Responsibility
Responsible McCormick Official: Associate Dean Eric Perreault
Responsible Office: McCormick Office of Research Administration
Last Updated: January 3, 2023

Overview
This guidance applies to proposals requesting cost share with McCormick investigators, and serves as a supplement to guidelines from the Office for Research. Both sets of guidelines should be considered when making a cost share request at either the school or institutional level.

McCormick engages in cost sharing but limited to situations in which it is mandated by the sponsor per the solicitation or policy guidelines (mandatory cost sharing) or deemed appropriate considering specific and compelling circumstances (voluntary cost sharing). Cost sharing on large-scale proposals usually includes commitments of faculty time, graduate student support, and/or cash support.

Voluntary Cost Sharing
Voluntary cost sharing is optional, not an entitlement. McCormick may decline requests for voluntary cost sharing or may provide support below what is requested. Furthermore, departments have varying guidelines for cost sharing, with some requiring contributions from individual faculty or other specific requirements. Faculty involved in a proposal or award in which cost sharing is requested are responsible for being aware of their department policies.

Voluntary cost sharing is only considered for multiple-investigator proposals to external sponsors for grants with sponsor budgets of at least $5M. Cost sharing is at the discretion of the Office of the Dean.

- Single-Investigator Proposals: The Office for Research does not typically consider requests for cost sharing to support single-investigator proposals. PIs may request cost share support through their department and McCormick.

Cost Share Level
- Mandatory: Mandated sponsor cost sharing is typically outlined in the sponsor’s solicitation. When mandatory cost share is required by a sponsor without a specific cost share level, the cost share support should not exceed 10% of the sponsor budget that will remain in McCormick.
- Voluntary: McCormick and the University generally do not encourage voluntary cost share and if requested, the PI needs to provide a strong justification. Voluntary committed cost share support should be no higher than 10% of the sponsor budget coming to McCormick and remaining at McCormick. Voluntary cost share requests are limited to contributed faculty effort, unrecovered indirect costs (i.e. unrecovered F&A), and graduate student support.

Partner Institutions
If cost sharing is requested from McCormick, it is expected that partner institutions (e.g., subcontractors) will also provide cost share at the same percentage level.

Cash Support
Cash cost sharing may be proposed only when cost sharing is mandatory. It may be proposed for budgetary items including service contracts, postdoctoral fellow salaries and fringe benefits, equipment,
and other items that cannot be fully supported within the constraints of the grant budget. In unusual cases, administrative support may be covered by cash cost sharing, but this is generally discouraged unless the proposal includes a sponsor budget of more than $3 million per year at Northwestern. In these instances, it may be appropriate to request partial support for an administrative core staff, such as support for an administrative director, business administrator, and/or program assistant. Voluntary cash cost sharing support is not available.

- **McCormick and Department Cost Share Commitments**: For proposals with mandatory cost share, the McCormick Office of the Dean and individual McCormick departments will provide equal amounts of cash cost share provided that 100% of the cash cost for both the McCormick Office of the Dean and the department is recovered via academic year salary recovery.¹ The combined department/PI/school cash commitments are usually matched by the Office for Research. Thus, the typical overall cost share split is 25% from departments/PI, 25% from schools, and 50% from the Office for Research.

- **Fractional Cost Share Support**: Fractional cost share apportioning across departments is based on the number of tenure or tenure-track senior/key personnel and their department affiliation. For example, if there are a total of 5 PIs with 3 from one department and 2 from another, 60% of the total departmental cash cost share will come from the first department and 40% of the departmental cash cost share will come from the second department.

### Academic Year Salary Commitments

Faculty are required to meet their academic year salary commitments made at the time of proposal that satisfy either the contributed academic year salary cost share commitments or the academic salary recovery required for the McCormick cash commitment. Academic year salary recovery may not be re-budgeted for summer salary, either directly or as flow-through from academic year salary to summer salary, and the portion of the academic year salary returned to the investigators' accounts may not exceed 35%. Additionally, academic year salary recovery may not be re-budgeted into any other research expense category (i.e. to fund additional postdoc salary, supplies, services, etc.)

### Other Types of Cost Share Support

- **Graduate Student Support**: McCormick works with The Graduate School (TGS) to provide University Fellowships as cost sharing, typically at the level of one 12-month University Fellowship per $1M in sponsor funding carrying full F&A that comes to and remains in McCormick. Graduate student support (with costs based on the standard student costs that would be included in the sponsor budget) is included in the 10% cost share maximum cost share level. Graduate student support provided by McCormick should be used to support McCormick doctoral students.

- **First-year Fellowship Quarters**: First-year quarters available from TGS can be used to supplement standard cost sharing provided that these additional quarters can reasonably be argued to support students who will contribute meaningfully to the proposed research. Using first-year quarters provides a means to meet large, mandatory cost sharing requirements without increasing the cash burden on McCormick, since the cost of these quarters is fully covered by TGS.

  - The following equation can be used to determine the minimum number of additional quarters that must be budgeted into the proposal or be included as standard cost share quarters, when first year quarters are requested as part of the cost share:
    - \[ (# \text{ of 1st year quarters being used as cost share}) \times (# \text{ of years of the proposed project}) \]
    - For example, if 12 first year quarters are being used as cost share, and the duration of the proposed project is 3 years, then at least 36 additional quarters

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¹ For example, based on the standard academic year salary recovery split (35% to investigator; 32.5% to the investigator's department; 32.5% to McCormick), and a standard 50% split with OR, a budgetary cash cost share request of $10,000 will require approximately $7,692 in academic year salary recovery (including fringe benefits) charged to the sponsor.
must be added to the sponsor budget or be included as standard cost share quarters.

- When first-year quarters are provided as cost-share, the PI must ensure that:
  - All students recruited to the project have adequate funding for the duration of their studies. Additional support from the Dean's Office will not be provided.
  - First-year fellowships must be used before the penultimate year of the grant.
  - Students supported by first-year fellowships remain on the associated project for a long enough period to make a substantial research contribution so that the provided fellowships can reasonably be justified as cost sharing for the project.

- If the PIs are unable to recruit the full number of first-year students provided as cost share, they still have the obligation to fulfill the cost sharing required by the grant. Additional contributed effort beyond that committed in the grant or faculty discretionary funds are possible ways to meet the shortfall. McCormick cannot provide additional support beyond the obligations made at proposal submission.

- **Space:** McCormick does not provide space as part of cost sharing. Requests regarding incremental or renovated space should be discussed with the relevant department chairs early in the proposal preparation process.

### Award Modifications

For programmatic reasons, sometimes faculty cease participation in awarded projects in which they have a cost share commitment. To satisfy the project’s cost share, the commitments must then be redistributed. The revised cost share plan must receive approval from all department chairs, deans, and/or the Office for Research who have a revised commitment. The department research administrator should facilitate this approval on behalf of the PI.

### Notes

- **Timing:** Consistent with Office for Research guidelines, the PI should make the initial request for cost sharing support at least four weeks (preferably 6-8 weeks) before the proposal deadline ([http://osr.northwestern.edu/proposals/costsharing](http://osr.northwestern.edu/proposals/costsharing)).

- **Summer Salary:** Academic year salary recovery should be a priority when cost-sharing is requested. Summer salary for investigators is discouraged if the academic year salary recovery is inadequate to cover the cash cost-share.

- **Limited submissions requiring cost share:** In the case of a limited submission proposal that requires a cost share commitment, the PI should reach out to the McCormick Research Dean in advance of submitting a limited submission to the Office for Research Development to obtain preliminary approval. This request should include a list of all tenure or tenure-track key personnel, and their written confirmation of participation. It is recommended to use DocuSign to obtain this confirmation of participation.
  - **Equipment acquisition proposals:** Equipment acquisition proposals must identify major, and in some cases minor, users that will be included in the calculation for the cost share distribution. A rationale for the user group selected must also be provided.

- **Preproposals:** Cost sharing commitments are not made at the pre-proposal stage.