

Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders

UH-Downtown/PS 06.A.08

From: William Flores, President

Issue No. 1

Effective date: 08/17/2015

Subject: Organized Research and Creative Activities (ORCA) Program

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1. PURPOSE

This PS provides guidelines for the administration of the Organized Research and Creative Activities (ORCA) program at University of Houston-Downtown (UHD). The ORCA program provides small project grants to support scholarly and creative activities by tenured and tenure-track faculty at UHD. The funding and assurance of institutional compliance for this program will be managed by the Assistant Vice\ President for Research and Sponsored Programs (AVP-ORSP).

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Research: Any gathering of facts, data, and information for the advancement of knowledge, confirmation of previous work, or the solving of complex problems.
- 2.2 Creative Activity: Pursuit of endeavors by those in disciplines in the arts, including but not limited to art, music, writing, performing arts, dance, photography, and sculpting.

3. POLICY

3.1 Proposal Requirement

- 3.1.1 To qualify for internal funding through the ORCA Program, a faculty member must submit a complete research proposal. The research proposal must follow the format described in the [Format For ORCA Grant Proposal](#) and must provide all of the information required therein.

3.2 Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

- 3.2.1 To qualify for internal funding through the ORCA Grant Program, each research proposal will be evaluated using the following criteria:
- 3.2.2 The proposed research or creative activity must: (a) support the goals and/or objectives of the department and/or the goals and objectives of the University; (b) contribute to knowledge in the discipline; (c) have the potential to result in patents or licenses for commercial products; and/or (d) have the potential to attract additional funding from external funding sources.

3.2.3 The University ORCA Committee will consider only proposals that satisfy at least one of the criteria in Section 3.2.1. Proposals of equal quality and potential that satisfy more than one criterion will be given highest priority for funding.

3.3 Eligibility of Proposer

3.3.1 For research or creative activity to be internally sponsored by the University using ORCA funds, the proposer must hold a tenured or tenure-track appointment at the University at the time the research is proposed.

3.3.2 ORCA grants are discontinued with the termination of a tenured or tenure-track appointment to the University.

3.3.3 Members of the University ORCA Committee and a Department ORCA Committee are ineligible for funding through the ORCA program.

3.3.4 Applicant must be in good standing with the university at the time of funding.

3.4 Composition and Appointment of Evaluation Committees

3.4.1 **Departmental Committees:** Each academic department from which an ORCA proposal originates must assemble a Departmental ORCA Committee. The committee is appointed at the discretion of the department. The committee must make every effort to represent a range of disciplines from which proposals may be submitted.

3.4.2 **University ORCA Committee:** The University ORCA Committee consists of one faculty representative from each academic department, elected via Faculty Senate procedures. Members of the University ORCA Committee will serve two-year staggered terms. The AVP-ORSP will convene the committee, provide instructions and an overview of pertinent regulations, establish deadlines, and oversee the election of a committee chair.

3.5 Grants and Expenditures of ORCA Funds

3.5.1 The University ORCA Committee may suggest that an ORCA grant for research or creative activity be greater or less than the original amount requested by the proposer. Under most circumstances, the University ORCA Committee may not suggest that a grant be increased by more than 10% above the original amount. There are no limits on suggesting a lower grant than originally proposed.

3.5.2 Use of ORCA funds must comply with all regulations of the University of Houston System, UHD, the state, and the federal government. Proposed research or creative activities involving human subjects must be approved by the UHD Institutional Review Board. Proposed research or creative activities involving animals must be approved by the UHD Institutional Animal Care and Use

Committee. Recipients of ORCA grants will be required to attend a Time and Effort training session and must submit regular Time and Effort reports to the AVP-ORSP through the proper process.

- 3.5.3 Proposed research or creative activities requiring city, state, or federal permits must provide copies of the required permits to the AVP-ORSP before funds will be allocated for the research.
- 3.5.4 Research funds from the ORCA program may be used, when specified, to cover course instruction replacement cost and/or a summer salary.
- 3.5.5 No single grant may be greater than 10% of the ORCA funds available in that year.
- 3.5.6 Funds granted for designated uses (for example, the purchase of software) may not be re-budgeted into another category unless approved in advance by the AVP-ORSP.
- 3.5.7 All expenditures from faculty ORCA accounts must be approved by the faculty member, the departmental chair, and college dean.
- 3.5.8 All ORCA funds granted to a faculty member must be expended within three long semesters from the date of notification of grant. Unexpended funds at the end of this period will be returned to the ORSP.
- 3.5.9 If the SVPAA/Provost determines any modifications to the recommendations need to be made, he/she will consult the university ORCA committee.

3.6 Required ORCA Reports

- 3.6.1 Within 18 months of the end of the semester in which the ORCA grant is received, the recipient will submit a final report summarizing the results of the research or creative activities funded by the grant to the Provost and AVP-ORSP using the format described in [the Format For ORCA Grant Final Report](#).
- 3.6.2 In the report, grant recipients are required to describe the product of the project funded by the ORCA grant.
 - 3.6.2.1 Faculty may choose to disseminate the findings of the grant via outcomes that involve peer review (e.g., an off-campus exhibition or performance, chapter in a book, conference presentation, or journal publication).
 - 3.6.2.2 Grant proposals to external agencies that result from the grant also area acceptable as the product of an ORCA grant.

- 3.6.2.3 Acceptance for conference presentation, publication, exhibition, performance, or external funding as a result of the ORCA grant is desired, but it is not required. However, evidence of efforts to seek such acceptance is an essential element. Failure to demonstrate productivity described in the original grant proposal may render the applicant ineligible for future ORCA grants.
- 3.6.3 The AVP-ORSP will archive all final reports of ORCA grants and will make them available to the university community.
- 3.6.4 The recipient of an ORCA grant will be required to acknowledge the support received from an ORCA grant in any publication, exhibition announcement or other appropriate external or internal outlet. The recipient of an ORCA grant also will furnish two copies of any published work, exhibition announcement, or presentation program resulting from any amount of ORCA funding to the AVP-ORSP. One copy will be archived in the ORSP office and one copy will be sent to the University Archive.
- 3.6.5 The recipient of an ORCA grant also may be required to present the findings or products of this project to the university community at a forum to be determined by the Provost.
- 3.6.6 If a recipient fails to submit a final report within 18 months, that individual is ineligible for future ORCA funds. The AVP-ORSP will notify the individual and the ORCA committee of this ineligibility. The eligibility restriction remains in effect until such time as the recipient submits a report.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Proposal Submission, Review Process and Timelines

The steps, review processes, and timelines associated with ORCA grant applications are outlined below. If any due date falls on a holiday, the due date is moved to the next work day.

- 4.1.1 By the first Monday in March: The VPAA-ORSP will distribute a call for ORCA grant proposal submissions with reference to the proposal guidelines included in PS 06.A.08. The call for proposals will also contain the deadline for proposal submissions indicated in Section 4.1.3 below.
- 4.1.2 By the first Monday in May: Each academic department will have formed their Department ORCA Committee will have selected and announced the name of the individual who will serve as chair of the committee. The Senate will follow Faculty Senate procedures to complete the elections for each department's representative to the University ORCA Committee; the Senate will send the names to the AVP-ORSP and the Senior VPAA/Provost.

- 4.1.3 By the second Monday in September: Proposer submits proposal to the Department ORCA Committee. [Note: Prior to the fourth Monday in September, any revisions and review at this level should be completed by all parties including the Department ORCA committee chair, the Department Chair, and the College Dean.] By this date also, the University ORCA Committee should have met and elected a chair.
- 4.1.4 By the first Monday in October: Proposer submits final proposal to Department Chair, College Dean, and the AVP-ORSP (who will record the submission, ensure that it meets regulatory requirements for funding given in section 3.5, and forward it to the University ORCA Committee). Department ORCA Committee also forwards the [Recommendation and Signature Form](#) to Department Chair who then sends to College Dean.
- 4.1.5 By the third Monday in October: The Dean submits the [Recommendation and Signature Form](#)) to the AVP-ORSP, who forwards it to the University ORCA Committee.
- 4.1.6 By the second Monday in November: The University ORCA Committee sends its funding recommendations to the AVP-ORSP with a cover letter from the committee chair and spreadsheet in which each proposal is listed in rank order from highest priority for funding (top) to lowest priority for funding.
- 4.1.7 By the first Monday in December: The Provost will notify each proposer, the Chair of the University ORCA Committee, all department chairs, and all college deans of funding decisions. The AVP-ORSP will send the [Recommendation and Signature Form](#) and justification statements to all applicants.
- 4.1.8 By the second Monday in December: The Provost will announce the names and project titles of all ORCA grant recipients to the UHD community.

5. EXHIBITS

There are no exhibits associated with this policy.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Parties: Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs

Review: Every three years on or before May 1st

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

7. POLICY HISTORY

First version of this policy.

8. REFERENCES

[Format For ORCA Grant Proposal](#)
[Format For ORCA Grant Final Report.](#)
[Recommendation and Signature Form](#)