GSU Guidelines for PI/Award Transfer to Another Institution

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this guidance is to provide information on Georgia State University (GSU) and Federal standards and procedures for faculty transferring sponsored projects when departing GSU for another institution.

II. DEFINITIONS

The transfer of an award from one institution to another can be a time-consuming action. To minimize this, several items should be addressed prior to the transfer.

A. Relinquishment of Federal Awards

Federal grants and contracts are awarded to GSU, not directly to Principal Investigators (PIs). If a PI changes institutions, GSU will determine on a case-by-case basis whether it will retain, transfer, or terminate the award. As the grantee institution, GSU must approve the relinquishment of the award and formally relinquish the award and equipment to the PI’s new institution. The awarding agency or sponsor must also approve all grant/contract transfers.

B. Sponsor Approval Process

To initiate a transfer, GSU first submits a transfer request using a process defined by each sponsor. If the sponsor approves the request, the sponsor will begin the process of closing out the award at GSU. At the same time, the new institution will submit a proposal to the sponsor for the remaining funds. After completing both the closeout and proposal review stages, the sponsor will issue a new award to the new institution. This can take two to three months. It is important to initiate the request well ahead of the expected start date at the new institution.
Approval Process Checklist

The following factors should be considered as a part of the process. A more detailed checklist is also included on the OSPA website.

1. Will the grant be transferred, or will a new PI be named at GSU?
2. If there are project staff members remaining at GSU, will there be a new subaward issued back to GSU from the new institution?
3. Are there subawards on the current award? All active subawards will need to be closed out prior to the transfer (Note: Closeout of a subaward requires the receipt of an invoice from the subaward marked “Final”.)?
4. What will be the relinquishment date (generally the last day at GSU)?
5. What is the unobligated balance to be transferred to the new institution? This is the amount unspent/unencumbered at the relinquishment date and may involve some estimates by the PI. This amount will be verified by OSPA.
6. Are there any cost sharing obligations under the award?
7. Has there been any intellectual property developed?
8. Is there any equipment associated with this award that is to be transferred to the new institution (refer to procedure for Transfer of Equipment for Departing Faculty)?
9. Are there any compliance protocols (IRB, IACUC, rDNA, etc.) to close out or to obtain approval for a new PI at GSU if there will be a new subaward issued back to GSU from the new institution?
10. Is there a lab to close?
11. Will any related project staff members, such as graduate students, transfer to the new institution with the PI?

III. GUIDANCE

A. Procedure for Transferring an Award

1. Stop all spending on the award as soon as practical.
2. Notify OSPA as soon as possible.
3. Complete the Exit Checklist (attached). This must be complete before OSPA can submit any transfer to the sponsor.
4. For those sponsors that require a letter of request, OSPA and the authorized official who signs on behalf of GSU will prepare on university letterhead a letter addressed to the Sponsor’s grants specialist or contracting officer and program manager. The relinquishment letter will contain the following:
   • The sponsor’s award number
   • The effective date of the relinquishment
   • A statement of intent concerning the transfer of equipment (see GSU procedure for Transfer of Equipment for Departing Faculty)
5. Repeat this process for all awards to be transferred
B. Transfer of Contracts
While federal grants are often transferred between institutions based on the relocation of a PI, contracts are generally not transferrable, but instead may be terminated completely and re-issued to a new institution. Sponsors may also require the University to retain the original contract and issue a subcontract to the PI’s new institution. This may also occur on grants and cooperative agreements. The steps outlined above, should be followed regardless of the award type. Questions regarding this process should be directed to OSPA.

C. Process for Specific Sponsors
Contact OSPA for guidance for specific sponsors.