School of Humanities

Research Incentivisation Policy

1. Background

A devolved budgetary system is in operation within the School in relation to incentivisation funding. Normally around July/August, the School confirms the non-pay budget for the proceeding financial year in discussion with the Head of College and Head of College Finance. The School budget for research incentivisation follows the College model outlined at http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/arts/research/informationforstaff/researchgrantincentivisation/

2. Allocation of budgets

In previous years, all research incentivisation budgets were allocated directly to Subject cost centres. Heads of Subject and individual PIs would then agree on the use of this funding within the Subject area. General assumptions around the use of this funding were applied, rather than a formal directive policy, placing HoSubs in a difficult position. The type of activity which this funding supported differed according to Subject and also individual PIs. This also has further affects in relation to the availability of funding to staff depending on which Subject area they are in.

Since financial year 2014-15, the School has implemented a revised policy for the allocation of incentivisation budgets which maximizes their strategic use. The context for this change is outlined below:

- To ensure School expenditure is linked to strategic objectives
- The College of Arts is the only College within the University to operate a research incentivisation policy of this type
- The low return rate in relation to staff time invested in small, centrally controlled sources of research support funding
- Increased demand from staff across the School, following feedback within the School Forum for School level support budgets
- College of Arts research income accounts for approximately 5% of the total University income
- General pressure on University / School budgets

Research incentivisation funding is therefore allocated on a strategic basis, for activities which both support the unit of assessment attached to the PI and also the wider research environment of the School, on a cross unit of assessment basis.

2.2 Model for Allocation

The current allocation model used by the College of Arts is outlined at http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/arts/research/informationforstaff/researchgrantincentivisation/

Since financial year 2014-15, the School has implemented a change to the internal allocation of funding:

- Salary recoup allocation portion and 50% of the project margin allocation is allocated directly to Heads of Subject as Subject budget holder
- 50% of the project margin allocation is reserved at School level

3. Procedure for budget allocation:

To assist with the annual planning process, the HoSA will provide a forecast of likely incentivisation budget for the forthcoming financial year, normally in May. This process allows the Head of School to be aware of the likely devolved budget from College, and also allows for forward planning with HoSubs in relation to larger budgets.
All incentivisation expenditure will be informed by the following principles:

- Funding should be utilised for the direct benefit of the UoAs in relation to staff and students
- Budget should not be used for non-pay items such as equipment
- Prioritisation of proposals which are deemed to develop current and future projects and which are capable of attracting new funding streams
- Unless in the case of funders who limit the use of DI budgets for specific purposes such as teaching buy-in, budgets should not be used to augment the financial support required for the delivery of the current research projects
- For proposals which relate to current research projects, there should be a clear case that expenditure will enhance project outcomes, e.g. generating new research outputs or developing related new projects
- Proposals which have an element of Discipline+ are strongly encouraged

The following are some examples of such activity:

- Funding of research centres
- Funding of CPD related to early career researchers
- Creation of and funding of postgraduate studentships
- Funding of fixed terms teaching posts to support the UoA to grow research income
- Funding of conference/marketing activity
- Targeted salary funding of RAs for large bid horizon scanning and or post project knowledge exchange dissemination

The following outlines the procedure for incentivisation budget allocation:

1) Allocation to Heads of Subject:
   - HoSA outlines forecast incentivisation budget to HoSubs in May
   - HoSubs and Subject PIs work together to develop a plan for the devolved incentivisation expenditure for forthcoming financial year, informed by staffing activity within the Subject
   - Budgets are confirmed by HoSA at annual budget setting update meeting with HoSubs in August/September. All budgets are approved at the discretion of the Head of School

2) School Budget:

An approval committee, including the Head of School, School Research Convenor and Head of School Administration, will act as the approval vehicle for proposals.

Informed by the principles outlined above, a call for proposals will be circulated by the School Research Convenor in November. Approved proposals will be communicated to colleagues by 1st December.

4. Management of Budgets

The process for expenditure follows the same procedures as for all School budgets. A devolved budgetary system is in operation, with budgets provided to budget holders (HoSubs) using School agreed drivers, following the initial School allocation from College.

Incentivisation budgets will be monitored as part of the standard process for School budgets. At period 6 within each financial year, projects which are deemed to be under budget and forecasting underspends to year end will be reevaluated. Clear areas with forecast budgetary underspends will then have budgets reallocated accordingly, with budgetary savings re-allocated to other School strategic activity.

A financial control matrix is in operation in order to ensure that expenditure is appropriate. This forms appropriate financial controls at ‘source’. The HoSA also provides a monthly detailed expenditure report statement to budget holders (HoSubs) which forms the basis of the analysis and investigation of material variance. Issues are reported back to the Head of School and Head of College Finance.

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