Incentive Program for Graduate Student Support on Externally-Funded Research Program

The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) previously established a program to help offset the cost of non-resident tuition for graduate students supported on externally-funded grants. Recent analysis has indicated the need to expand this program in order to increase the engagement and support for graduate students in externally funded research and creative scholarship, while promoting the submission of external research funding proposals across WMU. This program aims to provide support for both in-state and out-of-state students, as many funding sources do not cover tuition or provide full tuition. Faculty must request funds PRIOR to submission of grants as defined below effective August 15, 2018. These internal funds are available if the external grant is awarded.

The following parameters provide the context for eligibility and application to the program:

**Eligibility**

- Externally-funded project proposals submitted by faculty and staff that recover F&A costs at the full rate (currently 51%), at the approved off-campus rate (currently 24%) when applicable and approved; or the maximum rate published by the sponsor.
- The student associate/assistant must be funded, at a minimum, according to the annual stipend schedule published by the Graduate College at no less than one-half time (10 hours/week) across the academic year. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use this program for doctoral students with candidacy, for master’s only programs, or advanced master’s degree seeking students, to achieve the maximum benefit of the program for the student’s and the faculty member’s research program.
- Funds will be provided for a period of 1 year, are non-transferable, and must be requested again if a grant is resubmitted.
- Any out-of-state student(s) supported on the proposal whose tuition is supplemented via this program must change his/her classification to "resident" as soon as eligible, but no later than one year from the appointment date. The appointment letter for such students must indicate this responsibility. For any graduate student, that for whatever reason cannot become resident eligible, the tuition support equal to 2 credits each semester for the project is limited to one year (i.e., two semesters).
- Doctoral student individual fellowship applications may be eligible for the tuition aspect of this program on a case-by-case basis.

Contact the Associate Vice President for Research (AVPR) at least one month in advance to discuss if a specific grant is eligible.

**Available resources**

Faculty may request funds equivalent to either 2 credits of tuition for 2 semesters (Fall and Spring) or funding support on an hourly basis equivalent to two summer sessions in the form of a stipend. If the PI requests funding equivalent to a stipend for the summer sessions, student enrollment should not be required as this award will only fund the student.

**Process**

- No later than 15 working days prior to the proposal submission deadline, the principal investigator (PI) shall request participation in the program by completing the application form.
The department chair or unit director will be required to approve the request, which will then be forwarded to the associate dean for research, or relevant representative in the Dean’s Office. Upon approval, the Dean’s Office will forward the request to the AVPR. For staff in non-academic units, the form will need to be approved by the immediate supervisor and the unit vice president.

- The AVPR will review the request and provide a decision to the PI within 5 business days, with copies to the relevant administrators.
- The PI should work with their assigned OVPR research program officer to develop the proposal budget accordingly.
- The contribution for the tuition remission (equivalent to 2 credit hours/semester for two semesters or stipend for two (2) summer sessions, not to exceed an academic year) will be documented in the appropriate cost share section (sponsor required and/or WMU volunteered) on the proposal approval form (PAF) and will be managed through the applicable post-award process.
- Failure to meet the 15-working day deadline to request participation in this program OR meet the OVPR proposal submission deadlines (the 7, 5 and 2 day deadlines for all proposal materials) will result in disqualification from the program.

This program is subject to the availability of funds and may be discontinued at the discretion of the VPR and VPAA. Final funding decisions will be determined by OVPR with priority given to projects that recover F&A at WMU’s full negotiated rate or as appropriate to the sponsor, and provide funding for pre-doctoral appointees.