*Institutional Strategic Awards*

*General Project Launch Checklist*

# RPM Checklist

## RPM Pre-Award Checklist

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Done?** | **Description** | **Category** |
|  | Review: Project Initiation Form, Project Proposal, Application and/or Statement of Work and Granting agency Terms of Reference and/or Funding Guidelines | General |
|  | Develop preliminary governance plan/chart and management plan/ chart to ensure decisions (particularly with respect to risks) help move the project towards success. Ensure the structures identified are realistic for achieving operational goals/needs and reflect who will be responsible for the project’s financial oversight and who can make risk-incurring decisions. | HR |
|  | Review Budget, ensuring it has line items for a project manager and knowledge mobilization | Budget |
|  | Review Research Schedule Gantt and associated milestones | Schedule |
|  | Clarify role and time commitment of the Research Project Manager | HR |
|  | Identify key project risks and develop Risk Register | Risk |

## RPM Post-Award Launch Checklist

| **Done?** | **Description** | **Category** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Review: Project Initiation Form, Project Proposal, Application and/or Statement of Work; Granting agency Terms of Reference and/or Funding Guidelines; Executed Grant Agreement and any subsequent amendments; and Contract Agreement Memoranda (CAM) | General |
|  | Develop Project Initiation Form if one does not yet exist | General |
|  | Check in with Office of Research Services to see what already exists for the project and to let them know that you have been assigned as RPM to the project | General |
|  | Check the Commitments Database to see what institutional commitments SFU has made (https://commitments.dc.sfu.ca/); have the record’s status update, if needed | Budget |
|  | Ensure project accounts have been set up | Budget |
|  | Host a project kick-off meeting | General |
|  | Develop Project Summary Sheet (see ISA template) | General |
|  | Meet with Research Accounting to populate the RA/RPM Project Summary Sheet (see ISA template)  | General |
|  | Determine whether to create a Work Breakdown Structure to show project teams and anticipated outputs | General |
|  | Determine if any Ethics approvals are required | Stakeholders |
|  | Determine if the project has any space needs/considerations | HR |
|  | Work with ORS to facilitate any required Transfer Agreements  | Stakeholders |
|  | Determine if other agreements need to be put in place | Stakeholders |
|  | Review EDI plan from the project proposal and determine how to begin implementing it | EDI |
|  | Develop monthly/quarterly project management and/or financial dashboard/status update report | General |
|  | Confirm Research Schedule Gantt (including milestones) is still accurate | Schedule |
|  | Develop reporting schedule | Schedule |
|  | Develop detailed roles summary and associated charts | HR |
|  | Review Current Funding Agency Financial Administration Guide | Budget |
|  | Review and/or reconcile project budget (i.e. confirm that all committed contributions can be secured) | Budget |
|  | Disseminate budget revisions and clarifications as needed | Budget |
|  | Determine if/how to track and initiate co-funding | Budget |
|  | Create cheat sheets on budget-related restrictions and processes, if applicable | Budget |
|  | Distribute funding charts, as necessary (i.e. showing how much is to be provided when by which funder/co-funder) | Budget |
|  | If a foreign currency is involved, determine if you need to peg the exchange rate (https://www.sfu.ca/finance/departments/treasury/us-exchange-rate.html). | Budget |
|  | Confirm governance and management plans/charts are still accurate | HR |
|  | Create and disseminate list of the committee members or technical advisors  | HR |
|  | Develop Terms of Reference for committees | HR |
|  | Work with the Graduate Studies Office to facilitate hiring of Graduate Fellowships (GFs) and Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRAs) | HR |
|  | Confirm knowledge mobilization plan is still accurate | Communications |
|  | Check in with the SFU Knowledge Mobilization Officer about the knowledge mobilization plan | Communications |
|  | Develop project contact list | HR |
|  | Conduct Conflict of Interest analysis | HR |
|  | Develop communication plan, describing internal and external communication tools | Communications |
|  | Compile and disseminate publication guidelines/restrictions | Communications |
|  | Review and update Risk Register | Risk |
|  | Develop and disseminate procurement cheat sheets, as appropriate  | Budget |
|  | Develop stakeholder list, as appropriate | Stakeholders |
|  | Develop agreement tracking spreadsheet, if applicable | Stakeholders |
|  | Develop Intellectual Property cheat sheet, if applicable | Stakeholders |

# General Project Guidance

* **Ensure strong project governance is in place.**
	+ Confirm that there is an engaged Project Sponsor who holds overall responsibility for making decisions and guiding the vision of the project. If a project has multiple PIs, one should be identified as the lead PI/Project Sponsor, or else the governance plan should clearly delineate roles and responsibilities of the various PIs.
	+ Ensure that those in leadership roles have the time to take on their role, or else that they have a capable delegate who can step in as needed.
	+ Ensure that leadership roles have been defined so everyone is clear on who is doing what.
* **Make sure the roles of the primary project participants are clear.** It is ideal if governance and management charts are created prior to project award/initiation. These charts should consist of people that actually have the time to carry out their role on the project, not just individuals in high-up positions that look good on paper but who won’t actually have time for the project.
* **Confirm that primary project members are clear on the project manager’s role.** Ensure the project team knows that the Research Project Manager does not replace the project sponsor, the project accountant, or the leadership team. In addition, the project manager does not replace departmental support, such as for payroll appointments, timekeeping for hourly staff, review of expense claims, etc.
* **Confirm the role of Research Accounting and Research Services on the project to ensure adequate accounting oversight is in place.** Make sure everyone is in agreement as to who ismanaging what on the project.
* **Confirm who has the authority to make decisions on the project.** This should be incorporated into the Governance Plan. For instance, who makes decisions that can incur risk on the project? Ideally, decisions should not have to be made “by committee” as that could be challenging and time-consuming.