



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

IMPLEMENTATION GRANT FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

Purpose:

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) is requesting proposals from accredited institutions of higher education to implement a master's degree program in university research administration.

Award: NCURA will offer a \$40,000 Implementation Grant. The award will be for twelve (12) months beginning May 1, 2010.

Background: NCURA is a non-profit professional development organization dedicated to the continuing education of university research administrators. Founded in 1959, NCURA is a 501(c)(3) higher education organization of individuals involved in the administration of sponsored research at colleges, universities and teaching hospitals throughout the US and abroad. The organization has over 6,700 members from over 900 institutions and continues to expand its membership by an estimated 200 individuals each year. In addition, NCURA is expanding its international collaborations with the European Research Managers Association.

NCURA has a strategic goal of advancing the professionalism of the field of research administration by providing a pathway for its members and others in the research community to obtain a Master's Degree in Research Management. In seeking the creation of a master's degree in research administration, NCURA considered the following:

Demand:

In September 2008, a survey of NCURA membership indicated a strong demand for a master's degree program. Of the 885 respondents, 60% (over 500) expressed an interest in an online graduate degree in research administration. In addition to data from the NCURA survey, anecdotal information from federal government employees also indicate a strong interest in a graduate program in research administration.

Need:

Although no formal survey has been conducted of potential employers (universities, government agencies, hospitals, and other non-profits), there is direct and indirect evidence suggesting significant employer need for formally trained research administrators. A recent article on the importance of the CRA (certified research administrator) credential indicated that employers sought employees with formal training in research administration. A recent dissertation (Roberts, T.J. "Perceptions of Research Administrators on the Value of Certification." PhD diss., University of Central Florida, 2005. Abstract in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 68/08: 2799.) found the same result and noted the growing need for formal training. These formal studies along with the rapid expansion of the profession of research administration provide strong evidence of employer need for formally trained individuals.

Topical Areas of Study:

NCURA believes the following areas of study are important elements for the development of a graduate degree program:

- Major Issues in Pre-Award Administration
- Major Issues in Post-Award Administration
- Legal and Ethical Compliance
- Budgeting and Project Management
- Grants Fiscal Management
- Legal and Regulatory Environment
- Contracts and Subcontracts
- Auditing
- Facilities and Administration Costs
- Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer
- Organizational Models

Distance Learning Formats:

NCURA believes that the majority of student demand for a master's program comes from working adults. Therefore, it requires applicant universities to include distance learning formats for the delivery of the program, not only to accommodate the needs of working professionals but also to address the demands of learners from across the nation.

Role of NCURA: NCURA can offer grant recipients support in terms of information about the profession of research administration, literature on the body of knowledge, support in the promotion of the degree program, and access to senior members of the profession who have demonstrated instructional skills and who can serve as adjunct faculty, as internship supervisors, and as final project/thesis committee members.

Application Procedures: Narratives for Implementation Grants should not exceed 15 double spaced pages (one inch margins, 12 point type). Proposals should address the following elements:

1. **Planning Process:** Describe the process employed to develop the implementation plan for the proposed master's program. Applicants who have received an NCURA Planning Grant may simply refer to its final report for that grant.
2. **Approval Process:** Describe the process by which the proposed master's degree will be reviewed and approved by the applicant's governing body along with an expected timeline for that process.
3. **Plan of Study:** Describe the proposed curriculum for the master's degree including student learning goals, the total credit hour requirements, a list of required and elective courses, exit requirements, plan of assessment, and admission and retention standards. Note that course lists and/or catalog descriptions can be included as supplementary material, outside of the 15 page limit. However, any substantive discussion of the courses should be included within the proposal narrative. In other words, the use of supplementary material should not be used to get around the page limitation.
4. **Enrollment:** Discuss the enrollment expectation and capacity for the proposed program.
5. **Distance Learning Format:** Describe the distance learning formats for the delivery of the program.
6. **Resources:** Discuss the resources needed to implement and sustain this program including a description of the faculty needed to deliver the program.
7. **Business Plan:** The proposal should discuss how the university proposes to sustain the program.
8. **Promotion/Publicity:** Describe how the program will be publicized and promoted.
9. **Budget:** The proposal should include a detailed budget and justification. There are no specifically allowable or unallowable costs (i.e., indirect costs are allowable if the institution feels they are appropriate), the important issue is that the budget should support the scope of work. The budget and justification are not part of the 15 page limit.

Application Deadline and Submission: The deadline for submission of proposals is 5:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time, on **March 31, 2010**.

Proposals must be submitted by e-mail in PDF format (version 7 or higher) to:

proposals@ncura.edu

Evaluation Criteria: Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- The quality and rigor of the proposed Plan of Study,
- The extent and use of distance learning formats,
- The accessibility of the program to part-time and geographically bound students,
- The capacity of the program to meet enrollment demand and need,
- The quality of the Business Plan,
- The thoroughness of the planning for a degree program, and
- The extent to which the proposal meets NCURA's goals for a master's in research administration.

Reporting: Award recipient will submit a final report by April 30, 2011.

Questions should be directed to: proposals@ncura.edu