Training Opportunities

The following classes are taught regularly by OSP. For more information or registration instructions, please refer to OSP’s website at http://prism.si.edu/osp/index.htm or call our main line at 202-275-0840.

- Finding Funding Sources
- Grant Writing
- Preparing a Grant Budget
- Proposal Submission to External Sponsors
- Is it a Gift or a Grant?
- Cost Sharing Principles
- Financial Compliance and Audit
- Fund Manager’s Financial Management of Grants and Contracts
- Fund Manager’s Focus Group
- Overview of Services
- Introduction to NSF Fastlane
- Introduction to Grants.gov
Who do I contact in OSP?

OSP has three main divisions: the administrative (pre-award) staff, who assist with proposal development and award negotiation; the financial (post-award) staff who invoice the sponsor and prepare financial reports; and the audit liaison, who calculates and negotiates the indirect cost rate with the federal government and manages all audit activities. A listing of the administrative and financial contacts for your unit is found on OSP’s website http://prism.si.edu/osp/index.htm.

Where do I get more information about the Office of Sponsored Projects?

Refer to OSP’s PRISM Website at http://prism.si.edu/osp/index.htm or call us at 202-275-0840. We are often on site at your museum or unit and are happy to visit with you.

The intent of this orientation booklet is to provide Smithsonian development staff with information about how the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP), the Development office and unit development officers work together in the pursuit and stewardship of private grants and contracts.

This booklet does not reflect all the functions managed by OSP. For further details on OSP’s mission, visit http://prism.si.edu/osp/index.htm or contact OSP directly.

We welcome your inquiries.

The assigned OSP liaison person for __________ is ____________________ who can be reached at ______________
Commonly Used Terms with Sponsored Projects

**Contract** – A mutually beneficial, legally binding agreement between the Smithsonian Institution and another party. A contract consists of promises made by each party, each of whom is legally obligated to fulfill its terms and give deliverables.

**Financial Report** – Information required by the sponsor at specified dates in which the Smithsonian certifies detailed expenses made on the project. OSP prepares and submits this information to sponsor.

**Grant** – A legally binding agreement between the Smithsonian and another party to provide financial support without requiring specific results, sponsor control, or direction.

**Invoice** – A bill given to the sponsor for work completed on a grant or contract. OSP prepares and submits invoices to the sponsor based on the Smithsonian’s accounting system records.

**Overhead/Indirect Costs/AS-PO** – Organizational expenses not specifically related to a particular project (i.e., heating, rent, etc.). The three terms reference the same type of expense.

**Principal Investigator/Project Director** – The person who is leading the project and is, thus, the primary point-of-contact for the project being funded. This is usually a scientist, curator, or other program person.

**SPIN** – A web database, open to all Smithsonian staff (through the OSP website) that provides listings for federal, nonfederal, and international funding opportunities from more than 2,500 sponsoring agencies.

**Sponsor** – The incorporated organization – private or government – that is funding a project. A sponsor usually has a programmatic contact and an administrative/financial contact. Development often uses the term “donor” while OSP uses the term “sponsor.”

How do unit staff conducting the project obtain access to their grant money?

Once OSP has signed a grant award, a fund is set up in the Smithsonian’s accounting system (ERP) for the amount of the award. Access to the fund is usually available within 24-48 hours. Note that the cash does not need to be received from the sponsor in order for the unit staff to be able to spend funds.

What policies (Smithsonian Directives) address issues relating to private grants and contracts?

- SD 304 “Guidelines for Administering Indirect Cost (Overhead) Rates and Charges”
- SD 318 “Externally Funded Grants and Sponsored Project Contracts”
- SD 321 “Review and Submission of Proposals for Sponsored Projects”
Which office is the primary point of contact with private (non-government) sponsors?

OSP coordinates with development staff if there is a need to contact a private sponsor regarding a non-programmatic matter. OSP routinely defers to development staff in this regard to respect the personal relationships that development staff may have or is building with the sponsor’s representative. In return, development staff keep OSP apprised of any discussions and provide copies of sponsor correspondence for OSP’s understanding and files.

Why does OSP sign my unit’s grant award?

The Secretary has delegated responsibility for accepting grants and contracts to the Director of OSP. OSP’s signature represents the Smithsonian’s legal commitment to carry out the project according to the terms and conditions of the award.

How does OSP work to keep good relationships with the sponsor?

OSP recognizes the value of good sponsor relations and, therefore, consults with the appropriate development staff to determine the best way to approach a sponsor and ensure the timeliness of all required reports.

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Why does Development staff coordinate work with OSP?

OSP is the Smithsonian business office assigned with institutional responsibility for the administration and management of all externally-funded grant and contract awards. This management responsibility includes private grants and contracts. OSP is responsible for award signature, setting up and classifying awards in the accounting system, and for ensuring the Smithsonian complies with all award, Institutional, and auditor requirements. Therefore, OSP must approve the project budget and terms and conditions of the award agreement.

What types of projects does OSP support?

OSP supports any project that receives external funds as a grant or contract, from federal and non-federal sources. These are broadly characterized as research, exhibit, education, collections, or capital projects.

How can I tell if an award is a grant, contract or gift?

The definitions for these and other types of awards are defined in Smithsonian policy SD 318, “Externally Funded Grants and Sponsored Project Contracts.” Classifying an award, at times, can be a complex process. A quick indicator of a grant is an award in which the sponsor requires a detailed financial accounting of the funds spent and/or a return of unspent funds. A contract would have further restrictions.

When do I need to work with OSP?

Stewardship of grant and contract funding from private sources is a shared concern of OSP, the Development office and unit Development staff. OSP most often works with development staff on matters concerning:

- Budgeting appropriately in proposals
- Submission of proposals
- Negotiation of award terms
- Signature of award document
- Ongoing correspondence with sponsor during the life of the award, including resolution of programmatic or administrative concerns
- Submission of financial reports and invoices