

## 16 – External Funding

### Action Item Template Response

#### General Action Item Information

Lead Division/Office: Pervasive Technology Institute

Action Item Number: 16

Action Item Short Name: External Funding

Dependencies with other EP Action Items: 3a, 4

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#### I. DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS ACTION.

During the past 10 years, the Office of the Vice President for Information Technology & CIO has amassed a strong record of taking leadership or partnering roles in contracts and grants from federal, state, and private sources. IU should continue its aggressive pursuit of external sources of funding that enhance IU's IT capabilities and advance the missions of the university. Many opportunities for IT funding may be embedded in disciplinary research that calls for proposals for improving instruction or cyberinfrastructure.

Action 16 calls for OVPIT to lead and expand its efforts to effectively partner with academic units, campuses, administrative units, or individual investigators for external funding opportunities. This role has been delegated to PTI - a collaborative initiative that reports administratively to OVPIT and includes OVPIT, UITS, School of Informatics, and the Maurer School of Law as current formal partners. Because of its collaborative structure, PTI is well suited to play a pivotal role in this activity. (Indeed, such a role is set out explicitly as regards IT-centric research in the proposal submitted by President McRobbie to the Lilly Endowment to create PTI.)

Grants have a variety of roles within the university. One of the critical roles of grant funding is to extend the reach and impact of IU research, scholarship, and creative activities. All grants do this, but if one accepts the contention that IU faculty are among the best in the world, then it follows that IU should pursue and promote very large grants - such as NSF Science and Technology Center grants and NIH NCRG grants - since such grants by virtue of their overall impact help steer the national research agenda. At the same time, as stated by one of the leaders of the Research Technologies Division of UITS, "Each researcher's work is the most important to them - that's why they do it." Implementation of Action 16 thus must strive to achieve a balance between supporting all research, and in particular supporting the pursuit of research grants that bring large research centers, major facilities, and educational centers to IU.

Within Action 16, there are several subcomponents, as follows:

- 16a. Support for IT-related Proposals and Grants
- 16b. Research Commons
- 16c. Optimizing Support of Research Through Peer Review
- 16d. IU's National Presence and Research Competitiveness

These items all fall under the general category of financial stewardship in that they strive to

achieve excellent stewardship of two resources:

- Stewardship of the talents of IU researchers, by ensuring that these talents are as fully utilized as possible
- Stewardship of university and state funds, by ensuring that they are leveraged to the greatest extent possible via use of funds from federal granting agencies, vendors, industrial partners, and entities seeking to engage IU in research and development contracts.

## **II. WHAT ARE THE POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR PLANS?**

There are few policy implications of these plans. The proposal in sub plan 16c is a significant change in practice, in that the proposed actions deal head on and openly with the gap between resource availability and ability of the university community to consume those resources. As pointed out above, usage is metered already - more or less through the outcomes of persistence of graduate students in a process somewhat akin to natural selection. A key point here is that the change in practice is designed to provide better support overall for IU researchers and scholars and to make best use of the resources available locally and nationally.

There are relatively significant changes in practice generally implied by this plan for Action 16. Overall, this plan calls for continuing and increasing the targeted and purposeful investment of effort in extending the research and scholarly possibilities afforded IU researchers through pursuit of external funding. A more systematic effort is proposed, involving the traditional approach of faculty peer review in directing activities. This plan also calls generally for actions that will enable IU researchers to win more major grants such as funding for NSF Science and Technology Centers and NIH National Centers for Research Resources. Overall, this action renders into practice the practical steps that follow from a belief that IU faculty are among the best. With that the case, we aim to aid and support them in pursuit of external funding that extends the research capabilities and impact of their work.

**I.**

**II.**

## **III. IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS.**

- OVPIT, UITS
- Vice President for Research
- School of Informatics
- School of Medicine
- College of Arts and Sciences
- Schools of Public Health (currently being formed)