To: Norman Campus Deans, Chairs, Directors and Faculty
From: Kelvin K. Droegemeier, Vice President for Research
Date: 15 July 2016
Subj: Tracking and Reporting of Sponsored Research Incentive (SRI) Funds

Dear colleagues,

Each year, the Norman campus Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) distributes approximately $3.5 million, in a program known as Sponsored Research Incentive (SRI), to academic departments and centers to support research and creative activity. The SRI program began some 40 years ago, prior to the existence of our centralized Office of Research Services (ORS), as a means for helping academic departments deal with the additional administrative load associated with managing external grants and contracts garnered by their faculty. Over time, following the creation of ORS, SRI morphed into a program for seeding new ideas and incentivizing the pursuit of external funding (https://vpr-norman.ou.edu/policies/sponsored-research-incentive for additional details).

Although SRI is linked to the expenditure of indirect costs (IDC) from external grants and contracts, IDC (and thus SRI) is actually funded via an education and general (E&G) allocation within the University’s budget that is then reimbursed by the organizations providing the external funding. Most research universities operate an SRI-type program, though details vary considerably.

Given the size of the yearly SRI distribution and the important role it plays at the University, a more effective mechanism is needed to account for its use. Consequently, two important changes are being made, effective immediately.

- First, each organization receiving SRI will, beginning with the distribution for FY16 (which takes place in October 2016 based upon expenditures from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016), establish a new department number solely for SRI funds. Please use the form on the VPR’s website when opening this new department number. Existing 122-XXXX-XX department numbers will no longer be used for SRI distribution.
- Additionally, following the end of each fiscal year, every organization receiving SRI will be required to submit a brief report to the Office of the Vice President for Research indicating how SRI was used to advance research and creative activity. The first report will be submitted in summer 2017, covering the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 (i.e. tracking needs to begin now).
- No changes to the SRI policy itself are being made.

Additional details regarding yearly SRI reports, FAQs for this policy, and the form to open a new SRI department number can be found at https://vpr-norman.ou.edu/policies/sponsored-research-incentive. Please address any questions you have to VPR-SRI@ou.edu.

cc: Nicholas S. Hathaway, Executive Vice President and Vice President for Administration and Finance
Chris Kuwitzky, Associate Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Kyle Harper, Senior Vice President and Provost
Stewart Berkinshaw, Associate Provost
Terri Pinkston, Controller