

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
<p>I) General Information</p> <p>1) In general terms, what services do you provide and to whom do you provide these services?</p>	<p>Texas A&M University Research Services (TAMU-RS) provides core sponsored agreement services (proposal administration, contract negotiation, project compliance, project administration, and accounting) for Texas A&M University (TAMU) agreements and other non-core services (responsibilities performed by the institution regardless of where a proposal/award is administered including TAMU risk review and approval of Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF) and agency-joint proposals, academic cost-sharing, use of space and facilities, conflicts of interest, time and effort reporting, etc.). These services are generally provided for TAMU sponsored agreements and are available to any TAMU Principal Investigator who has been authorized by his/her Dean to use Research Services. There are sponsor-restricted funding arrangements that are required to be administered by TAMU-RS. Examples include projects with eligibility requirements mandating a degree-granting institution, all Qatar projects, Coordinating Board Advanced Research Projects (ARP), and The Welch Foundation projects. Administrative services and assistance provided by other offices within the Office of the Vice President for Research include proposal development, Community of Science access, collaboration and team building, research compliance, reporting and statistics, incentive programs and distribution of incentive funds for program development, bridge funding, start-up initiatives and general oversight of TAMU's research program.</p>	<p>Services start with assistance finding funding opportunities, through individual searches and using our Funding Calendar on our web site. Proposal Coordinators are available to assist in interpreting the Request For Proposals (RFP), completing the budget to meet System requirements, identifying and applying current estimating procedures (fringe benefits, indirect costs, etc.) We will prepare agency specific forms for the business components of the proposal (budgets, legal data specific to our Agency, AOR identification, compliance, certifications, etc.). We assist with the internal routing by providing internal budget estimates specific to a partnering System member when applicable and finalize the System component's primary administrative review/approval. The actual proposal</p>	<p>The Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) provides comprehensive proposal and project support services for all researchers throughout The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) who indicate an interest in transportation research. Services of the Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF) are used to administer cost reimbursable federal contracts, as well as others that contain contract clauses for which TTI, as a state agency, cannot comply.</p>	<p>The Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC) has mandated that all Federal projects be administered by the Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF). For projects that cannot be administered by the TAMRF, the HSC departments provide daily administrative support with oversight from HSC Central Administration. Because the HSC office of research is not a full service operation, HSC departments often choose to have the TAMRF administer most non-federal projects as well.</p>	<p>The Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES) is committed to providing coordinated, seamless and efficient research administration services that support the success of TEES' researchers while balancing the business needs of sponsors. From proposal submission and contract negotiation to project administration and close out, TEES' researchers are supported at every step of the process. <u>Pre-award services include:</u> Identification and dissemination funding opportunities via email, Genius/SMARTS and TEES Newsletter; Budget review and preparation; Proposal preparation; Proposal submission to sponsors; Preparation of sponsored required forms; Electronic routing of proposal documents for internal approval; Maintenance of database accessible via TEES' Epik Portal on current and archived proposals; Training for researchers and staff. <u>Post-award services include:</u> Contract Negotiation Services: Review, negotiation and routing of all agreements; Processing interim funding requests; Training for researchers and staff. <u>Project Administration Services:</u> Project establishment; Compliance assurance; Budget revisions; Distribution of incentive funds; Coordination of no-cost extensions; Deliverable tracking; Project close-out; Training for researchers and staff. <u>Other Services:</u> TEES researchers can utilize TEES' password protected Epik Portal to manage research projects and view information on contract negotiation progress, financial reports, travel and purchase vouchers, project property and other useful information. All TEES' researchers as well as non-TEES researchers authorized by their employing institutions may utilize TEES' research administration services.</p>	<p>The Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF) is a non-profit corporation that has been providing full service research administration services since 1944. The services provided by the TAMRF are part of one continuous integrated process focused on research administration. The TAMRF provides the following services to TAMUS Researchers: proposal initiation, budget preparation, electronic routing, final proposal preparation, proposal submission, post submission services, negotiations, sub-awards, agreements including but not limited to consulting, teaming, nondisclosure, and material transfer. When the TAMRF receives notice of an award it briefs the PI and staff on the award terms and conditions, policies and procedures. TAMRF provides a full accounts payable and accounts receivable report to the PI. Specifically, provides payments to vendors for all grant related charges and assistance with vendor dispute resolution. All financial reports required by the sponsor, as well as full billing services are provided by TAMRF. Throughout the project the TAMRF monitors the financial status and compliance with the award terms, policies, and coordinates the project close-out. TAMRF also provides strong customer service and flexibility. Some specific areas of flexibility in contracts include: Ability to accept non-standard TAMUS clauses; indemnification of sponsors; Acceptance of laws of a state other than Texas; as the governing laws of the agreement; Provision of project liability insurance; provision of project participant insurance; Comprehensive insurance program including but not limited to coverage over foreign and domestic TAMRF and sponsor owned equipment for which TAMRF is legally liable and professional liability coverage for all research projects administered by TAMRF; Ability to use flexible TAMRF travel and purchasing policies and procedures (not State of Texas).</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
<p>2) Do you exclude any particular Texas A&M System Members/funding agencies from these services?</p>	<p>No. TAMU-RS does not "exclude" any Members or funding agencies from these services. TAMU has approved agreements, when it is in the best interest of TAMU and the agencies, to have projects administered by the agencies. These research expenditures are counted in the agency financials, reports and formulas. However, the expenditures are included in the TAMU report to the National Science Foundation. Currently, TAMU-RS does not provide services for research that is not a TAMU research activity as published in the NSF report for TAMU (i.e., HSC).</p>	<p>No. We don't exclude any System member or funding agencies from these services. We may be excluded from applying on occasion by the sponsor if a 501 (c)(3)/non-profit organization or a degree granting institution is required. In those cases, we will direct the PI to the Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF) or to Texas A&M University Research Services (TAMU-RS). We will request Dean and Unit Head approval for a PI outside our focus groups before we process the proposal.</p>	<p>TTI does not exclude any members of TAMUS; however, the majority of transportation research within the System is performed by joint employees located within the TAMU College of Engineering departments. Other departments include statistics, landscape architecture and geology/geophysics.</p>	<p>Only HSC projects are administered through the HSC. HSC PIs may utilize only the TAMRF or HSC for research administration. No funding agencies are excluded.</p>	<p>All TEES' researchers as well as non-TEES researchers authorized by their employing institutions may utilize TEES' research administration services.</p>	<p>No</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
<p>3) What is your indirect cost return policy?</p>	<p>a) INDIRECT COST RETURN TO COLLEGES FOR PROJECTS ADMINISTERED BY TAMU-RS - Indirect cost return to colleges not included in agreements with the agencies (TEES and AgriLife) is 45%. Indirect cost return to colleges included in agreements with the agencies is the same as the policy of the respective agency.</p> <p>b) INDIRECT COST RETURN TO DEPARTMENTS, CENTERS AND PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS - College policies for indirect cost return to the departments, centers and Principal Investigators vary by college and are established by the Dean.</p>	<p>The current policy, starting September 2008, 40% of the Indirect Costs (IDC collected) will be returned to the unit to be shared with the PI. The remaining 60% is retained by the Director for program development. There are some exceptions. If a PI requests and is granted a lower IDC rate than the sponsor will allow, the IDC is returned first to the Director's office to the level projected prior to the reduction. Department/Unit Heads define internal policies for further distribution to the individual PI, however administration encourages a further 60%/40% split.</p>	<p>TTI desires to continue & expand collaborations with the academic departments, as this work provides significant advantages for the Institute & the academic departments. To facilitate this interaction, the following procedures have been developed to distribute indirect cost revenue to the academic departments on research projects that have an effective indirect cost rate in excess of 25%. The effective indirect cost rate is the negotiated indirect cost rate less any institutional contribution. For eligible projects, the indirect cost money returned is based on the sum of the direct salary & benefits charged to the project by individuals within the academic department. Sixty percent of the net indirect cost money earned (money received by TTI less the administrative fee charged by the Texas A&M Research Foundation, if applicable) is distributed to the academic department. TTI encourages the department to distribute 20% of this money to the faculty member(s) charging to the project. To reduce agency risk through diversification of TTI's research program, i.e., lessen our dependence on the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), TTI has begun to use an indirect cost return directly to the study supervisors as an incentive for developing work outside of the TxDOT program. For those projects that will pay the full indirect cost rate (46.5%), 2.5% of the total contract dollars (roughly equivalent to 10% of indirect) is allocated directly to the study supervisor. TTI is strongly committed to increasing the agency's research project partnerships with minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and seeks to pursue all viable opportunities for collaboration with MSIs, either as the lead institution or in a supporting role. TTI offers a financial incentive to PIs who successfully include a MSI in a competitively selected research contract. For each proposal submitted with a MSI on the team, PIs are given \$500 to expend in overhead funds. If the team is awarded the contract, the PI's account will be credited with 10% of the value of the MSI's share of the research, up to a combined total incentive of \$2,000 (\$500 + 10%) per project. Qualifying partnership institutions include Prairie View A&M University, Texas A&M International University Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Texas Southern University and the University of Texas at El Paso.</p>	<p>The HSC President retains a lump sum of \$500K for contingency purposes, the HSC VPR's Office keeps 10% of the net IDC's generated, and the remainder is returned to the college or institute that generated the funds.</p>	<p>Incentive funds are generally distributed according to the following formulas, based on the administrative location (ad loc) of the lead principal investigator:</p> <p>Formula 1- TAMU Engineering Units/Departments and other TAMUS Agencies (Projects administered at full indirect) 25% TEES 16% Principal Investigator 59% Unit/Department</p> <p>Formula 2 – TAMU Non-engineering Units 25% TEES 40% VPR 16% Principal Investigator 19% Unit/Department</p>	<p>All recovered indirect costs are returned to the System Members. As a matter of convenience for the System Members the TAMRF retains its service fees from the collected indirect costs and remits the balance of the indirect costs to the System Member. This process eliminates the need for the System Member to issue a payment to the TAMRF for its administration services. Hence, it is not a requirement of the TAMRF that it be paid via recovered indirect cost, but it is the most practical method. Once the recovered indirect costs are issued to the System Member the TAMRF is no longer involved in any decisions regarding the allocation of those funds.</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
II) Preaward						
1) Do you provide information on RFA's?	<p>The TAMU Office of Proposal Development, a unit of the Division of Research and Graduate Studies, distributes comprehensive lists of funding opportunities for researchers, and provides information for finding and competing for funding on their website at http://opd.tamu.edu/.</p>	<p>AgriLife maintains a funding calendar on our C&G web site. (http://agcg.tamu.edu) This calendar provides information on our regular sponsors providing specific deadlines and direct links to the full RFP. The calendar also includes tools for accessing alternative resources for specialized queries via Grants.gov, Texas Register, Community of Science, NSF, NIH, USDA/CSREES, and TAMU-VPR. We will assist with interpreting any RFA/RFP to determine if it's applicable to a specific individuals program and aid in evaluating alternatives if applicable.</p>	<p>Yes, the TTI Research Development Office (TTI RDO) does extensive searching for opportunities and distributes that information via email and the TTI intranet.</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>Yes. TEES has a full-time employee responsible for identifying and disseminating information on funding opportunities including RFAs.. Funding opportunities are disseminated via email, Genius/SMARTS and TEES newsletter.</p>	<p>No. In 2007 the Cost Study Committee, which consisted of representatives from TAMUS, TAMU, TTI, HSC, and AgriLife Research recommended that the TAMRF no longer provide funding opportunity services. System Members felt that either they were best suited to provide those services in-house and/or they were receiving those services from the TAMU Office of Proposal Development.</p>
2) Do you provide help with proposal development and grant writing?	<p>The TAMU Office of Proposal Development supports TAMU faculty in the development and writing of proposals for research and education funding. The office supports center-level initiatives, proposals from individual faculty, and proposals to support institutional objectives such as diversity. The office also provides seminars and workshops related to grant writing for faculty and students.</p>	<p>Yes. AgriLife supports complex or alternative technical grant writing efforts through the VPR's Office of Proposal Development by sponsorship of a grant writer on that office staff. Additional assistance for proposal development is available from our Contracts & Grants Office specific to an individual project need which may require joint consultation with pre-and post-award team members as well negotiators and fiscal administrators. These services are provided at no charge to either the PI or the unit.</p>	<p>The TTI RDO assists with scheduling, team building, contract review, subcontract and professional service provider coordination, drafting non-research sections of proposals, forms, representations, certifications, budgets, reproduction, packaging, mailing and tracking.</p>	<p>The HSC contributes to the TAMU Office of Proposal Development (http://opd.tamu.edu) and has access to their services.</p>	<p>Yes.</p>	<p>We work closely with PIs to develop their proposals including all required forms and materials. However, we do not write the scientific text of the proposal. The TAMU Office of Proposal Development (http://opd.tamu.edu) provides this service to researchers campus-wide.</p>
3) Do you help to prepare budgets?	<p>Yes. TAMU-RS uses a spreadsheet template to prepare detailed budgets in accordance with TAMU Rules/TAMUS Policies, current rates and sponsor guidelines. This includes sponsor forms, budget justifications, and cost-sharing commitments.</p>	<p>Yes. We prepare detailed budgets specific to the program response with emphasis on precise estimates for salary and wage positions, fringe benefits, escalation factors, categorical allocations in compliance with OMB A-21, adherence to the DHHS NICRA or an alternate rate if applicable, subcontractors' detailed documentation, adherence to the programmatic limitations on duration and requested funds, matching contributions when applicable, overall compliance with System policies.</p>	<p>Yes, regardless of whether the project is administered through the TAMRF or TTI.</p>	<p>The TAMRF provides this service for projects that are administered by the TAMRF. For projects that will be administered by the HSC, PIs have the option to have the TAMRF assist with the budget preparation (for a fee) or the HSC VPR's Office may assist with budgets.</p>	<p>Yes. TEES' seasoned proposal administrators prepare budgets for federal, state, non-profit and private sponsors. TEES proposal administrators utilize a spreadsheet template to automatically calculate fringe, group insurance premiums and facilities and administrative costs allowing for quick and easy budget adjustments if needed. Budgets are carefully tailored to correspond with sponsor program guidelines.</p>	<p>Yes. TAMRF works closely with the PI to prepare the proposal budget and TAMRF completes and submits the budget forms to the sponsor.</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
4) Are you capable of using grants.gov and other online grant submission tools?	Yes. TAMU-RS uses Grants.gov and other online submission systems for federal, nonprofit and state sponsors.	Yes. We are regular users of both Grants.gov and NSF-Fastlane. Web grant pages we also use include eRA-Commons, NOAA Grants-on-Line, American Heart Association, TxDot, NASA-NSPIRES, etc. The on-campus tools used by TAMRF - InfoEd and TEES - EPIK are also integrated into our workflow.	Yes	The HSC is capable of utilizing grants.gov, but because the TAMRF administers all federally funded projects, it has not been necessary at this time.	Yes.	Yes. TAMRF submitted Grants.gov proposals to federal agencies since the inception of Grants.gov and we provided a TAMURF-specific Grants.gov website early on to researchers to provide guidance and tips on Grants.gov submissions.
5) What is the lead-time for grant submission?	TAMU-RS does not have a specific lead-time requirement. If electronic submission is required, we encourage submission to the sponsor the day before the due date. All proposals must be approved prior to submission.	We currently do not require a specific amount of lead time. We primarily operate on a first come basis, so we ask that you contact us early. We recognize that some opportunities have a very short time line and we work closely with the investigators to respond. Because of limited resources, we do work with those proposals that we have in-house first and consider the deadline to be met when prioritizing resources.	We prefer five days, but can respond in a day.	The HSC optimistically would like 5 working days prior to the deadline, however the HSC and the TAMRF do everything possible to submit the proposal, no matter how close to the submission deadline the proposal is received.	TEES does not have a required lead time for proposal submissions. While TEES on occasion makes same day submissions, TEES' preference is to have as much lead time as possible.	TAMRF works within the timelines available but are required to complete routing of the proposal prior to submission to the sponsor (this usually takes about four days). Some proposals can take weeks for the PI to prepare and submit and others can take one day.
6) Do you help with obtaining the required signatures or use on-line routing?	TAMU-RS assists in routing as requested. We accept fax and scanned approvals.	On-line routing is not currently used, however, we do accept both fax and scanned signatures. We request the PI obtain the unit head signature(s) and we obtain signatures from the applicable System Member's CEO and/or Director required for documentation of internal administrative approval.	The TTI RDO obtains signatures.	The HSC relies on the department to route (on paper). The TAMRF obtains signatures through electronic routing.	Yes. TEES proposals are routed electronically for approval. A routing coordinator provides assistance as needed to customize routing paths and facilitate researcher access and approval of proposals.	All of the proposals are electronically routed by TAMRF on behalf of the PI.

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
7) Do you help with obtaining any required certification?	Yes. TAMU-RS prepares all sponsor-required representations and certifications.	Yes. We provide specific agency representations and certifications, IRS determinations, insurance certifications, EO 12372 compliance with the Governor's Office, lobbying certifications, debarment/suspension, drug-free workplace, subcontracting plan, various forms of accreditation, and human resource compliance (payroll verification, age discrimination, civil rights, etc.)	Help with administrative certifications, such as lobbying, is provided by the TTI RDO.	The HSC assists with certifications on internally administered projects. The TAMRF provides necessary certifications.	Yes. TEES provides full support in this area.	Yes. Certifications and Representations are normally an awardee's responsibility so TAMRF generally complete and sign those.
8) What are your subcontract/consultant arrangements and fees?	TAMU-RS prepares and manages subawards and consulting agreements as required by the terms of the sponsored agreement. In accordance with the current indirect cost rate agreement, indirect cost is charged for the first \$25,000 of subcontracts and for the entire amount of consulting agreements unless specific sponsor regulations mandate alternative rates. A separate fee for this service is not charged by TAMU-RS.	All subcontracts are written and processed by Texas A&M AgriLife staff as direct sub-agreements with partnering organizations. Indirect costs are allocated to subcontracts per the System IDC rate agreement: i.e. the IDC rate applies only to the first \$25,000 of the subcontract unless other rules apply (limited IDC with alternate IDC base). Consultants are handled as vendors with full IDC applicable to the consultant fee. No additional fees are assessed.	Subcontracts are written and negotiated by TTI Contracts and Grants staff. Indirect costs on subcontracts are applied only to the first \$25,000 of subcontract expenditures, as determined by the TAMUS federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. There are no additional fees.	Subcontracts or consultants are rare on HSC administered projects. If present on an HSC administered project, the HSC VPR's office works closely with the department and contract administration on subcontracts/consulting agreements. This is handled by the TAMRF on all TAMRF projects.	The facilities and administrative cost rate agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) establishes the following rates for all federally sponsored projects for fiscal years ending August 31, 2008 through 2011. The rates extend to all other sponsored activities as appropriate. 46.5% for on campus organized research, 46.5% for on campus instruction, 26% for other sponsor activities, 26% for all off campus programs, 7% for (Intergovernmental Personnel Act) IPA programs: Per the facilities and administrative cost rate agreement with DHHS, TEES applies F&A to the first \$25,000 of each sub award.	The TAMRF does prepare and negotiate subcontracts. The fees for subcontracts are the same as for other awards and are described in the Postaward section.

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
III) Postaward:						
<p>1) What are the fees for your service and how are they calculated?</p>	<p>TAMU-RS charges 15% of indirect cost earned for all core and non-core services. This rate, as opposed to a percent of direct expenses, was established by collaboration with the Council of Deans to respond to specific needs expressed by the colleges. It was calculated based on a maximum recovery of 3% of direct expenditures.</p>	<p>Research Administration is a part of the IDC rate. No separate fees are charged. These are covered by the IDC retained by the AgriLife Administration.</p>	<p>TTI does not collect a fee for post-award services; however these costs are included in the TAMUS federally negotiated indirect cost rate of 46.5% of modified direct costs.</p>	<p>The HSC pays the TAMRF a fee of 7.49% of direct expenditures for research administrative services. This fee is reviewed and adjusted annually. The HSC does not charge a fee for internally administered projects.</p>	<p>TEES takes the direct cost of a project and increases that amount by the applicable F&A rate (46.5%) to account for indirect costs (IDC). The total IDC received by TEES is generally divided as follows: 25% TEES, 16% Principal Investigator, 59% Unit/Department.</p>	<p>The methodology for determining the rates that the TAMRF charges for its services was initially implemented in FY2007 as a result of a series of meetings with representatives within the Texas A&M University System. The representatives formed a group referred to as the Cost Study Committee. The System Members represented on the committee included Texas A&M University (TAMU) also representing Texas A&M at Galveston (TAMUG), Texas AgriLife Research, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), The Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC) and The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS). Currently the committee does not have a representative from TAMUS. The Committee developed a fee for service cost model that is based on core services and volume of activity managed by the TAMRF for each System Member. A basic principal of this model is that System Members with the higher volume of "direct research expenditures" administered by the TAMRF are charged at a lower rate. In FY09 the effective rate is eliminated and individual rates will be applied for proposal processing and post award operations. A proposal processing fee of \$755 will be charged for each submission. Expenditures categorized as scholarships, tuition, equipment, and cash balance accounts will be charged at a flat fee of 2%, as fewer resources are required to manage these types of expenditures. With regard to sub-awards, expenditures less than or equal to \$500K per sub award will be subject to the post-award rate applicable to each System Member. Expenditures that exceed \$500K per sub award will not be subject to the service fee. The remaining direct research expenditures will be charged at the rate applicable to each System Member as follows: TAMUS - 8.21%; TAMU/TAMUG - 5.47%; AgriLife Research - 7.63%; HSC - 6.48%; TTI - 7.92%; TEES 8.21%; and PVAMU 8.21%.</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
<p>2) How are grants from sponsors that do not pay indirect costs, or limit the amount of indirect costs, handled? For example, who pays the administrative costs?</p>	<p>TAMU-RS uses a percent of indirect cost earned to cover administrative costs. The rate was based on an assessment of the distribution of indirect cost rates in the TAMU-RS portfolio and agreed to by all colleges.</p>	<p>Grants from sponsors that do not pay IDC or pay a limited IDC are handled the same way as grants with full IDC. There is no separate charge to the unit.</p>	<p>TTI policy does not allow for reductions to the federally approved rate, unless the sponsor's written guidelines limit F&A recovery. Any exceptions to the use of the negotiated rate will require a statement of explanation to be included in the routing documentation indicating the benefits to the System and the State of Texas that justify cost sharing a portion of the F&A costs of a particular program and must have CEO, or designee, approval.</p>	<p>The submitting department has the choice of whether they want to administer the project internally or run it through the TAMRF. The administrative costs are indirectly passed along to the submitting college or institute.</p>	<p>TEES absorbs the administrative costs of grants with no indirect costs. For projects utilizing the 26% off-campus rate, TEES generally adjusts the IDC distribution enabling TEES to earn the same return as if the project utilized the full Facilities and Administrative Cost (F&A) rate of 46.5%. In such cases, the distribution is as follows: 43.75% TEES, 12% Principal Investigator, 44.25% Unit/Department.</p>	<p>The TAMRF provides the same level of service and commitment to all projects regardless of the amount of indirect costs recovered. Projects with less than full indirect cost rate normally require the same level of effort that a project with full indirect cost requires. Hence, the TAMRF charges its service fee as a percent of direct expenditures. The Cost Study Committee felt that charging a percent of direct research expenditures for the TAMRF's service fees was the most equitable method of charging all projects. In regards to "who pays the administrative costs?" as stated earlier, the recovered indirect costs are returned to the System Member and decisions regarding the allocation of those funds are decided by the System Member.</p>
<p>3) What are the travel policies and per diem rates? Is there any difference in these policies for state versus federal funding?</p>	<p>There are differences in travel policies based on the source of funding and sponsor requirements. General revenue funds are administered under the State of Texas travel policy and sponsored agreements follow TAMU's travel policy for local funds. Under the local funds policy, travel on sponsored agreements is not subject to the State Management Travel Policy. Actual hotel costs may be reimbursed with receipts and costs for meals may be reimbursed without receipts up to the federal per diem guideline for the location. (Meal receipts are required if a single meal is \$75 or more.)</p>	<p>AgriLife follows the State of Texas travel policy. OMB Circular A-21, section 48, states that a grant recipient should follow its internal travel policy. Policy allows for full reimbursement if a conference hotel is used, if lower air fare rates are available (except for overseas flights), etc.</p>	<p>TTI follows the State of Texas travel regulations on all directly-administered projects. Projects handled by the TAMRF follow their travel policy, in which there may be some differences.</p>	<p>The HSC projects administered by the TAMRF use the TAMRF travel policies and per diem rates. Projects administered internally follow state travel guidelines.</p>	<p>For in-state travel on state funds, the maximum amount for lodging is \$85.00 and \$36.00 for meals Any overage in these amounts is paid from non-sponsored project accounts. For out-of-state travel on state funds, and all travel on local and research funds, TEES can use the Federal per diem rates for meals and lodging. TEES accounts that follow research guidelines can receive actual hotel costs at the single room rate. Current Federal per diem rates are published on the GSA website at the following link: http://www.gsa.gov/HP/01Trvl/perdiem</p>	<p>The TAMRF travel policies are flexible but are subject to any restrictions in the sponsor's agreement. The TAMRF does not have restrictions requiring a specific airline, hotel or car rental agency to be used. TAMRF does offer a maximum per diem rate of \$152 that may be used and does not require receipts for lodging or meals. Some examples of service levels that the TAMRF provides regarding travel include:* Travel advances issued within four business days. * Travel reimbursements issued within ten business days. * Errors or questions on the travel reimbursement are first attempted to be resolved via a phone call or e-mail. * Emergency checks can be issued within an hour.</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
<p>4) What are the ordering policies? Is there any difference in these policies for state versus federal funding?</p>	<p>Currently, TAMU departments are authorized to purchase supplies and services costing less than \$5,000. For purchases exceeding this limit, requisitions are processed through Strategic Sourcing. However, there are differences in purchasing requirements based on the source of funding and sponsor requirements. In addition, State law exempts state bidding requirements for purchases to be paid from external contracts and grants. The Office of the Vice President for Research is working with Strategic Sourcing to implement this exemption for sponsored projects.</p>	<p>Purchasing follows the same policy regardless of source of funds. Pro cards are issued for purchases less than \$5,000, \$5,001 to \$10,000 requires, at a minimum, verbal bids, and anything over \$10,000 has to be handled by the central purchasing office. They will take care of getting bids, checking for suspension and debarment, and placing the order.</p>	<p>TTI follows the State of Texas purchasing guidelines for all funding sources, including fixed price contracts with federal sponsors. Items or services costing \$5,000 or less do not require going out for bids. TTI uses the Texas A&M Strategic Sourcing and Purchasing department for the purchase of goods and services in excess of \$5,000.</p>	<p>No differences</p>	<p>In general, departments may make requisitions up to \$5,000.00 and over. Requisitions in excess of \$10,000 require a formal invitation to bid. TEES utilizes a number of existing contracts to make the procurement process as easy and efficient as possible. If a vendor contract or other document requires a TEES signature or approval internal contract review may be needed. Requisitions involving Federal funds are handled much the same as other requisitions. There are, however, some variations. For example, Federal requisitions require the inclusion of specific language in bids and purchase orders. There are also additional requirements in the case of capital equipment purchases.</p>	<p>The TAMRF does not have separate purchasing policies for state versus federal funded projects. However, there are times when a sponsor will have specific purchasing requirements and in those situations the TAMRF will comply with the sponsor's requirements. Below are some specifics regarding purchasing policies for more details please visit our website at http://rf-web.tamu.edu.</p> <p>Delegated Spending Limits – PI's have delegated authority to make purchases of equipment, supplies, and services under \$5,000. – For purchases that exceed the delegated spending limit of \$5,000, requisitions must be submitted to the RF purchasing office.</p> <p>Vendor Selection and Purchase Orders – Upon receipt of the requisition, RF has flexibility as to the vendor selection. We often use state purchasing contracts or other negotiated vendor contracts in order to obtain the best pricing.</p> <p>Emergency Orders – RF has ability to prepare and send purchase orders the same day as receipt of a signed requisition from the PI.</p> <p>Sole Source Purchases – RF purchasing office is able to approve requests for sole source purchases upon receipt of an adequate justification from the PI and a signed quote from the vendor.</p>
<p>5) Do you deal with compliance issues?</p>	<p>Yes. Compliance issues are coordinated with the Office of Research Compliance and the Research Policy Office. Compliance requirements are reviewed during proposal preparation. Conflict of interest issues are resolved prior to award and other approvals are confirmed prior to the establishment of the account.</p>	<p>Compliance issues are handled by the Deputy Director for Texas AgriLife Research. Any investigations would be handled in conjunction with the VPR's office and the appropriate compliance office.</p>	<p>TTI project administrators perform both contractual and financial compliance issues.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes. TEES' Office of Risk and Compliance provides assistance and guidance to researchers and staff in a number of compliance areas including: human subjects, animal subjects, export controls, nepotism, rDNA - infectious biohazards, safety training, hazardous chemicals, project safety analysis.</p>	<p>Yes. Compliance issues are confirmed at the Postaward stage but usually initiated at the Preaward stage, e.g., Financial Conflict of Interest, if reported, is managed prior to award, IRB, IBC, and IACUC approvals must be in place prior to expending funds.</p>

Fact Finding Questions	Units/System Member					
	Texas A&M University (TAMU-RS)	Texas AgriLife Research (AgriLife)	Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)	Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC)	Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES)	Texas A&M Research Foundation (TAMRF)
6) What type of accounting system is used?	<p>TAMU-RS uses FAMIS as an accounting system. An internal database is used for monitoring awards and proposals. In addition, the TAMUS data warehouse is used for reporting.</p>	<p>We use FAMIS. We encourage the units to provide access to the PI to his/her projects either at the account or the support account level for access to the most up to date information. This will change once the new Research Administration System is in place.</p>	<p>TTI uses the Financial Accounting Management Information System *(FAMIS) for accounting and ORACLE for management information and various reporting needs.</p>	<p>The HSC and the TAMRF both use the FAMIS accounting system; however, each keeps separate accounting records.</p>	<p>TEES has developed and utilizes its own finance and accounting system known as Epik. TEES researchers can utilize TEES' password protected Epik Portal to manage research projects and view information on contract negotiation progress, financial reports, travel and purchase vouchers, project property and other useful information.</p>	<p>The TAMRF uses FAMIS for its accounting system.</p>
7) How is effort currently reported and monitored?	<p>Project payroll reports are certified monthly by the Principal Investigator. Key personnel requirements are monitored by comparing budgeted salaries to expensed salaries. TAMU-RS is participating in committees with faculty, staff and other research offices to develop an on-line certification system for effort reporting.</p>	<p>Currently AgriLife has an in-house program that pulls 100% of the effort from the Payroll system for all individuals paid through the a workstation. The reports are produced monthly, on paper, and are sent to the units for approval. We request the principal investigator sign for himself and his/her employees.</p>	<p>Effort is currently certified by the PI of the research project after the fact each month for all employees working on his/her project. The Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-21 requires after the fact certification performed by each employee working on (or having the potential to work on) federally sponsored projects.</p>	<p>Federal projects undergo payroll verification. There is a new time and effort reporting system being developed for the entire TAMU System.</p>	<p>TEES monitors the effort of key personnel on research projects by monitoring the salary support proposed against the salary support paid to each key person on a research project. TEES is currently working with Texas A&M University, the Texas A&M Univeristy System and other research administration offices in College Station to develop a uniform electronic process to certify and monitor time and effort.</p>	<p>Currently, TAMUS does not have time and effort reporting system that monitors 100% effort on all projects. The TAMRF is a member of the TAMU Time and Effort Reporting and Budgeting of Sponsored Projects Committee. The committee is developing TAMU rules and procedures that will assist the University in implementing an effective Time and Effort Reporting System.</p>