



Cost-Sharing Contributions Policy

Office of Research Grants and Contracts

Policy updated June 27, 2012

Cost Sharing, or matching, refers to the portion of project costs borne by the University and/or by a third party, rather than by the funding sponsor. Some funding sponsors require Universities to reflect their project commitment by sharing in its costs. (Note, some sponsors such as the National Science Foundation specifically prohibit cost-sharing even on a voluntary basis). Types of cost sharing include mandatory cost sharing, voluntary cost sharing, matching, and in-kind contributions, as well as equipment and non-equipment cost sharing. Cost sharing is usually accounted for in the budget and must be indicated on the NKU Routing Form.

In-Kind: In-kind is a contribution to a sponsored program that has value but is not monetary in nature. In-kind support can include the value of faculty release time, products or equipment, volunteer services, or loaned executives. In-kind support should always be included in a budget at fair-market value and must be approved on the NKU Routing Form.

Whenever cost-sharing is a part of a grant proposal, all of the cost share expenses must be documented in writing and upon award tracked in the same detail as expenses paid by the funding sponsor. All such expenses are subject to audit.

Policy for Cost Sharing on Grants (Also called "Matching Funds")

When the funding sponsor requires cost share, the Principal Investigator of the proposed project is responsible for securing the cost share. The required cost share can be provided by the University (college, department or other office) or can be provided by a 3rd party (community partner or outside university). Confirmation of the required cost share must be separately documented and indicated on the NKU Routing Form with signatures of the relevant party (dean, chair, other office representative, and/or 3rd party representative). To the extent possible within NKU, in-kind matches (such as faculty release time) will be made rather than cash matches.

Voluntary Cost Share or Match

When cost-share is not required as part of a grant program, NKU discourages offering it on a voluntary basis, in part due to the additional administrative burden required to document and track the effort/expenditures. Once offered on a voluntary basis in a grant proposal, the contribution becomes a required part of a grant award and must be honored.

When there is compelling evidence that cost share exceeding the sponsor's program requirements will significantly increase the likelihood that a proposal is funded, the Principal Investigator can secure voluntary cost share from the University or with 3rd party sources through negotiations with those potential voluntary match providers.

Questions regarding specific program requirements related to cost share should be discussed with an RGC staff member as early as possible in the proposal preparation process. Before seeking support from external sources, especially from private businesses or foundation, plans should be discussed with an RGC staff member. Please contact 859-572-5136 for assistance.