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External Funds

'And money is like muck, not good except it be spread around' (Francis Bacon 1561-1626)

'It has been said that the love of money is the root of all evil. The want of money is so quite as truly' (Samuel Butler 1835-1902)

If we follow overseas and interstate trends it can be expected that Science Division staff will spend an increasing proportion of their time seeking external funds for research projects. Such a trend has been underway for some years in the Division and may be accelerated if the Government continues to commit less to the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) operating budget.

All staff should make themselves aware of possible sources of funds for research projects and actively seek funding for projects that can not be adequately funded from Consolidated Funds. If you are planning to seek external funds but do not know who to approach, discuss the proposal with your Program Leader.

External funding must only be sought for high priority projects. The relevant Division policy is:

Although the availability of external funding can elevate the priority of any research project, high priority research should not be delayed or displaced by the need to support externally funded low priority work. Gaining external funds must not be a reason for withdrawing internal funds from any individual or program.

There may be occasions when funds are advertised for projects that may not be of high priority; if you think it worthwhile applying you should seek a review of priorities by talking to the relevant Program Leader.

Salary and wages overheads

When applying for funds it is essential that salaries and wages oncosts are included in the application.

Current salary levels and on costs can be obtained from the Administrative Officers.

Further information can be obtained by DEC's [Admin. Instruction No. 50](#), DEC's [Circular 1/97](#), and the Administrative Assistant.

Corporate administration overheads

These are to be charged at 45% unless approval has been given by the relevant Director for this to be varied.

Make sure that you include items such as plant hire, salary increments and inflation, which are sometimes overlooked.

Corporate overheads are to be calculated on all costs including salaries, salary oncosts, plant hire and operational costs.

Contracts or consultancies

It may be desirable for some jobs to let a contract or consultancy rather than employ staff on a short-term basis. Normally, contracts or consultancies may not be used for jobs where policy formulation is involved or where the work is normally done or was previously done by salaried or wages staff. If you are considering using this method, you should discuss the proposal with your Program Leader and ensure that an approved contract is used. Before any consultancy contracts are signed check if proposed contracts or sub-contracts are within DEC's guidelines. It is particularly important to ensure that a percentage of the fee is withheld until the contract is finalized. Advice from a co-ordination of financial services should be obtained on payment mechanisms for consultants and contractors, since there may be PAYE taxation requirements that DEC must meet.

Internal application procedures

Applications that involve hiring staff or involve contracts using DEC's research facilities must be discussed with the relevant Research Centre Manager. Check salary figures and overhead calculations with the Administrative Officer. All external fund applications should be discussed with your Program Leader.

It is vital that you meet any conditions imposed by the granting agency, especially those relating to progress reports and audit. If you don't meet conditions you will get a bad reputation with the agency (and its scientific advisers) and this reputation may affect your colleagues also. Progress reports to funding agencies must be approved by your Program Leader (see Guideline No. 9) before they are sent.

If a grant is received or contract entered into it is necessary to advise the Administrative Officer of the details so that a Trust Account can be set up.

Under no circumstances are staff to expend monies on projects dependent on external funding unless written advice is received from the funding agency confirming that monies will be forthcoming.

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<http://calmweb.calm.wa.gov.au/drb/science/docs/quidelines/>