

# External Partnerships

A Guide for Extension Faculty in Navigating Collaboration  
Options with External Partners



Extension  
University of Missouri

There are clear advantages to Extension serving as a primary applicant for external funding; however, there are also meaningful benefits to **collaborating on projects** led by other organizations. This guide outlines three primary options for documenting our partnership when working with external entities on applications or agreements.

If you are preparing a grant application in which Extension will be the lead recipient, or if you are communicating directly with a funder regarding a local sponsorship, contract or gift, please refer to the **External Funding Guide** for comprehensive guidance on all aspects of managing external funding.

## Three Avenues for Project Collaboration

### Letter of Support

Offers broad support without any specific commitments.

### Fee for Service

Includes standard rates for delivering curricula or classes.

### Subcontractor

Provides funding for a specific, defined scope of work.



## Letter of Support

A letter of support is an effective way to establish interest in a project, highlight alignment with broad goals or expected outcomes, demonstrate engagement, and strengthen collaborative relationships. This can add meaningful value to an applicant's proposal without requiring commitment from the University of Missouri. The letter should not indicate that Extension will be providing specific personnel effort, financial contributions or other resources.

*A support letter can be signed and submitted by all Extension faculty, although it is recommended the letter be reviewed by relevant leadership as well as the Business & Finance office.*



## Fee for Service

If a partner's proposed work plan includes delivery of our curricula or identifies our role as providing recurring activities or established programs, their proposal will likely be strengthened by formally contracting MU Extension for service delivery. These services are typically billed at standard rates (e.g., per class session, consultation, assessment, etc.). This type of agreement does not generally require a detailed budget or fiscal tracking and it involves minimal documentation.

*A contract template can be provided. These agreements must be routed through Business Services for review and signed by an authorized signer only.*



# Subcontractor

When proposed funding supports a specific, defined scope of work with a set timeline and objective deliverables - and funding will be provided for salary offset and other project related expenses - Extension may be considered a subcontractor. Documentation, including a detailed budget, scope of work and commitment letter, is prepared and submitted to our partner prior to the sponsor deadline. This ensures our work and budget is appropriately included in the overall grant application.

*Grant applications are processed through the Extension Pre-Award Team and are officially submitted on behalf of the University of Missouri through the Sponsored Programs Administration.*



When an outside entity seeks our collaboration, it presents a **valuable opportunity** to leverage services, broaden reach and visibility, and secure additional funding.

<p>Short Turnaround</p>	<p><b>A letter of support</b> is particularly useful when we are invited to participate on a project but there is insufficient time to complete administrative review and obtain institutional approvals. If the partner anticipates a higher level of Extension involvement, they may include a contractual line item in the proposal budget without specifying the University of Missouri.</p> <p>Should the project be awarded, we can then finalize fiscal and legal details prior to entering into a formal agreement.</p>
<p>Extension Mission</p>	<p>Regardless of how the partnership is defined, the project goals should closely align with the overall objectives and mission of Extension.</p>
<p>UM System</p>	<p>The <b>UM System</b> includes the University of Missouri-Columbia (<b>MU</b>), University of Missouri-Kansas City (<b>UMKC</b>), Missouri University of Science and Technology (<b>Missouri S&amp;T</b>) and the University of Missouri-St. Louis (<b>UMSL</b>). Each campus is part of the same entity - The Curators of the University of Missouri - therefore, sister campuses are not considered external subcontractors on grant applications. Instead, involvement by each University is woven together throughout the submission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● On grant applications, the supporting campus submits <u>internal</u> documentation to the lead campus as evidence of secured approvals on budget details and scope of work.</li> <li>● After an award is fully executed, MU may receive a unique MoCode to track expenses separately. Otherwise, salary offset may be handled through a shared MoCode. The pre-award team can assist with determining which method is appropriate for each situation.</li> <li>● A support letter and fee for service contract would be handled in the same manner whether for an external entity or a sister campus.</li> </ul>

Still have questions or not sure where to start? Reach out to the Extension Pre-Award team!