



Who Should Read

Chief Research Officers

Research office staff

Departmental research administrators

Roles and Responsibility Matrix Library and Template

Resources for Developing a Tool to Guide Researchers
Through the Grant Process

Two Ways to Use this Tool

1. Gather ideas for creating a roles and responsibility matrix for research administration specific to your institution
2. Update an existing responsibility matrix to be more comprehensive and include key features that increase its functionality for users

Roles and Responsibility Matrix Library and Template

The grant cycle is a complex process that requires the participation of stakeholders across campus. Coordinating, or even knowing, who is responsible for each step can be as confusing as the process itself. A roles and responsibility matrix is a tool that can be used to help manage complex processes that involve multiple parties by clearly defining each task and naming a responsible party.

Regardless of an institution's organizational structure, the award process involves lots of moving pieces and different players. This can lead to confusion and headaches for researchers as they navigate the award process, trying to understand what responsibilities fall on them and when (and to who) they should turn to for support at other steps. Without clear documentation of ownership over each step, it is easy for duplicative work to be done, or for one person to push a task on to someone else.

To better engage and support researchers, research offices should provide them with clear, detailed, and user-friendly ways to understand their role in each step of the grant process.

How to Use This Tool

This tool helps research administrators carefully delineate research administration duties. There are two components to this tool: 1) a matrix library and 2) a matrix template.

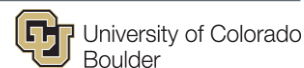
Roles and Responsibility Matrix Library

Research administrators can utilize the library to create or update their current roles and responsibility matrix. It contains profiles of institutions, like the University of Colorado Boulder, that have created exemplar roles and responsibility matrices and as well as a consolidated list of existing roles and responsibility matrices from other research offices.

Roles and Responsibility Matrix Template

Drawing on a sample of 15 existing matrices, the excel template provides the framework for creating a roles and responsibility matrix and includes major pre-and post-award process categories. Research administrators can fill in this template to include the steps within each category and identify the primary and supporting roles for each step.

Top of the Class: University of Colorado Boulder



Many institutions might already have a responsibility matrix, but too often they are either too vague or too granular to be helpful. The University of Colorado Boulder's [Roles and Responsibilities Matrix for Research Administration](#) stands out for its comprehensive creation process and detailed design, which resulted in a tool that is beneficial to both researchers and administrators. In addition, the development process helped bring to light process inefficiencies that could then be fixed to help reduce the administrative burden on faculty.

Key Components for Developing a Comprehensive Responsibility Matrix



Well-Researched Process

Dedicated ample time early in the process to reviewing matrices of other research institutions to understand key components to include



Clearly Defined Areas of Focus

Working groups defined all tasks associated with 15 specific functional areas in the grant process



Broad Stakeholder Engagement

Involved over 40 volunteers from across campus to participate in 11 working groups; 1 pre-award group and 10 post-award

Creating A Valuable Tool for Researchers and Administrators



Clearly Defined Roles

Each task is clearly assigned a primary and supporting responsible party or parties. Primary responsibility falls on the party that is carrying out the action or implementation of the task. The support role falls on parties who should be consulted as necessary. A task can have multiple supporting roles.



User-Friendly Formats

The matrix is available in multiple forms. Users can access a [PDF version](#) or a [webpage version](#) where they can click through a list of topics and jump to the specific section of interest, like proposal development.



Connects with Resources

The web-based matrix provides additional resources to researchers like links to relevant forms, policies, and contacts when they are mentioned in the matrix.



Periodic Review and Updates

The Office of Contracts and Grants acknowledges that the matrix is a "living document" and needs to be reviewed updated to reflect changes in processes. The matrix reflect this by including the roles of "primary in future" and "support in future".

Key Features to Maximize Utility of the Matrix

Many institutions have a document or matrix that outlines the roles and responsibilities of parties involved with the grant process, but too often they lack clarity or an appropriate level of detail to make them useful. Below, are three examples of strong matrices and the key features that make them stand out.

The matrices may look different at each institution, but a few themes emerge. Each includes the right level of detail and clearly defines the different roles that each involved party plays. These institutions also present their matrices in a format that is user-friendly and easy to navigate.

University of Michigan



[Office of Research and Sponsored Projects \(ORSP\) Roles and Responsibility Matrix](#)



Key Features

- ✓ Matrix utilizes the "RASCI" system which assigns responsible parties to one of the following roles: Responsible, Accountable, Supporting, Consulting, Informed
- ✓ Each category of the process, like proposal development, includes the right level of detailed information on each step of the process
- ✓ A committee of stakeholders from across campus is responsible for the on-going process of defining roles and responsibilities for the research administration process

Washington State University



[Roles And Responsibilities Matrix For Research Administration](#)



Key Features

- ✓ Web-based structure allows users to easily navigate to the section of interest
- ✓ Research administration process is broken down in to 19 clear process categories
- ✓ A notes section provides additional context or clarity around specific responsibilities

Northeastern University



[Office of Research Administration and Finance Roles and Responsibility Matrix](#)



Key Features

- ✓ A [traditional responsibility matrix](#) breaks down the process and shows the primary, secondary, or co-responsible party for each step
- ✓ A separate [chart](#) provides an alternative view organized by party which allows each party, like PIs, to quickly and easily see exactly which steps in the process they are responsible for

Library of Roles and Responsibility Matrices

This library includes a collection of roles and responsibility matrices from a variety of institutions. Many of these matrices include some of the key features identified in the previous section. Institutions who are constructing a responsibility matrix from scratch can utilize this library to understand the types of steps and level of detail that various institutions have included in their matrices. The table below includes a list of links to view the matrices.

Institutions
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Office of Sponsored Programs Roles and Responsibilities Accountability Matrix
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Research Administration Responsibility Matrix
University of Delaware Research Administration Roles and Responsibilities
University of Maryland Office of Research Administration Roles and Responsibilities
University of Miami Office of Research Administration – Roles and Responsibilities Matrix
University of Minnesota Sponsored Projects Administration Responsibility Matrix
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte Roles and Responsibilities Matrix for Research Administration
University of North Dakota Research Administration Roles and Responsibility Matrix
University of Southern California Roles and Responsibilities of Research Administration
University of Tennessee Knoxville Proposal and Award Roles and Responsibilities Matrix
Wayne State University Sponsored Programs Administration Responsibility Matrix