

September 2007

Dear Faculty and Staff:

Greetings from the Office of Research and Economic Development! I hope that your semester is off to a successful start.

We have several new faces in ORED, and I wanted to let you know who these new folks are.

Dr. Teresa Gammill joins ORED us as our Research Program Director, with a primary responsibility for the EPSCoR program. Dr. Gammill comes to MSU from the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science, where she previously served as Director of School Advancement. Teresa can be reached at tgammill@research.msstate.edu.

Tina Cunningham has joined our Sponsored Programs Administration office as an Associate Administrator. Prior to coming to MSU, Tina worked in Sponsored Programs Administration at the Ohio State University. Tina will be responsible for Chemical Engineering, Industrial and Systems Engineering, the Office of Research, Mississippi State Extension, and EPSCoR. She can be reached at tcunningham@spa.msstate.edu.

Ashley Gillespie has joined our Sponsored Programs Administration office as an Assistant Administrator. Ashley just finished her degree in Communications from Mississippi State in May. Ashley will be responsible for the Meridian Campus, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Office of Graduate Studies, the College of Business and Industry, the Center for Safety and Health, Student Affairs, Continuing Education, the Library, and the Center for Educational Training Technology. She can be reached at agillespie@spa.msstate.edu.

Midge Davis joins us as an Executive Secretary in the Office of Research and Economic Development. She was previously Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Adult and Continuing Education at East Central Community College. Midge can be reached at mdavis@research.msstate.edu

Please join me in welcoming these folks to the MSU family!

This month, I would like to spend some time on the ORED budget, particularly on how we spend our overhead funds. Whenever the university submits a proposal for funding, there are some overhead costs built into the budget that are part of the “cost” of doing research at MSU. These overhead funds are then distributed across the university to the generating unit (37%), the university general fund (40%), the Reach for Excellence Fund (4%), and the Office of Research and Economic Development (19%).

So, how do we spend the recovered overhead monies in the ORED? For every \$1 of overhead that we receive in ORED, approximately 31 cents goes to faculty support and start-up, 6 cents goes to grant matching and cost sharing, 15 cents goes to ORED

administrative costs, 21 cents goes to research infrastructure and facilities, 1 cent goes for new initiatives, 3 cents goes to economic development, and 23 cents goes for miscellaneous costs. I give more details on each of these categories in the paragraphs that follow.

Faculty Support and Start-Up - We provided monies in support of start-up to 30 different faculty members from various colleges out of overhead funds. ORED also provided funding for nearly 45 different faculty requests and projects including faculty travel support to conferences, research initiation program awards (RIP), seed funding for the Institute for Digital Biology, funding for science and engineering faculty to visit Washington, D.C., and funding for the Humanities and Arts Research Program (HARP).

Grant Matching and Cost Sharing - This included required matching funds for several grants funded by the National Science Foundation.

Administrative Costs – This included funds in support of our federal relations activities in Washington, D.C., ORED professional staff travel, and other costs associated with running the ORED.

Research Infrastructure and Facilities – This included funding for the Electron Microscope Center (including new equipment monies, renovations, and maintenance contracts), legal fees for patents, software upgrades for COEUS (used for grants administration) and Inteum (used to track technology commercialization), facilities support for the Social Science Research Center, support for improved ventilation in Hillbun Hall, and EMC renovations.

New Initiatives – This included funds in support of major proposal efforts, including a grant for the new NSF Engineering Research Center proposal and seed funding for the Family Business Initiative in the College of Business and Industry.

Economic Development – This included funds to develop a long-term plan for Phase II of the research park, acquisition of the trailers in the Research Park, and support for the MSU economic development forum.

Miscellaneous – This included anything which doesn't fit into the other categories. A significant number of projects were funded in this category which includes items such as membership for MSU in the Institute for Mathematics and its Applications, membership for MSU in the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, grant monies for the Library to assist with achieving ARL status, financial support for the Institute for Neurological Science and Technology (INST), and program support for Sigma Xi.

As a faculty member, I generally felt that overhead funds simply diminished the amount of money that I could spend on my research project. With this in mind, ORED is working to ensure that we are good stewards of these funds. Generally, we try to spend our returned overhead funds on projects with the potential for a significant return on

investment, to help faculty members initiate and extend their research programs, and on “one-time” projects – to ensure that each year we can strategically re-invest these monies.

So, the next time you are preparing a budget for a grant, and you see the overhead funds coming to the university, I hope that you can understand better that these funds are being used to move our research program forward.

Good luck as the semester goes forward, and please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Go Dawgs!

Kirk.