



Policy Title: Crowdfunding	
Policy Number: ACAD-308	Created: October 2015
Policies Superseded: NA	Revised:
Responsible Office: Office of Research Services	

SUMMARY:

In recent years, researchers, faculty and staff at Coastal Carolina University have used crowdfunding as a resource for funding research and other projects. The University has cultivated relationships with specific crowdfunding websites to support these efforts. These sites provide a source for one-time research or for other projects that weren't allotted significant department resources to bridge a funding gap, with fundraising goals typically between \$3,000 and \$25,000. The University has selected <https://experiment.com> for funding research and other projects in the sciences, and <https://www.givecampus.com> for funding education, humanities and business projects.

POLICY:

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Crowdfunding refers to the practice of funding a project or venture by collecting many small donations of money from a large number of people, typically via the Internet. Crowdfunding can be used to raise funds for a wide variety of projects initiated by faculty, staff, students and groups at Coastal Carolina University.

II. THE USE OF CROWDFUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND OTHER PROJECTS

- A. The following procedures apply to all faculty, students and staff using a crowdfunding platform to generate funds to support research projects using CCU personnel, facilities, equipment or resources.
 - 1. Applicants must be faculty, staff or students of Coastal Carolina University. All funds received will be treated as grant funding and will be deposited into a grant account that will be the property of the University. All funds must come directly to CCU.

2. All crowdfunding projects, particularly those using any CCU facilities, equipment, personnel or resources, must receive unit-level (i.e., departmental and dean) approval prior to the beginning of the crowdfunding effort. Please fill out the approval form, attach a project budget, and route both through the department chair and dean to the Office of Research Services. Projects that involve equipment purchases may have to be approved by CCU's Procurement Services to assure compliance with University and state procurement guidelines. Once approved, the form will be returned to the researcher (faculty/staff/student) for the project to begin.
3. CCU reserves the right to reject funds that utilize any CCU facilities, equipment, personnel or resources in the event that prior approval was not obtained.
4. Use of the CCU insignia, logo and other related promotional branding materials requires the permission of University Communication.
5. The project leader or team members cannot have a financial interest in the crowdfunding company or any interest that is in conflict with the discharge of University duties. Project leaders or team members cannot accept gifts or anything of economic value from the crowdfunding company if it could be reasonably expected that the gift or favor would influence the action of project leaders or team members with respect to the company. In addition, gifts from the company cannot be accepted if the value of any gift exceeds \$50 in total. Unsolicited advertising or promotional items of nominal value, such as pens or notepads, can be accepted.
6. Federal grant/contract award requirements are only applicable if the project is already partially funded by a federal grant, contract or award, or if an award of this type is being applied for. Federal funding sources, such as the Department of Health and Human Services, which includes the Public Health Service and the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Defense and the National Science Foundation, do not allow any scientific overlap between projects they fund and any other project funded by a separate source (e.g., via crowdfunding). The project leader is responsible for ensuring that the crowdfunded project is outside the scope of federally funded research and complies with the terms of the grant or contract award.
7. Researchers are required to comply with all laws and applicable University policies and procedures, including those related to research compliance such as IRB and IACUC, conflicts of interest, intellectual property rights and all other relevant compliance requirements. All funds must be spent according to University, state and federal procurement guidelines.
8. Crowdfunding relies on the personal and social networks of the project team to drive traffic to the team's crowdfunding page. Email lists used in support of these campaigns will only come from the personal contact lists of those involved in the project and will not be pulled directly from the

University alumni donor database or from any other centralized University email list, unless the project team is authorized to do so by the dean of the benefiting school or college. When setting up an account on the crowdfunding site, CCU faculty and staff are reminded NOT to use their CCU account credentials for a username or password.

9. Tangible items of fulfillment (material items or gifts that are delivered in exchange for funding) are not to be offered by the project leader. Coastal Carolina University will not support a fulfillment process through crowdfunding and will not process donations that reduce the full tax-deductible value of the donation.
10. Since CCU holds title to any equipment purchased for the project, purchases may require prior approval by CCU's Procurement Services to assure compliance with University and state procurement guidelines. However, projects not using any CCU resources whatsoever and which involve activities outside the employee's scope of employment do not require institutional approval and will not be accepted by CCU. Tax and legal implications are the responsibility of the individual when funds do not come directly to CCU, and it is the sole responsibility of the individual to determine such implications.
11. Project leaders are advised that crowdfunding sites do not provide intellectual property protection. Presenting the campaign to the public could result in others using the ideas and research before they can be protected with patents or other legal measures. The University has an interest in any discoveries or inventions if the project is performed as part of the employee's CCU duties. If the crowdfunding company desires any interest in the project or if there is concern about intellectual property protection, please consult with University counsel.