

Research Grants and Contracts Project Manager

Job Description

The Role

Job title: Research Grants and Contracts Project Manager

Department: Innovation and Learning Directorate

Responsible to: Director, Innovation and Learning

Location: Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester

Salary: Grade 8: £38,784 - £46,049 per annum

Hours: 35 hours per week

Term: Permanent

Relationships with:

Internal: Academic staff, Innovation & Learning directorate, Finance directorate.

External: Research Funders, Collaborating Institutions, Industry & Commercial Partners, Auditors, Professional Networks and Sector Bodies.

About the Innovation and Learning Directorate

The Innovation and Learning Directorate delivers key elements of the RAU Strategy 2023–2028 by leading core academic-enabling services across International and Partnerships, Learning and Teaching, Research and Knowledge Exchange, Learning Technology, Laboratories, and Library and Archives. It acts as the University's professional interface with external partners, supports academic staff and researchers, and enriches the curriculum across the UK campus and international partners. The Directorate works across all RAU departments, contributes to University-wide committees and strategic projects, and plays a central role in advancing the RAU's goals of Quality, Reach and Sustainability.

Role Purpose

The purpose of this role is to provide expert guidance, coordination and hands-on support for academics throughout the entire research project funding lifecycle. The postholder will work with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that grant applications are well-developed, accurate, and competitive by leading on bid preparation, budget development, and compliance with funder requirements. A key function of the role is to coordinate the end-to-end submission process, maintaining effective communication with applicants and partners to deliver high-quality proposals on time. The role also safeguards the University's interests by helping to review, negotiate, and finalise research contracts and collaboration agreements, ensuring that risks are managed and contractual terms are favourable.

Once projects are awarded, the postholder will continue working with the lead academic, finance team and other stakeholders to provide robust post-award financial and project management support to ensure successful project delivery. This includes setting up and maintaining project accounts, monitoring budgets, approving expenditure, and overseeing staffing requests to ensure compliance with funder and University policies. The postholder plays a crucial role in financial stewardship by preparing claims, submitting funder financial statements, reconciling timesheets, and ensuring that all reporting obligations are met. A key outcome of the role is the smooth closure of projects, ensuring that all financial, contractual, and administrative requirements have been fulfilled.

Key Responsibilities

Pre-Award Research Grant Responsibilities

1. Provide comprehensive support to academics throughout the pre-award stage of research funding.
2. Coordinate the preparation and submission of grant applications, ensuring accuracy, completeness, and timely delivery.
3. Develop, review, and approve project budgets in line with funder requirements and internal financial policies.
4. Ensure full compliance with funder rules, eligibility criteria, and documentation standards.
5. Coordinate the end-to-end submission process, maintaining clear communication with internal stakeholders, applicants and research partners.
6. Review, negotiate, and finalise research contracts and collaboration agreements to secure the best contractual position for the University.

Post-Award Research Grant Responsibilities

7. Project manage and prioritise a portfolio of awarded research projects, providing expert post-award support to academics.
8. Set up, activate, and maintain project accounts in accordance with institutional and funder procedures.
9. Authorise expenditure and monitor budgets to ensure costs remain within approved limits and comply with funder and University policies.
10. Review, approve, and process staffing requests and appointments for research projects.
11. Reconcile timesheets and ensure accurate allocation of staff time to funded activities.
12. Prepare and submit financial claims, invoices, and funder financial statements, including portal submissions where required.

13. Reconcile and close completed projects, ensuring all financial, reporting, and contractual obligations have been met.

Line Management

14. Line management of the Research and Knowledge Exchange administrator(s).

General responsibilities:

- The University is committed to equality of opportunity. All staff are required to comply with current legislation, University policies and good practice guidance.
- All staff are required to act in a way that safeguards the health and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at all times. The post holder must be familiar with and adhere to appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance and participate in related mandatory/statutory training. Managers have a responsibility to ensure their team members understand their individual responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- All staff are required to participate in the University appraisal process and should ensure they are familiar with the process and plan time to prepare for their appraisal. Following the appraisal, staff are expected to undertake in any necessary learning and development and work towards the objectives that have been set.
- The University expects staff to attend any training designated as mandatory and to undertake learning and development activities to support their role. Managers must facilitate learning and development within their teams.
- It is a condition of employment that staff will not disclose any information obtained in the course of their duties other than to those entitled to receive it. The post holder must ensure that the confidentiality of personal data remains secure and that restricted information or highly restricted information to which they have access remains confidential during and after their employment at Royal Agricultural University. All staff must undergo appropriate data protection training as required.
- All absence from work must be reported in accordance with the University's absence procedures and recorded on iTrent.
- The University acknowledges its responsibility to provide a safe, smoke free environment, to its employees, service users and visitors. It is the policy of the University not to allow smoking on University premises other than in specifically designated areas.

University Values

As a University we have chosen five values to underpin our learning community. These are the values which we will all work by and for which we want the RAU to be known. We are:

- Collaborative - we believe in the power of working together. We are stronger as a community of practice - inspiring each other, identifying shared goals, and providing reciprocal support leads to greater success.

- Open-Minded - we are receptive to new ideas and we value the diversity of experiences and skills. We are committed to listening to everyone across the RAU community.
- Resourceful - we adopt creative approaches to achieve our goals while setting higher standards, promoting professionalism and sustainability.
- Responsible - individually and collectively we take accountability for our actions working with integrity to achieve the highest ethical standards.
- Inclusive - we acknowledge the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and are committed to maintaining an environment that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

Person Specification

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
Qualifications		
Educated to Degree Level or equivalent qualification	E	A
Membership of relevant Professional Association, e.g. Association of Research Managers & Administrators	D	A
Knowledge, Experience and Skills		
Knowledge of Research Funding and Compliance. Strong understanding of academic research funders and funding processes, including UKRI, EU Horizon, charitable organisations such as the Leverhulme Trust, and industry sponsors. Skilled in interpreting funder requirements, eligibility criteria, contract terms, and compliance frameworks to ensure adherence and optimise funding success.	E	A, B
Experience in Pre- and Post-Award Grant Management. Demonstrable experience supporting research applications, developing budgets, coordinating submissions, and managing awarded projects, including financial monitoring, claims, and reporting.	E	A, B
Contract Review and Negotiation Skills. Proven ability to review, interpret, and negotiate research contracts, collaboration agreements, and funding terms to protect the institution's interests.	E	A, B
Financial and Analytical Skills. Strong financial acumen with the ability to prepare, review, and monitor budgets, analyse financial	E	A, B

Requirements The post holder must be able to demonstrate:	Essential or Desirable	Measured By A) Application Form B) Interview C) Presentation
information, reconcile project accounts, and ensure accurate expenditure control.		
Experience of working collaboratively the ability to work with broad range of internal and external teams to achieve delivery	E	A, I, P
Experience of stakeholder engagement, building successful relationships and networks at all levels	E	A, I, P
Project management experience, understanding core principles and processes required for effective project management and delivery	E	A, I
Excellent communication skills, oral, written and presentational, ideally with experience in writing reports and papers	E	A, I, P

Application Procedure

If you are interested in applying for this role, please send:

- University [Application Form](#) together with the [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) available on the University website www.rau.ac.uk) – you may attach your up to date CV if you wish to add additional information.
- Details of two referees who must be people who can comment authoritatively on you as a person and as an employee in relation to the level of the post, and must include your current or most recent employer or their representative.
- Please forward to the HR Team, Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 6JS or via email to jobs@rau.ac.uk stating where you saw the advert for the role
- Informal enquiries can be made to Dr Esther Wilkinson, Director of Innovation and Learning – (email Esther.wilkinson@rau.ac.uk)
- Closing date:** 25 January 2026 with **Interviews on:** 18/19/20 February 2026.
- We acknowledge receipt of all applications within two working days. If you do not receive an email from us after submitting your application, please let us know by sending a new email **without any attachments** to Human.Resources@rau.ac.uk so we can check if your application has reached us.
- Should you be selected for interview please be aware that we are unable to reimburse interview expenses.

The RAU is an equal opportunities employer and we particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates as they are under-represented within the RAU at this level