

NOTE: The University of Alberta’s Research Services Office (RSO) created this document to help researchers and sponsors understand how the University approaches sponsored research. This document is subject to relevant University practices and policies.

Agreements are concluded more quickly where the parties have similar expectations.

Sponsors and researchers should have a shared understanding of where a sponsored research project falls on this spectrum:

Type of Project	Project Characteristics (not exhaustive)
Research (Grant, Contract or Collaboration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study design and budget are defined by the university’s researcher (or “principal investigator”) or tailored to particular sponsor • Research is fundamental and curiosity-driven • Discovery-based; hypothesis-testing; the specific outcome is difficult or impossible to predict • Research Ethics Board review may be required • Industry-funded projects may be eligible for matching government programs • May involve training graduate students and thesis projects • May involve sponsor’s researchers, equipment, background IP (for collaborative projects) • Intended to advance knowledge in the field and lead to scientific or scholarly findings and publication • Results may include patentable inventions or software • Sponsor is provided report(s) of results for internal use. Other use rights negotiable.
Lab or Technical Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope-of-work including experiments or tests to be run is defined by the sponsor (or “client”) • Researcher/principal investigator will apply existing knowledge towards a particular problem/test or to generate data of limited application • Applies expertise or uses existing testing protocols, analytical services, or existing research tools (without material modification; but existing know-how is retained by university) • Specific outcome is known • No expectation that project activities will generate patentable inventions • May or may not have an expectation of scholarly publication • Does not involve graduate student thesis work • Sponsor is provided test results. No intellectual property is generated or transferred. • Indirect cost assessment is required pursuant to policy
Clinical Trial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope-of-work and budget may be set by researcher or sponsor • Scope-of-work is a study or part of a study that explores whether a medical strategy, treatment, or device is safe and effective for humans, or which medical approach works best for certain illnesses or groups of people • Research Ethics Board review is required • NACTRC negotiates contract unless funded via a peer-reviewed award: then RSO
Consulting Services/ Supplemental Professional Activities (SPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work undertaken by university personnel independently from the university • Does not include significant use of university facilities or resources • RSO does not negotiate or sign contract; university is not involved

The RSO helps researchers and sponsors put together the right agreement for a sponsored research project.

Contact us after you’ve reviewed this document so that we can get to work!

Researchers – contact your faculty’s [research facilitator](#) to start.

Sponsors – feel free to call us at 780-492-5787 or visit [our website](#) for more information.