USU Office of Research and Graduate Studies

RGS Strategic Goals

- Expand success of USU's graduate students.
- Increase competitiveness in contracts/grants.
- Increase individual researcher capacity and productivity.
- Enhance graduate and undergraduate research program.

USU Research Foundation
Research Council
Business Services
Graduate Council
Academic Departments
Communications

School of Graduate Studies
Research Development
Sponsored Programs
Integrity and Compliance
Grad & Undergrad Research
Proposal Development
Institutional Review Board
Environmental Health & Safety
Animal Care & Use LARC/IACUC
Research Computing

Utah State University
Research Integrity and Compliance provides USU faculty, employees, and students with the training, information, and support required to meet USU’s high ethical standards in the conduct of its research, and assists in achieving compliance with federal and state regulations and USU policy. Research Integrity and Compliance hosts the Research Scholars Certification Program (RSCP). The RSCP consists of a Research Scholars Orientation each year, and two Forums. These events, along with associated online training, constitute USU’s Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training, which is required of all NSF-funded students and post-doctoral fellows, all NIH-funded individuals, all NIH trainees, and all USU doctoral candidates. Research Integrity and Compliance sponsors a New Faculty Mentoring Workshop each year. Recognized faculty mentors share their experience in establishing and maintaining effective mentoring programs. Research Integrity and Compliance also tracks completion of Research Financial and Administrative Series Training (RFAST), required of all investigators who conduct sponsored research, as well as completion of Conflict of Interest (COI) disclosures and management plans for all faculty through the iComply system. USU’s Federal Compliance Manager acts as Director of the division, and provides administrative support to ethics review committees, faculty, and administrators in understanding and responding to federal regulations and guidance related to their research activities.
Sponsored Program Accounting (SPA) provides post-award fiscal and administrative support to the campus community to ensure regulatory compliance with federal, state, private, and university policies. SPA establishes and closes out indexes for sponsored projects, matching indexes, and Facility and Administrative indexes. SPA prepares and submits, in accordance with award requirements, all financial reports and billings; external reports to comply with governmental and national statistical reporting requirements; and internal reports to provide meaningful information to administration, faculty, and staff. SPA prepares and distributes Time and Effort quarterly salary distribution reports and the annual Time and Effort Certifications reports. In conjunction with the Controller’s Office and the Sponsored Program Division, SPA provides campus training on federal and state sponsored project regulations and university policies, which includes newsletters providing in-depth information on research topics. SPA serves as the audit liaison for government and independent auditors.
The USU Libraries provide specialized databases for each discipline to assist with research. Access is provided to large, multi-disciplinary databases, such as Web of Science, Scopus, and JSTOR, as well as scholarly databases and resources focused on the research of a specific discipline. Most of the Libraries’ article and research collections, excluding the online book catalog, either contain the electronic full text of all resources in the collection or automatically link out to the full text if it is available. PDF copies from journal articles and book chapters held in the USU Libraries’ print collection can also be requested. The robust Interlibrary Loan program can quickly and efficiently obtain many resources not currently owned. The research output of USU faculty (and students) can be found in Digital Commons, the USU institutional repository. Each discipline has a designated subject librarian who specializes in the resources of the particular field. The subject librarian can help with locating available resources for research, including investigating options for purchasing necessary materials that the Libraries currently do not own. The subject librarian can also help with any questions and issues that arise relating to library materials and services, in addition to providing research instruction to students.
The Office of Research and Graduate Studies offers a variety of internal seed grants to faculty in an effort to build USU’s research capability and increase extramural funding for scholarly activities. The Grant-Writing Experience through Mentorship (GEM) program provides funding to enhance the proposal development skills of new investigators through one-on-one research and grant-writing interaction with successful research mentors (1-year funding of up to $10,000). The Research Catalyst (RC) program provides funding to help investigators develop new initiatives or directions in their discipline (1-year funding of up to $20,000). The Seed Program to Advance Research Collaborations (SPARC) provides funding to catalyze development of interdisciplinary research teams and large-scale projects that involve more than one department, research center, college, or institution (1-year funding of up to $35,000). There are two competition cycles per year for the GEM, RC, and SPARC programs, with applications due on April 15 and October 15. The Capital Equipment Grant program is an annual competition for funding to purchase capital equipment to support research and creative activities at USU. The program receives an annual allocation of $250,000 from the recovered F&A pool and requires a 1:1 match from applicants. Submissions are accepted March – April 15.
Faculty can access the official records for their sponsored projects through the Researcher Dashboard, a tool created specifically for researchers to view their expenditure, proposal, and award information quickly, efficiently, and in real time. The information contained in the Dashboard is automatically updated every evening, and faculty members are able to review their proposals, awards, and associated account balances. Additionally, faculty can search prior awards at USU to find potential collaborators and to seek out other faculty with success in acquiring funding from specific agencies and programs.
The Proposal Development Division equips researchers with the training, resources, and assistance they need to be more competitive in seeking external funding for their scholarly and creative pursuits. Proposal Development is home to the Funding Finder database – a USU-built and maintained repository of external funding opportunities, graduate and undergraduate fellowship/scholarship opportunities, internal seed grant announcements, and nomination calls for faculty prizes. The Proposal Development Specialists, assigned to specific colleges, provide researchers with assistance in the development and submission of proposals for external funding consideration. Proposal Development offers faculty and graduate student grant writing seminars several times per year, providing participants with core grant writing training. The Proposal Writing Institute, developed and presented by the Proposal Development staff, is an annual, intensive grant writing workshop in which a small, competitively selected number of researchers are guided step-by-step through the development of a specific proposal each participant brings to the institute. Proposal Development manages the limited submission process, the internal seed grant program, and provides access to the DMPTool, an online resource to aid researchers in the development of data management plans for proposals.
The Office of Research and Graduate Studies offers a number of resources to help faculty be successful in attracting high-caliber graduate students to their programs. The Graduate Student Recruitment Toolkit provides a summary of methods and RGS resources to help increase the quality, quantity, and diversity of graduate students. The Toolkit includes a summary of best practices compiled from other research universities to help design an effective recruitment strategy for programs, and a section that details specific USU resources to help implement a recruitment strategy. The Graduate Student Recruitment Grant program provides up to $1,500 annually to support program activities that directly contribute to the recruitment of a highly qualified, diverse graduate student community. Preference will be given to departments and programs that demonstrate efforts to recruit doctoral students or underrepresented groups to their disciplines, and to efforts that leverage other funds. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, bringing prospective students to the USU campus, visits to out-of-state recruitment fairs or professional conferences, or development of recruiting materials. Departments are eligible for one recruitment grant per year.
As a division of Commercialization and Regional Development, Commercial Enterprises provides a one-stop-shop to identify, secure, and propagate economic value by leveraging USU’s intellectual capital and physical assets. Commercial Enterprises team members have valuable experience in business development and entrepreneurship. Directors of business development have applied knowledge of industry internal operations, management concepts, and intellectual property protection vital to success. Commercial Enterprises facilitates the development of university intellectual property into commercial endeavors with industry, venture capitalists, and commercial partners. Intellectual Property Services helps USU faculty and staff manage and protect intellectual property. IP Services attorneys work closely with USU and USU Research Foundation researchers to identify, protect, and commercialize USU intellectual property. The IP Services team assists and supports USU employees as they disclose their novel technologies and prepare them for the marketplace.
The Environmental Health and Safety Division (EH&S) is a service organization that provides expertise and advice for compliance with federal, state, and local safety and health regulations as well as current professional practices and guidelines. The goal is to prevent injury, illness, and environmental damage through the recognition, evaluation, and control of potential hazards arising from university activities. This is accomplished through services that ensure a safe and healthy environment for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors at USU and the surrounding community. Services include assisting the university in compliance with regulations and training university personnel and students in appropriate safety measures.

General areas of focus include environmental, biological, radiological, chemical, occupational, laboratory, and general health and safety. Currently, EH&S offers courses in over 20 different areas and has a video library with safety topics available for checkout.
The Institutional Review Board (IRB) supports researchers who do studies involving human participants, helping to ensure participant protection while promoting high-quality research that can provide rewards to participants and/or society. Such research might be conducted by faculty as their own scholarly work, or as research assignments for classes they teach, or by undergraduate/graduate students who are pursuing individual research projects. Individuals who conduct research involving human participants must complete an online training program provided through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). The IRB website provides a variety of resources including the USU Investigator Handbook, a list of frequently asked questions, example consent documents, tips for preparing applications, several training presentations, and information for researchers working with marginalized ethnic and cultural groups. Four IRB staff members provide additional guidance and manage the review process in conjunction with the IRB Chair and Board of 18 members. The IRB uses the online program Protis for IRB application submission, review, and protocol management. Archived forms are available on the IRB website to review the types of questions that will be asked in the Protis application.
The Research Development Division aims to enhance USU’s research portfolio by increasing the number and success of proposal submissions. Specific objectives are to increase participation in the research enterprise, encourage proposal submissions at multiple career stages, improve success of proposals submitted, match opportunities with faculty expertise, strategically plan for future funding opportunities, and develop interdisciplinary teams across campus. Research Development offers multiple services, including quarterly Faculty Research Training sessions that highlight RGS research resources. The annual Research Mentors panel provides best-practices advice from successful USU PIs in numerous disciplines and at various funding agencies. The Best Practices workshops include presentations from successful PIs nationwide and highlight their experiences in forming proposal teams and managing awarded projects. Research Development also conducts funding agency visits, interdisciplinary team-building sessions, and individual researcher mentoring.
The Laboratory Animal Research Center (LARC) provides facilities and services for researchers needing to use laboratory animals in their research projects. The university maintains animal care facilities accredited by the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC), registered with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and maintains an assurance with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), part of the Public Health Services. The LARC facilities are the only locations on campus approved to house animals associated with federally funded biomedical research. The LARC has the capability to house animals from mice and rats to goats and pigs. Other capabilities include surgery facilities, biocontainment, and behavioral areas. These facilities are available to all USU faculty members. In addition to providing housing and animal care services, the LARC and its staff can assist in providing research services and training to university personnel. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) provides oversight of all animal research at USU. Completion and approval by the Committee of an animal research protocol is required for any researcher wanting to work with animals in teaching or research, including biomedical, agricultural, and wildlife projects.
The Division of Research Computing (DoRC) manages community-supported compute, storage, and networking resources made available to all USU faculty, staff, and students. Currently, the environment contains a total of over 3,000 cores, ~500 TB of storage, and has a 10 Gbps connection to the Internet. In addition to managing the common infrastructure, the DoRC also provides software installation, support, consulting, and system administration services at no charge. Many open-source software packages are available. Licensing for the Intel and Portland group compilers is provided by DoRC and there are many additional proprietary software products available via campuswide licensing.
The Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP) oversees the administration of sponsored programs at USU and offers a range of services for faculty, staff, and students seeking external funding for research, instruction, service, and other scholarly and creative endeavors. DSP reviews and approves grant applications to ensure compliance with USU policies, sponsor requirements, and state and federal laws and regulations; negotiates award terms and facilitates post-award project management in connection with Sponsored Programs Accounting; and advises on compliance and regulatory issues. DSP also provides proposal and award reports to the Vice President for Research, Board of Trustees, and college deans as requested. The DSP website provides a variety of resources to assist researchers involved in sponsored programs, including the USU Research Guide, proposal preparation information, indirect cost documents, policies and procedures, and required internal forms. Perhaps the greatest DSP resource available is the Sponsored Program staff assigned to support specific colleges or units. DSP staff are the authorized organizational representatives when working with a sponsor and have signature authority to sign proposals and awards on behalf of USU. DSP staff are available to provide training to colleges, departments, or individual faculty as requested and welcome the opportunity to meet with a researcher to discuss a particular proposal or award.