

# Budget Proposal Narrative

## 2023 Strategic Budgeting Process

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Please carefully review the [Call for Proposals](#) with particular attention to the evaluation criteria before beginning this application. Criteria should be addressed throughout the proposal narrative.

### Section 1: Proposal Title and Department Contact

Proposal Title: **Research Compliance**

Division: Academic Affairs

College/Unit: Research and Sponsored Programs

Department Contact: David Patrick

### Section 2: Proposal Summary and Problem Statement

*Check the most relevant box (one selection only).*

Priority Program and Service Areas:

- Graduate Programs
- Inclusive Student Success

Identified Structural or Legacy Funding Needs (to be used sparingly and in conjunction with Division VP)

- Core Infrastructure, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance
- Remaining funding needs from partially funded prior request  
*If checked, please identify original funding request amount and actual funding received in narrative section*
- Other [Click here to enter text](#)

Statement of Purpose (One Page or Less):

Federal and State law, agreements with research sponsors, and University policy impose certain administrative obligations governing Western research that include programs for protecting human and animal subjects, the Institutional Review Board and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, responsible conduct of research training and documentation, financial conflict of interest reporting and management, and processes for investigating suspected research misconduct. Ensuring University compliance in these areas is the responsibility of the office of Research and Sponsored Programs, where one half-time Research Compliance Officer (RCO) and a part-time external IRB consultant currently conduct the work.<sup>1</sup>

The workload associated with meeting these obligations has increased over time while staff FTE has decreased, making it increasingly difficult to ensure compliance across all areas. Staff turnover and a

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<sup>1</sup> When the abstract for this proposal was submitted in October RSP had 1.5 FTE RCOs, but one has since left the institution.

competitive RCO job market have added to the challenges, with staff shortages currently requiring an outside consultant to support most IRB administrative functions. At times during the last 18 months, research application processing times have been so long that the resulting delays had serious impacts on faculty scholarship, some graduate student thesis completions and many undergraduate capstone projects. The effects are felt across the University, impacting externally-funded, unfunded, and student research as well as some classes that use the IRB.

#### Summary of Proposed New Investments:

Funding for 1.0 FTE RCO position is requested. RSP has budgeted funding for one RCO position already, and has previously used self-sustaining funding for a second position, which is currently unfilled. This proposal requests funding to support permanently filling a second RCO position.

#### Impact of New Investment on ADEI and Sustainability:

Stabilizing staffing at a sustainable level will enable the compliance group to restart progress toward some important ADEI objectives that have simply been out of reach for several years or longer. These range from making forms and instructions accessible, to developing policies and training materials helping encourage equitable and inclusive research practices at Western, such as guidance for IRB applicants on working with children and other vulnerable populations, conducting cross-cultural research, and research involving sovereign indigenous communities, to name a few.

## Section 3: Performance Outcomes and Risk Mitigation

#### Expected Outcomes and Evaluation of Success:

[Strategic Plan metrics](#) most directly advanced by the proposal are (i) research revenue and (ii) number of undergraduates with high impact experiences

#### Impact on Recruitment, Retention, and Satisfaction of Diverse Faculty, Staff, and Administrators:

Rising workloads have caused the RCO position to become more challenging and less rewarding and recent turnover has been high. Yet RCO positions have frontline responsibility for serving and helping protect the interests of individuals and groups from a wide range of backgrounds, often including marginalized or vulnerable populations. Funding for the requested RCO line will help address these workload challenges, making it more likely that Western can attract and retain compliance professionals with the sort of background and skills required to most effectively bring ADEI principles to the work, and will create sufficient space within the positions to enable staff to put those principles into action.

#### Anticipated Consequences if Proposal is Not Funded:

The requested position is necessary to ensure Western can meet its research compliance obligations.

## Section 4: Process and Development

Describe Collaborations and Stakeholder Engagement:

The research community engages in compliance oversight primarily through faculty representation on the IRB and IACUC, as well as through the Research and Creative Activities Council, all of which have been engaged at a variety of levels in dealing with some of the challenges caused by compliance staffing shortages over the 2-3 years. A recent town-hall style forum for human subjects researchers engaged dozens of faculty in a discussion of current challenges and near-term plans for the IRB. The office of Risk Management and Compliance as well Audit and Consulting Services have also been consulted.

Explain how this proposal will leverage resources or commitments from other sources:

N/A

Has your department previously submitted this proposal?

No.

Describe any funding alternatives that have been explored.

A search for two RCO hires is currently underway. If the proposal is not funded, salary and benefits for one position will come from indirect cost revenue collected from external grants. Given other commitments on ICR revenue that arrangement may not be sustainable. Nor may ICR revenue necessarily be the ideal match for such a cost because most of the compliance workload is associated with unfunded research activities which, of course, do not generate indirect cost revenue.

## Section 5: Fulfillment of WWU's Strategic Plan's Core Themes and Goals

Please explain how your proposal and the anticipated outcomes will advance the Core Themes and Goals of [WWU's 2018-2025 Strategic Plan](#) and the strategic priorities set for this budget cycle. How does this allocation or withdrawal of funding advance or hinder access to Western, academic excellence, and/or inclusive achievement?

### Core Themes

Advancing Inclusive Success

Student research experiences are a powerful way to advance student success, and many student projects require some amount of support from research compliance. This proposal will provide more responsive and more complete compliance support for student researchers.

Increasing Washington Impact

The proposal advances Western research, and through it, impacts throughout Washington and beyond.

## Enhancing Academic Excellence

Research compliance services support student scholarship in nearly every field of study, to one degree or another. In addition to capstone experiences, independent projects, and thesis research, several courses require students to go through the IRB approval process as a teaching exercise, for example. Such high-impact learning experiences require a sufficiently staffed research compliance program able to devote the time necessary to assist junior researchers while keeping processing times short enough that student projects are feasible on an academic calendar.

### Goals

Western will provide a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity.

The proposal directly supports scholarship and research.

Western will advance a deeper understanding of and engagement with place.

N/A

Western will foster a caring and supportive environment where all members are respected and treated fairly.

N/A

Western will pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices, and impacts.

N/A

## Section 6: Space Planning, Capital, and Maintenance Considerations

Major Equipment of Software Needs

N/A

Space or Infrastructure Upgrades

N/A

Changes to the Use of Existing Space

N/A

Incorporation of Physical Accessibility and Cultural Inclusion

N/A

**Proposal Title: Research Compliance**

**Division: Academic Affairs**

**Department: VPR Research and Sponsored Programs**

**Department Contact: David Patrick**

Salary and Benefits	Description	Fiscal Year 2024					Fiscal Year 2025				
		FTE	Salary	Benefits	One-Time Costs	Total	FTE	Salary	Benefits	One-Time Costs	Total
Faculty Positions		-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	\$0	-
Professional/Exempt Positions	Senior Research Compliance Officer	1.00	\$105,000	\$34,646	\$2,500	\$142,146	1.00	105,000	34,646	\$0	139,646
Classified Positions		-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	\$0	-
Student Salaries (Graduate Assistants, Hourly Student, etc)		-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	\$0	-
<b>Total Salaries and Benefits</b>		<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	<b>\$34,646</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>\$142,146</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>105,000</b>	<b>34,646</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>139,646</b>

Non-Personnel Expenses	Description	Price per		Recurring	One-Time	Total	Price per		Recurring	One-Time	Total
		Units	Unit	Costs	Costs		Units	Unit	Costs	Costs	
Supplies and Materials						\$0					\$0
Professional Service Contracts						\$0					\$0
Other Goods and Services, Memberships, etc.						\$0					\$0
Travel						\$0					\$0
Other						\$0					\$0
Capital Facility Expenses (New Space or Space Modifications)						\$0					\$0
<b>Total Non-Personnel Expenses</b>				<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>			<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

University Indirect Costs	Description	Include?	Recurring	One-Time	Total	Recurring	One-Time	Total
			Costs	Costs		Costs	Costs	
Libraries** (Estimated at \$10k per faculty member)	\$10,000 per new faculty member	YES	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Academic Support Services/Student Support Services	3% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES	\$4,189	\$0	\$4,189	\$4,189	\$0	\$4,189
Institutional Support	2% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES	\$2,793	\$0	\$2,793	\$2,793	\$0	\$2,793
Plant Operation and Maintenance	3% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES	\$4,189	\$0	\$4,189	\$4,189	\$0	\$4,189
Graduate TA Waiver	<a href="#">Input amounts for new TA Positions</a>	YES	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Indirect Costs</b>			<b>\$11,172</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$11,172</b>	<b>\$11,172</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$11,172</b>

Total Proposal, All Direct and Indirect Costs	FTE	Head Count	Recurring	One-Time	Fiscal Year	FTE	Head Count	Recurring	One-Time	Fiscal Year
			Costs	Costs	Total			Costs	Costs	Total
	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$150,818</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>\$153,318</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$150,818</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$150,818</b>