



UNIVERSITY  
OF ALBERTA

# GUIDE TO RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKFLOW APPROVALS

APRIL 2024



# Contents

The workflow approval process for New Proposal/New Project requests . . . . .	4
The workflow approval process for Amendments . . . . .	7
The workflow approval process for OE Authorization . . . . .	8
The workflow approval process for Agreement Acknowledgements . . . . .	8
The workflow approval process for Subgrants . . . . .	10
Appendix A - Definitions . . . . .	11
Appendix B - Research Approval Inquiry . . . . .	12

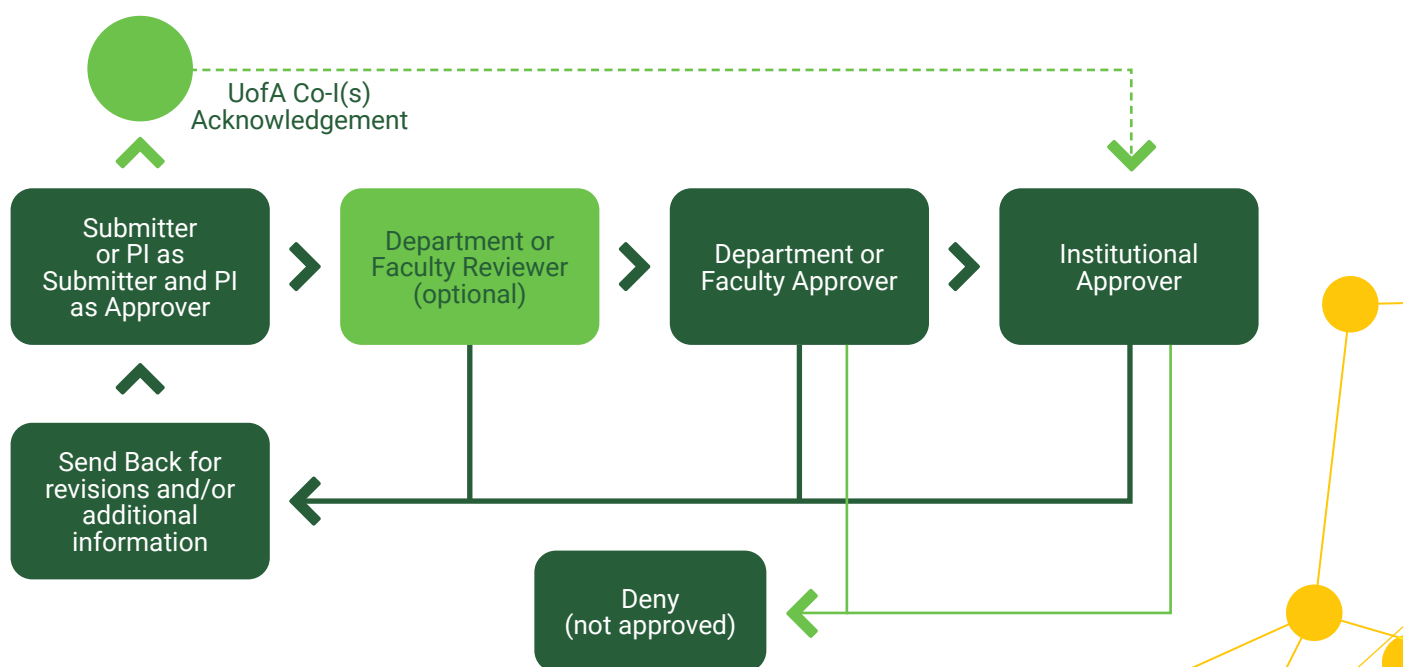
If you have questions about these processes or issues with the online approval for a specific situation, please contact a Research Administration Specialist by email to [rsoinfo@ualberta.ca](mailto:rsoinfo@ualberta.ca)

# Guide to Research Administration Workflow—Approvals

This guide provides information about the Research Administration Workflow (RAW; i.e. online approvals) process in relation to the creation of research administration requests (new proposal, amendment, agreement acknowledgement, subgrant, and OE Authorization) created via the Researcher Home Page. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of each of the individuals involved in the process.

The diagram below is a visual representation of the research administration workflow process showing each of the sequential review (optional) and approval steps, followed by detailed descriptions associated with each request type.

## Research Approval Workflow (RAW)



## The workflow approval process for New Proposal/New Project requests

1. **SUBMITTER AND/OR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):** Create and submit a new Application/Proposal/Project request (PI/Submitter) via the [Researcher Home Page](#) (RHP) - refer to [RHP Quick Reference Guide](#) and/or consult with [Research Administration Specialist](#) for help. Prior to submitting the request PI/submitter should:
  - a. Compile all sections of the Sponsor's application form into a single pdf document and attach to a new Proposal Request. A complete application includes the following:
    - I. Scope of Work
    - II. Budget (including indirect costs [ICR](#) where applicable in accordance with [Indirect Cost of Research Procedure](#))
      - i. Attach written approval from Dean if a reduction in ICR has been agreed to.
    - III. CVs/Biosketches (if required by Sponsor)
    - IV. Institutional (including those from the Office Vice-President Research, Faculty, and/or Department) and/or partner organization letters of support or commitment, where applicable.
  - b. Attach any pages/forms that need a physical signature(s) to the request page as a separate attachment and include a note in the Submission Comments section indicating who needs to sign the page/form. All required signatures that are not part of the workflow approvals should be obtained first (eg. students, supervisors or co-investigators (Co-I's), etc.).
  - c. If applicable, attach a copy of the Department/Faculty approval of Additional Resources. This includes any additional resources provided by other Departments or Faculties.
  - d. Ensure that UofA co-investigators named in the application have been added to the request page.

### By submitting the proposal request the PI or Project Holder confirms that:

1. They have read the attached documents with reference to the Research Project;
2. They are aware of the terms and conditions pursuant to which the University is agreeing to undertake the Research Project (the "University Obligations"); and
3. They are aware that, in accordance with the terms and conditions applicable to their appointment as an academic staff member to the University, their participation in the Research Project must be:
  - in accordance with the University Obligations; and
  - in accordance with all applicable University policies and procedures, including the responsibilities of a principal investigator under the Roles and Responsibilities Procedure
4. As Principal Investigator for this Proposal, it is their responsibility to review the data contained in the "Certification Info" section for correctness, and make any necessary corrections before proceeding with submission or approval of this Proposal.

#### NOTES:

- The Researcher Home Page will not permit the PI to make any changes after they have submitted a request because submission reflects the PI's approval. If changes need to be made after the form has been submitted, consult with a [Research Administration Specialist](#) via [rsinfo@ualberta.ca](mailto:rsinfo@ualberta.ca).
- Request will route to PI for approval if someone other than the PI has submitted the request.
- PI/submitter should ensure all team members meet Sponsor eligibility requirements.

## 2. DEPARTMENT/FACULTY REVIEWER (OPTIONAL) AND/OR APPROVER (REQUIRED). In accordance with [UofA policy](#) only one approval is needed at either the department or faculty level. Individual faculties can decide whether the approval happens at the department or faculty level. Prior to approving the request the department/faculty reviewer and/or approver should:

- a. Confirm the application is for research or research-related activity.
  - I. If it is not, then it should not be submitted through the Researcher Home Page and the request should be **Denied**. Non-research related documentation (at either the application or award stage) should be reviewed and approved in accordance with schedule A of the [Contract Review and Signing Authority Policy](#). If the non-research proposal is successful, a Special Purpose Project can be [requested](#) to manage the funds once all the award documentation has been finalized.
- b. Confirm PI is eligible to apply for and hold research funding for the entire proposed project period in accordance with the [Eligibility to Apply for and Hold Research Funding Policy](#). The Department/Faculty can run the following query ZRS\_GM\_PROF\_PI\_ELIGIBILITY to determine eligibility. If unsure, consult a [Research Administration Specialist](#).
  - I. If not eligible and there isn't a more appropriate person able to be the applicant, **Deny** (see Notes below) request.
  - II. If not eligible and there is a more appropriate person able to be the applicant, **Send Back** (see Note\* below) request so application can be updated and a new Proposal request be submitted.
  - III. If eligible by exception, but exception does not cover the term of the funding, contact a [Research Administration Specialist](#) for guidance.
- c. Verify that [indirect costs of research](#) (ICR) have been included where applicable in accordance with our [Indirect Cost of Research Procedure](#).
  - I. If not included and should have been, **Send back** to PI and ask them to revise the budget and resubmit their request.
  - II. If not included, confirm that Dean (or delegate) has agreed to waive the ICR.
- d. Confirm the Department/Faculty supports the proposed activity.
- e. Confirm the availability of space and other resources that the PI and/or any co-principal investigator has declared.
- f. Ensure the correct internal funding source(s) is/are identified, if applicable.
- g. Sign and attach Chair/Dean physical signature(s) if required by sponsor.

#### Send back the request when

- a. The applicant is not eligible to apply and a more appropriate individual should be the project PI
- b. Indirect costs have not been included and the proposal needs to be revised to include it.

#### Deny the request when

- a. The application is not a research related activity
- b. The applicant is not eligible and there isn't an appropriate replacement
- c. The department/faculty does not support the activity
- d. Space or other declared resources are not available to support the activity

#### NOTES:

- The Reviewer and/or Approver can modify the request form to reflect needed revisions, providing confirmation of agreement to the revisions by the PI, prior to confirming their approval.
- It is recommended that the Approver or Reviewer contact the PI/submitter directly prior to completing a Send Back or Deny.
- It is required that an explanation of the reasons for the decision to send back or deny the application to the PI/submitter be included in the Approvals comments which are added when the approver clicks either the Approve, Sendback or Deny buttons. These comments are visible by clicking on the View/Hide Comments link or the triangle next to the Comments line in the Approvals section of the form.

3. **UOFA CO-INVESTIGATOR(CO-I) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** Acknowledgements from all UoA Co-I(s) named on the application are obtained in parallel to PI/department/faculty approvals. These must be in place prior to institutional approval being provided. Co-I(s) approvals can be monitored via the Acknowledgement Status on the UofA Co-I(s) section of the Proposal request page.

#### By clicking on Accept Co-I's acknowledge:

- a. The same statements as set out in the PIs declaration apply, and
- b. The PI will administer the award on behalf of the research group

#### Co-Is must also answer these three questions

- New or additional resources are required from my Faculty/Department (including teaching release time)
- Faculty/Department letter or email confirming additional resources is attached
- Project includes honorarium or salary for the co-Investigator

4. **INSTITUTIONAL APPROVER:** [Institutional Review and Approval](#) is provided by Research Administrative Services on behalf of the institution. Prior to providing approval Institutional Approver should:
- Confirm application is complete and conforms to sponsor eligibility and guidelines
    - If not and required revisions are minor, Institutional Approver should follow up with the applicant to obtain revisions or missing information.
    - If not and required changes are major (ie. missing budget, scope of work, applicant ineligible), **Send back** to PI, email request to provide revisions and/or missing information.
  - Verify information in letters or emails confirming support/commitment align with information included in application, including confirming Co-I acknowledgements are complete.
    - If not included and should have been, follow up with PI and ask them to provide
  - Confirm expenses are eligible and ensure compliance with the sponsor's Indirect Costs of Research policy
  - Confirm eligibility of partner organizations and contributions (program-driven)
  - Identify unique and/or complex terms and conditions (e.g. terms that would prevent students from being able to work on the project for thesis-based work, publication restrictions, limits on future IP use rights, restrictions on other funding sources (ex. tobacco industry)).

**NOTES:**

- Institutional approver will work with the PI, department/faculty and/or sponsor, as required, to address any issues prior to application being approved.

## The workflow approval process for Amendments

Requests follow the same approval steps as identified above, except for amendments involving a decrease in the award amount or for projects held by a Chair, Dean or Director role where the amendment is to change the project holder because of a change of the individual in the role. For those exceptions, consult with a [Research Administration Specialist](#) via [rsinfo@ualberta.ca](mailto:rsinfo@ualberta.ca). Otherwise:

- SUBMITTER AND/OR PI:** Create and submit an Amendment request (PI/Submitter) via the [Researcher Home Page](#) (RHP). Please consult the [Type of Amendment Requests Reference Document](#) to determine what information is required for the specific type of amendment being requested.
- DEPARTMENT/FACULTY REVIEWER (OPTIONAL) AND/OR APPROVER (REQUIRED).**  
In accordance with [U of A policy](#) only one approval is needed at either the department or faculty level. Individual faculties can decide whether the approval happens at the department or faculty level. Prior to approving the request the department/faculty reviewer and/or approver should:
  - Confirm the Department/Faculty supports the proposed amendment to the activity.
  - Confirm the availability of space and other resources that the PI has declared.
  - If the project amendment is to extend the end date, confirm PI is eligible to apply for and hold research funding for the entire proposed project period in accordance with the [Eligibility to Apply for and Hold Research Funding Policy](#).
- INSTITUTIONAL APPROVER:** [Institutional Review and Approval](#) is provided by Research Administrative Services and indicates the subgrant request has been received at RAS and is in the queue for processing.



## The workflow approval process for OE Authorization

Over Expenditure Authorization research administration requests follow the similar approval steps as identified in the request for new proposal above. Reference the [Research - Over Expenditure \(Authorized\) Procedure](#) under the [Financial Management and Practices Policy](#) in UAPPOL.

1. **PROJECT HOLDER:** Create and submit an Over Expenditure Authorization request (PI/Submitter) via the [Researcher Home Page](#) (RHP). Prior to submitting the request, the Project Holder should:
  - a. Confirm the over expenditure is eligible to be authorized. Projects set up in Fund 330 – Research (Operating) such as a General Research Account are not allowed to have an authorized over expenditure.
  - b. Determine the maximum amount expected for the project to go over expended which cannot be more than the value of the next project budget award amount.
  - c. Have a plan that will clear the project over expenditure within a specific time period which determines the duration of the over expenditure authorization.
2. **DEPARTMENT/FACULTY REVIEWER (OPTIONAL) AND/OR APPROVER (REQUIRED):** Prior to approving the request the department/faculty reviewer and/or approver should:
  - a. Confirm the Department Chair supports the proposed request for Over Expenditure Authorization.
  - b. Confirm the amount is less than the next year's budgeted award amount
  - c. Agree that Research Administration Services may be required to accrue a provision for any restricted research project over expenditures to the Department's operating budget.
3. **INSTITUTIONAL APPROVER:** [Institutional Review and Approval](#) is provided by RAS and indicates the Over Expenditure request has been received at RAS, is compliant with policy and has been processed.

## The workflow approval process for Agreement Acknowledgements

Agreement Acknowledgement research administration requests follow the similar approval steps.

1. **RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION SERVICES (RAS)** will create the Agreement Acknowledgement once an agreement is ready to be signed. They submit the request for workflow approvals.



**2. PI - Prior to providing approval, the PI should:**

- a. Read the attached agreement
- b. Be aware the University must comply with the agreement once signed
- c. Understand the participation of each team member in the research project, including the PI, must be in accordance with
  - I. The attached agreement, and
  - II. All applicable University policies and procedures including the [Research Administration Roles and Responsibilities Procedure](#).
- d. Understand the extent required to permit the University to comply with the parts of the attached agreement that give the sponsor(s) of the research project or others the right to own or license the results of the research project and patentable intellectual property (PIP) including:
  - I. The right, title and ownership interest in the PIP is licensed or assigned to the University,
  - II. The right, title and ownership interest in the results of the project is licensed or assigned to the University, and
  - III. The PI will promptly sign and deliver such other documents that the University requests in order to evidence the license or assignment
- e. Acknowledge it is in the PI's best overall interests that the attached agreement, including the provisions relating to ownership and licensing of the results of the research project (including PIP), is entered into by the University, and
  - I. Before allowing any other research team member to participate in the research project, the PI will ensure that the research team member is fully informed of and agrees to be bound by the matters set out in the acknowledgement, and
  - II. Before allowing any graduate student to participate in the research project where that participation will be the basis of all or part of that student's thesis, the PI will inform that student of the University's policy on public access to thesis results and the student's right to own copyright in such thesis, the attached agreement, and the possible ramifications of the attached agreement on the student's research.
- f. Have the opportunity to review the agreement acknowledgement and to discuss it with others of their choosing before voluntarily providing their approval.

**3. DEPARTMENT/FACULTY REVIEWER (OPTIONAL) AND/OR APPROVER (REQUIRED).**

In accordance with [U of A policy](#) only one approval is needed at either the department or faculty level. Individual faculties can decide whether the approval happens at the department or faculty level. Prior to approving the request the department/faculty reviewer and/or approver should:

- a. Read the attached agreement
- b. Understand what the terms and conditions the University is agreeing to in undertaking the research project
- c. Confirm the Department/Faculty will comply with their responsibilities under all University policies and procedures applicable to the project, including responsibilities under the [Research Administration Roles and Responsibilities Procedure](#)

4. **RAS** receives the approved Agreement Acknowledgement. This acknowledgement allows for the agreement to be signed by the Vice President Research and Innovation or delegate in accordance with the [Contract Review and Signing Authority Policy](#)

## The workflow approval process for Subgrants

Subgrants only require approval of the Principle Investigator. These requests are not routed for Department/Faculty review or approval and would route directly to RAS for institutional approval and processing.

1. **SUBMITTER AND/OR PI:** Create and submit a Subgrant request (PI/Submitter) via the [Researcher Home Page](#) (RHP). Prior to submitting the request PI/submitter should:
  - a. Ensure the project is not overexpended (O/E) prior to requesting the subgrant and the fund transfer is allowed by the sponsor.
  - b. Obtain the contact information for each subgrant recipient institution, A complete application includes the following:
    - I. Recipient Institution
    - II. Researcher's Name
    - III. Research Services contact for the recipient institution
    - IV. Recipient Institution address
    - V. Subgrant start and end date
    - VI. Subgrant amount
    - VII. Scientific Reporting requirements
    - VIII. Scope of Work and Budget for the subgrant activities
  - c. By submitting the subgrant request the PI or Project Holder confirms that:
    - I. The information is correct
    - II. The recipient's name was referenced in the research project's application
    - III. Transfer from this research project is an allowable expense per the funding agency's guidelines or terms and conditions, or written authorization from the funding agency for this transfer of funding is attached
2. **INSTITUTIONAL APPROVER:** [Institutional Review and Approval](#) is provided by Research Administrative Services and indicates the subgrant request has been received at RAS and is in the queue for processing.

# Appendix A - Definitions

Workflow Action	Results
Approve	Request moves to the next approval step.
Deny	Request is returned to the submitter. A denied request can not be resubmitted.
Send Back	Request is returned to the submitter. Request can be updated and resubmitted into workflow.

Workflow Approver	Definition
Submitter (aka Requester)	The individual who clicks the submit button on the request page.
Principal Investigator (PI)	Individual identified as the Principal Investigator (PI) on the Researcher Home Page in PeopleSoft.
Co-Investigator (Co-I), if applicable	Applies to New Proposal/Project Request and UofAB co-applicants only. In addition to acknowledging their participation in the project, Co Is will need to answer 3 yes/no questions related to use of university resources as part of their approval step.
Department/Faculty Reviewer	An optional workflow step. A group of one or more Reviewers can be defined for each Department/Faculty Dept ID. Only one reviewer in the group needs to approve. If a reviewer is also in the approval group, the approval step is a required step in the approval chain.
Department/Faculty Approver	Individual approving on behalf of the Department/ Faculty. A group of one or more Approvers need to be defined for each Department/Faculty Dept ID involved in the approval chain. Only one approver in the group needs to approve.
Institutional Approver	Users who have the Institutional approval role on their user profiles. These individuals will receive notifications and have access to the worklist showing all pending approval transactions. These individuals will be responsible for further assigning the requests for processing within Research Administrative Services.

# Appendix B - Research Approval Inquiry

The Research Approval Inquiry page in Peoplesoft provides information on the status of Research Administration Requests pending approvals. It can be found under the Self-Service Centre, Manage Approvals folder. Each transaction type has slightly different parameters that can be used to search for pending records.

For a report on **all pending transactions**, search parameters are limited to four criteria, transaction ID, Department, Faculty and Principal Investigator.

Image 2

Self-Service Center

General Inquiry

Travel and Expenses

Manage Approvals

Approve T&E Transactions

View Active Delegations\*

Research Approval Workbench\*

Research Approval Inquiry\*

Research Approver Maintenance\*

Assign Proxy\*

Procurement

External Links

Appr. Inquiry

Search Parameters

Transaction Type: All Transaction Types

Search Parameters

1 Transaction ID

2 Department

3 Faculty

4 Principal Investigator

Field Value

Search

This inquiry will bring back a report of the pending transactions for all 5 types of research administration requests.

**New Proposals** search parameters include the same parameters as above plus project holder, sponsor and program.

Image 3

Appr. Inquiry

Search Parameters

Transaction Type: Proposal

Search Parameters

1-7 of 7

>

>>

View All

	Search Parameter	Field Value
1	Proposal ID	
2	Department	
3	Faculty	
4	Principal Investigator	
5	Project Holder	
6	Sponsor	
7	Program	

Search

The Proposals Report will show information as follows:

Image 4A

Proposal Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

1-1 of 1

>

>>

	Title/Step	Other Info	ID					
	Transaction Type	Proposal ID	Submit Date	Approval Step	Department	Faculty	Principal Investigator	
1		Proposal ID						

Image 4B

Proposal Approvals


Transactions Pending Approval

1-1 of 1

>

>>

	Title/Step	Other Info	ID					
	Project Holder	Sponsor	Sponsor Deadline	Project Title	Indirect Cost	Total Award Amount	Award Currency	
1								

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Page 13

**Project Amendment** includes the same search parameters as the New Proposal, with the addition of the Request ID as there could be multiple amendments on a specific project.

Image 5

Appr. Inquiry

Search Parameters

Transaction Type:Project Amendment

Search Parameters

1-7 of 8

View All

	Search Parameter	Field Value
1	Project ID	
2	Request ID	
3	Department	
4	Faculty	
5	Principal Investigator	
6	Project Holder	
7	Sponsor	

Search

The Project Amendment Report will show information as follows:

Image 6A

Project Amendment Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

1-1 of 1

Title/Step

Other Info

	Transaction Type	Project ID	Request ID	Submit Date	Approval Step	Department	Faculty
1		Project ID					

Image 6B

Project Amendment Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

1-1 of 1

Title/Step

Other Info

	Principal Investigator	Project Holder	Sponsor	Project Title	Amount Changed	PI Changed	Holder Changed	Sponsor Changed
1								

**Subgrant** request search parameters use the same fields as the amendment request search.

Image 7

Appr. Inquiry

Search Parameters

Transaction Type: Sub-Grant

Search Parameters

1-7 of 8

View All

Search Parameter	Field Value
1 Proposal ID	
2 Request ID	
3 Department	
4 Faculty	
5 Principal Investigator	
6 Project Holder	
7 Sponsor	

Search

The Subgrant Report will show information as follows:

Image 8A

Sub-Grant Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

Title/Step

Other Info

ID

Transaction Type	Proposal ID	Request ID	Submit Date	Approval Step	Department	Faculty
1	Proposal ID					

Image 8B

Sub-Grant Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

Title/Step

Other Info

ID

Principal Investigator	Project Holder	Sponsor	Project Title	Target Sponsor Budget	Currency Code
1					



**Over-Expenditure Authorizations** use the same search parameters but do not include the Principal Investigator, just the Project Holder.

Image 9

Appr. Inquiry

Search Parameters

Transaction Type: Over-Expenditure Authorization

Search Parameters

1-7 of 7

View All

	Search Parameter	Field Value
1	Authorization ID	
2	Project ID	
3	Department	
4	Faculty	
5	Project Holder	
6	Sponsor	
7	Program	

Search

The OE-Authorization Report will show information as follows:

Image 10A

Over-Expenditure Authorization Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

Holder/Step

Other Info

1-1 of 1

	Transaction Type	Project ID	Request ID	Submit Date	Approval Step	Department	Faculty
1		Project ID					

Image 10B

Over-Expenditure Authorization Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

Holder/Step

Other Info

1-1 of 1

	Project Holder	Sponsor	Project Title	Amount Requested	Expiry Date
1					

**Agreement Acknowledgements** use the same search parameters but do not include the Project Holder, just the Principal Investigator.

Image 11

Appr. Inquiry

Search Parameters

Transaction Type: Agreement Acknowledgement

Search Parameters

1-7 of 7

View All

	Search Parameter	Field Value
1	Agreement Number	
2	Proposal ID	
3	Department	
4	Faculty	
5	Principal Investigator	
6	Sponsor	
7	Program	

Search

The Agreement Acknowledgement Report will show information as follows:

Image 12A

Agreement Acknowledgement Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

1-1 of 1

Title/Step

Other Info

	Transaction Type	Proposal ID	Acknowledgement ID	Submit Date	Approval Step	Department	Faculty
1		Proposal ID					

Image 12B

Agreement Acknowledgement Approvals

Transactions Pending Approval

1-1 of 1

Title/Step

Other Info

	Principal Investigator	Sponsor	Project Title	Total Amount
1				