

Solutions for dealing with Adjunct Appointees in receipt of EU award with PI time included.

Background

Adjunct appointments are awarded to clinicians/medics at hospitals. Their salary is paid 100% by the hospital/HSE and they are NOT on the UCD payroll. They do however receive an “adjunct” appointment and a contract. Where Adjunct PIs have included their time on proposals and their position was not advised at pre-award and grant registration, issues have subsequently arisen at post award financial claim stage.

Where an Adjunct Appointee does not include PI time, then there should not be an issue.

Dual appointments are paid partially by the Hospital and partially by UCD – so we can demonstrate their time/costs more easily and recover their costs on a pro-rata basis

Note that, the issue applies to EU Framework Grants (e.g. Horizon Europe) in term of cost recovery, but for non-Framework (e.g. Interreg, DG a) it will more likely be on a matched funding basis, but the same issue arises.

Issue & Risk

As the salary of an adjunct is not on the UCD books, we cannot account for their costs on EU grants. The risk is, initially, a financial one but also reputational. The failure or cancellation of a large EU award involving large EU Universities would impact on UCD’s reputation and risk future collaborations with leading universities.

Solutions

A range of solutions and risk mitigation is outlined below:

- (i) Proposal Stage: Where clinicians/medics are applying for Horizon Europe or EU Non-Framework funding, they must flag the inclusion of their time/cost at the outset. *IF* the applicant has included PI time in their application then, where the applicant is a clinician/medic they must clarify their contract position when they submit their budget to the Pre-Award Accountant at budgetapprovals@ucd.ie. That is, whether they are a UCD employee, Dual appointment or Adjunct appointment. This allows the issue to be addressed at an early stage. (Note Dual appointments are paid partially by the Hospital and partially by UCD – so we can recover their costs on a pro-rata basis)
For framework awards, the PI could reconsider the staffing arrangements and, at proposal stage repurpose the funding intended for PI time to employing an additional Snr Research Fellow or similar. The PI can still guide the project but the Snr Fellow could do a lot of the tasks. Further options outlined below with regard

to the PI time, but are only applicable in certain cases (Linked 3rd parties).

- (ii) Grant Registration: Review of the budget at grant signing and registration stage to identify if PI time is included and if so what is the employment status of the applicant. Again, this allows for earlier identification of the issue, but in some cases may already be too late to address easily. Flagging PI time at the proposal stage when the budget is being drafted will help to avoid such situations where it is too late to address any issues easily.
- (iii) Linked 3rd Party Status: Under EU Framework Grant T&Cs, applicants can use a Linked 3rd Party (Affiliated party in Horizon Europe terms) status to allocate budget to another entity. There are strict requirements around this – See Article 14 of the AMGA (Annotated Model Grant Agreement). In particular:
 - a. There must be an agreement in place between the parties that precedes the application and grant, AND will supersede the grant long after it's completion.
 - b. The Linked party does not sign the GA, only the beneficiary that the Linked Party is “tied” to
 - c. The Linked Party must also complete their own financial statements
 - d. The Linked Party must provide the main beneficiary with all supporting documentation that may be required from time to time and to support audits by the European court of Auditors. This would be covered by way of a side agreement with the beneficiary.

The key issue surrounding the use of Linked 3rd Parties is the robustness of the agreement in place between UCD and the other party. This will have to be examined on a case by case basis and may not always provide a solution. It must be addressed at proposal stage if the PI holds an adjunct appointment AND has included PI time in the proposal.

The proposal would address the issue and introduce the Linked Party in the description of beneficiaries, for example: *The [Enter Name of Hospital of Institution] has a long standing agreement with UCD for Research, Teaching and Learning activities, and to support the development of these activities etc etc...*

So far, we have used the Linked 3rd Party Status for grants with the Mater Hospital, and SVUH.