



Basic Principles for Research Collaboration

Purpose

You should be very clear about the purpose of the collaboration, the expected outcomes, your role, how you fit into the big picture and your time capacity to deliver. There should be mutual trust, respect and expectations.

Reputation

Collaborating organisations, and more importantly - the lead organisation, should have relevant accreditation, governance frameworks, systems, staff and risk management processes for the delivery of services. All collaborators should have the necessary skills and drive to achieve the outcomes.

Management

There should be clarity about leadership, management and governance, both at a “whole of project” level and at sub-levels such as research activity programs, nodes, projects. All parties should be aware of their responsibilities and obligations. If students or early career-researchers are involved, ensure mentoring and supervision structures are in place.

Funding

The budget and proposed shared funding should be negotiated to ensure you receive research income to UWA to cover the costs of the research activity you will be undertaking. Be aware of the UWA Policy on the Recovery of Indirect Costs.¹ There is an expectation that UWA would receive research income and enter into a post-award funding agreement with the lead organisation.

Return on Investment (RoI)

If UWA is providing a cash contribution, the Return on Investment should be at least 4:1. This means UWA would expect to receive \$4 from the Funding Agency (not other collaborators) plus the \$1 contribution – making a total of \$5. All UWA cash contributions must have the approval of your Dean and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). UWA’s in-kind contribution should also be considered and not under-estimated. You need to ensure you fully cost your time and effort.² It’s important to note that it would be usual for all contributions (cash and in-kind) to be taken into consideration when calculating the share of Intellectual Property.

Intellectual Property

Ownership of background and project IP should be discussed. If successful, all parties will be required to enter into an IP agreement.

Publications

In accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research³, “collaborating researchers should agree on authorship of a publication at an early stage in the research project and should review their decisions periodically”

Ethics

Be aware that procedural and policy compliance with State, Federal Government legislation and other associated regulations for the use of humans, animals and biological safety will apply. Ethics approvals may need multiple-institutional approvals.

¹ UWA Policy on Recovery of Indirect Costs: <http://www.governance.uwa.edu.au/procedures/policies/policies-and-procedures?method=document&id=UP07%2F2>

² UWA Guidelines for Project Costing: <http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/rgco/apply-for-funding#apply-4>

³ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/r39>