

ABOUT THIS EVALUATION

The launch of Research Management Services (RMS) in 2011 resulted in changes in the workflow of proposals and awards within the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR).

The Office of Sponsored Research is composed of:

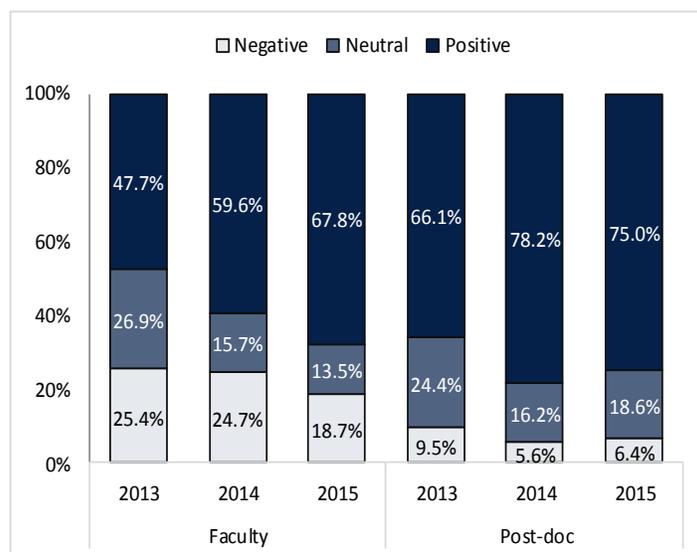
- **Research Management Services (RMS):** responsible for federal and nonprofit grants.
- **Government & Business Contracts (GBC):** handles contracts with federal, state, municipal and foreign governments.

April 2014 marked the transition of award negotiation of prescribed terms and conditions to the RMS Teams. Effective October 2014, select RSCs were trained by awards subject matter experts to negotiate complex award terms and conditions.

In 2015, the Office of Sponsored Research focused on areas of opportunity identified in 2014's Research Services Satisfaction Survey. Resultantly the organization took on several major efforts including an updated **RMS Service Partnership Agreement, Business Process Improvement** for outgoing subawards, a **subcommittee to recommend changes to the current funding model**, and an ongoing review of systems.

The Office of Sponsored Research asked the Philip R. Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies to evaluate the impact of these changes on consumers of research services, as well as to measure change in client satisfaction from 2014 to 2015. The Research Services Satisfaction Survey was distributed in June 2015.

Overall Pre-Award Satisfaction by Role & Year using 3-point satisfaction scale



WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

2013/ 2014/ 2015

In 2013, the first-ever Research Services Satisfaction Survey was conducted in conjunction with the annual Human Resources survey and, as such, all staff and faculty were sampled. The 2014 Survey targeted current users of research services more closely by extracting the sample from current databases and listservs.

In 2015, sample extraction mirrored the 2014 Survey, with additional efforts to target administrative users. 2,766 faculty and staff were invited to participate, and after 3 email reminders over the course of 2 weeks, 30% submitted survey responses. Faculty and post-doc respondents were extracted and utilized in developing comparisons across the three years for RMS and GBC ratings, as these two populations had comparable response numbers.

Up to 40% of those surveyed on RMS services in 2015 were matched to their responses in 2014. Matched pairs indicated statistically significant improvements in several services. See Research Management Services Ratings under Key Findings on page 2 for additional information.

Role	2013	2014	2015
Faculty	38% (466)	54% (429)	46% (381)
Other staff/administrator	33% (293)	17% (118)	27% (225)
Post-doc	13% (142)	22% (157)	19% (158)
Staff researcher	9% (82)	1% (9)	3% (22)
Academic non-faculty	8% (87)	6% (41)	5% (43)
In the last 12 months, have you been involved in submitting any proposals?			
Yes	72%	91%	91%
No	28%	9%	9%
Proposal type	2013	2014	2015
Federal funding	51%	51%	50.6%
City, County or State government	8%	5.3%	5%
Nonprofit organization or foundation	25%	31%	27.4%
Private industry	13.6%	11.5%	11%
Foreign government, unfunded activities, MOUs or other	2%	1%	6%

OSR FUNDING MODEL

The Office of Sponsored Research took the opportunity to use the 2015 Survey to gauge the impact of the OSR Funding Model on researchers at UCSF. Respondents who self-identified as MSO, Finance Office or Chair were given two prompts regarding the Funding Model.

Did you inform faculty in your department about the changes to OSR funding that began last year?	Yes	50%
	No	50%
Did changes to the OSR funding structure affect how you counseled faculty regarding grant proposals?	Yes	78%
	No	17%

[Click here](#) to learn more about how the Office of Sponsored Research is responding to concerns about the OSR Funding Model.

KEY FINDINGS:

Research Management Services Ratings:

RMS specific ratings evaluated the respondent's satisfaction with activities in the pre-award process owned by RMS. Year-to-year ratings are provided when available. Due to changes in survey questions, not all RMS services have year-to-year comparisons.

Scale: (1) poor; (2) fair; (3) good; (4) very good (5) excellent

Ratings marked with an asterisk () indicate a statistically significant improvement in matched respondents from 2014 to 2015.

Government & Business Contracts Ratings:

GBC specific ratings evaluated the respondent's satisfaction with services provided by GBC. Year-to-year ratings are provided when available. Due to changes in survey questions, not all GBC services have year-to-year comparisons.

Scale: (1) poor; (2) fair; (3) good; (4) very good; (5) excellent

Year-to-year score change—Faculty & Post-Doc Only

RMS Service	2013 rating	2014 rating	2015 rating
Meeting deadlines	3.5	3.9	4*
Establishing timeline	3.7	4	4.2*
Communicate application progress	3.4	3.7	4*
Complete application	3.8	4.2	4.3
Submission notification	3.9	3.7	4.3*
Timely award processing	n/a	3.4	4*
Timely subaward issuance	n/a	3.4	3.8
Communicate award/subaward status	n/a	3.7	3.7
Knowledgeable and proactive	n/a	n/a	4
Understand the requirements of the application	n/a	n/a	3.9
Represent the University professionally	n/a	n/a	4.2
Identify and communicate issues	n/a	n/a	3.9
Facilitating external communications	n/a	n/a	3.9
Guidance regarding which office is responsible	n/a	n/a	3.9

GBC Service	2013 rating	2014 rating	2015 rating
Understand requirements of the application	3.2	3.1	3.4
Understand the requirements of the contract	3.2	3.1	3.4
Communicate application progress	2.7	2.9	3.1
Facilitate external communications	2.9	3	3.3
Meet deadlines	n/a	3.1	3.4
Submit a complete proposal application	n/a	3.4	3.4
Knowledgeable and proactive	n/a	n/a	3.3
Represent the University professionally	n/a	n/a	3.9
Interpret contract terms	n/a	n/a	3.4
Provide useful advice	n/a	n/a	3.4
Identify and communicate issues	n/a	n/a	3.4
Work with stakeholders to resolve issues	n/a	n/a	3.4
Guidance regarding which office is responsible	n/a	n/a	3.4
Articulate differences between contract types	n/a	n/a	3.7

COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS

"...it's still not totally clear to me which tasks go to the pre-award or post-award person. I like to work with only one pre-award person to develop a partnership."

"I would recommend that the GBC unit create an informative website, standardized practices and procedures for teams and databases."

"Clear, effective and standard pathways for communication need to be developed."

"Overall, however, I appreciate that RMS is the easiest and most professional service group to work with."

"Continuity of service. The primary person I have worked with has changed quite a number of times since this system was implemented due to staff turnover."

"My experiences have really been colored by the quality of RMS personnel, and having the right person doing the pre-award job is probably the most important thing from my perspective."

"I would prefer that RMS staff come to 'meet and greet' the department yearly and present their services and answer any questions."

"I can't iterate more strongly that I think PIs need better training about exactly who is responsible for what... so that we don't have unreasonable expectations.... If we could develop ways to increase consistency, that would be very helpful."

"Overall, GBC serves our school very well and we have a very collaborative relationship with the Director and the contracts officers."

"It would be helpful... if RMS could generate a dashboard to capture what they are working on for the faculty so we can plan accordingly as well."

OFFICE OF SPONSORED RESEARCH ACTION PLAN

829 survey respondents generated 340 comments in response to open-ended survey questions. All comments were de-identified and shared with management. The Office of Sponsored Research recognized similar themes in the opportunities for improvement in the 2014 and 2015 Surveys. Resultantly, the 2016 Action Plan outlined below will continue to build on these themes. [Click here](#) to read the full action plan and learn about the progress made in 2015.

Opportunity	2015 Action	2016 Action
Strengthen effective communications	...by developing personalized communication plans for teams and client faculty and fostering a customer service focus.	...by collaborating with other research units to increase transparency and clarity in proposal and award statuses and changes to policies and procedures.
Developing productive relationships between the RSC and client researcher	...by improving primary and secondary RSC assignments, regularly assessing customer satisfaction and inviting clients to participate in RSC recruitment.	...by increasing face-to-face time and building relationships with faculty and staff in the client department.
Reducing staff turnover	...by partnering with departments to review factors that affect retention.	...by recognizing, developing and supporting OSR staff.
Improving subcontract services	...by reviewing subaward processes and services in Spring 2015.	...by evaluating, adjusting and implementing improved subaward processes across RMS.
Establishing service level expectations and consistency across teams	...by updating the RMS Service Partnership Agreement and implementing common processes across teams.	...by continuing to evaluate and implement the RMS Service Partnership Agreement.
Increasing level of expertise across staff	...by expanding the OSR training program to include ongoing training, and collaborative efforts between pre/post-award, UCB and Stanford.	...by ensuring consistent support of OSR staff across all teams.
Marketing of Government & Business Contracts (GBC) activities and communication	...by developing a comprehensive communication plan and leveraging web-based tools to direct faculty to the responsible office for given activities.	...by strengthening collaborations and actively reaching out to partners.

Would you like to add more feedback? Email OSRinfo@ucsf.edu