly for collaborative partnerships.
	2. To determine if an applicant is eligible, the applicant should review the solicitation and/or contact the owner of the competition.
6. What post award issues should I consider during the pre-award grant competition?
	1. Research Advancement Services (RAS) must review all internal grant competition guidelines before posting / publishing. RAS will work with the local administrator to insert language related to identify the funding source and to establish the plans for setting up award accounts.
	2. RAS will also work with the local administrator to establish the method to recognizing faculty awards in the ASU systems.
	3. Other post award considerations include the following:
		1. Will technical and/or financial reporting be required of award recipients?
		2. Will funding be paid directly to an individual, or will it be managed by their unit (or by the funding unit)?
		3. Will the funding need to be spent by a certain end date? If so, will requests for no cost extensions be considered?
		4. Will award recipients have leeway to rebudget, or will prior approval be required?

**Designing a solicitation for an internal competition**

1. What do I need to consider when designing an internal competition?
	1. Define the application guidance – such as mission / program goal / research priorities / research topics for funding
	2. State the expected outcome of this funding opportunity
	3. Decide is a letter of intent (LOI) or concept paper is required prior to the proposal submission.
		1. The owner may only invite well-reviewed LOI’s or concept paper applicants to submit a full application / proposal.
	4. State the specific forms that are expected, such as the following:
		1. Cover sheet
		2. Abstract
		3. Project description
		4. Budget and justification, including consideration of the following:
			1. State allowable / non-allowable expenses
			2. Decide if overhead is allowed
				1. Decide if funding will be managed in local account subject to ASC fees (8.5%)
			3. Decide if the applicant create their own budget or ask applicant to complete a specific budget template with their submission
			4. Define period of performance if applicable
			5. Decide if the applicant can define the period of performance or if the competition will have an expected start date and end date
			6. State if cost sharing is required. And if so, state the ratio / amount.
		5. Biosketch / resume
		6. Letters of support
		7. Charts
		8. Other attachments
	5. Include the expected format of the application and proposal
		1. Page length / word count
		2. Font / margins
		3. One PDF or separate attachments
		4. Naming convention for uploads
	6. Define the eligibility criteria
	7. Include time line of this competition
		1. Due date of application / proposal
		2. Period of review of applications
		3. Award announcement
		4. Start date of award
	8. Consider including the amount of funding that is available to award, the number of awards expected to be made, and the maximum ceiling amount to be awarded (or range of expected awards)
	9. State the review criteria
	10. Include contact person for questions
	11. State any terms and conditions for accepting the award, such as:
		1. Budget modification
		2. No-cost extension
		3. Publications
		4. IDP
		5. Progress Reports, including financial reports
		6. Acknowledgement
		7. Compliance issues (IRB, IACUC – for example)
2. How do I complete timely, accurate reviews of submissions?
	1. Consider and identify the reviewers for this competition. Select reviewers who are familiar or have expertise in the research topic areas. You may consider including a reviewer who is outside of this discipline for a layperson’s perspective, particularly regarding the readability of the application. You may consider an odd number of reviewers to avoid a potential tie in the outcome.
		1. The online [experts.asu](https://asu.pure.elsevier.com/en/) webpage offers identifying researchers per topic area
		2. [Pivot](https://pivot.cos.com/profiles/main) also offers a service to find topic area researchers
	2. Set the internal deadline for reviewers to complete and submit their evaluation of the proposals / applications that allows sufficient time for a thorough review. Confirm that the reviewers have the time to commit to this review within your timeline.
	3. Decide if reviewers will evaluate all proposals or will be assigned to specific proposals. The factors to consider in this decision may include the following: number of applications received, length of the applications, time line for the review process, number of reviewers. Keep the number of evaluation questions to a manageable number – to ensure that the reviewers can complete the process within the timeline but also provides critical responses to evaluate the responsiveness of the applications.
	4. Some questions to consider:
		1. Does it address the goals of the competition? Is it directly related to the internal competition?
		2. Is it achievable? Are the key personnel / staff have the competency and skills for this project?
		3. Is the project plan well-reasoned, well-organized and based on a sound rationale with a reasonable timeline?
		4. Does the proposed project have merit? Does it push the research forward?
		5. Is the project creative / original / transformative?
		6. Is budget reasonable and does it follow suit with the proposed project?
		7. Does the project have adequate resources?
	5. Use both ratings and comments for the reviewers to complete. Use ratings that are wide enough for distinction between proposals, and use an odd number, such as 1-5 or 1-9, to avoid a potential tie.
3. How do I inform applicants of award and rejection decisions?
	1. Decide if applicants receive review comments and outcomes. The feedback could be useful to applicants to strengthen future proposal development and writing.
	2. Recommended to keep the reviews confidential by not sharing the reviewers’ names with the applicant
	3. Create award and rejection email templates that then will be ready to send to the applicants.

**Post award administration of internal competitions**

1. Do I need a contract or award template for internal grants?
	1. It is recommended to use an awarding / contract template for internal awards. This document will confirm the award amount, budget and scope of work, period of performance, progress report expectation, deliverables, contact information, and any procedural policies (for example, is a no-cost extension allowed or budget modifications)
2. Once awarded, who is responsible for managing the awards?
	1. KED is happy to help with the posting the solicitation in funding.asu.edu and InfoReady as well as providing any assistance with managing the competition in InfoReady, but is not responsible for award management. The management of the award is the awardee’s responsibility.
		1. If the funds are distributed to the awardee’s unit, then the awardee should identify the person who will manage the award to ensure that expenses are aligned with the budget, that the deliverables are communicated to the right period, and that the contract is followed as outlined in the award.
		2. If the funds will remain in the funding unit’s account, then the funding unit’s staff will need to assist the awardee with transactions (posting expenses to the account, etc.)
3. Should I enter internal funding awards in the Enterprise Research Administration (ERA) system?
	1. Funding provided within ASU using ASU resources is not entered in ERA. ERA is the system of record for management of externally funded sponsored projects but not internally funded awards.
4. If an externally-funded sponsored program includes an internal funding competition, should internal investigator proposals be processed through ERA?
	1. If the overall external award has already been accounted for in ERA, then we cannot enter the associated internal proposals through ERA as it would result in double counting of the same proposed/awarded dollars.
5. How can investigators receive recognition for their internal grant proposals and awards?
	1. University reports capture proposals/applications for external funding, as well as externally-funded awards and expenditures. ASU can only report external funding in this context, and University leadership are interested in analyzing and growing our externally-funded portfolio.
	2. If an internal funding award is connected to an externally-funded sponsored award, the investigator(s) may be added to the Allocations of REC/RID/IIA at the main award level and receive award/expenditure recognition (REC) that way.
	3. There is not currently a university-wide system in place for tracking internal funding proposals and awards, as they will not appear in the Faculty Activity Report ([FAR](https://www.asu.edu/far/)). Investigators and/or Units may choose to include internal grants, fellowships, and other honors in promotion and tenure reviews, and such investigators/units are encouraged to develop their own tracking system, if desired.