**GIFT, SPONSORED AWARD OR SOMETHING ELSE?**

This guideline will provide assistance to determine if your award is a gift, a sponsored award, or if it does not fall into either of those categories. Funding coming into CMU may be labeled in a variety of ways and may not reflect how the University will be required to manage the funding. Below are some general guidelines that should help you decide the appropriate contact office for assistance for your funding, especially for awards made by corporations and foundations.

**Gift Criteria**

**Definition:** A gift is a contribution received for either unrestricted or restricted use in the furtherance of the institution’s mission for which the institution has made no commitment of resources or services other than committing to use the gift as the donor specifies.  The contribution is a nonreciprocal transfer in that there is no implicit or explicit statement of exchange, purchase of services or provision of exclusive information.

Awards or funding that meet the following criteria are generally considered to be gifts:

* The gift provides support for professorships, endowed chairs, scholarships, non-federal building projects, fellowships, capacity building, programmatic support, general research and instructional programs and similar activities. The donor may direct the use of funds to a specific program area or purpose.
* The gift has minimal requirements and does not:
  + Require return or tracking of property purchased
  + Require submission of scientific or technical data
  + Claim rights in patents, copyrights and other IP rights that may result from activities supported by the gift
* Require reporting other than a brief summary of results or funds expended
* There is no expectation at the time the gift is given that funds remaining at the termination of the project will be required to be returned to the donor or that formal permission would need to be granted to spend outside of the defined budget period[[1]](#footnote-1)
* The gift is irrevocable

For assistance with gifts from individuals, contact [gift-administration@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:gift-administration@andrew.cmu.edu)

For assistance with gifts from corporations, contact [corporate-relations@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:corporate-relations@andrew.cmu.edu)

For assistance with gifts from foundations, contact [foundation-relations@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:foundation-relations@andrew.cmu.edu)

**Sponsored Award Criteria**

**Definition:** A sponsored award is an agreement (grant, cooperative agreement or contract) between CMU and another entity typically for a specified statement of work with a **related, reciprocal transfer of something of value**.  The agreement is binding and creates a quid pro quo relationship between CMU and the entity.

Awards that meet one or more of the following criteria are generally considered to be sponsored awards:

* The award is from a federal, state or local government agency, or flow-through from one of these agencies
* The award is for a specific scope of work with a specified performance period or completion date
* The award includes budget restrictions (e.g., prior approval for re-budgeting and restrictions for certain budget categories)
* Detailed billing, separate accounting procedures, and/or regular reporting of expenditures are required
* The award includes a provision for audit of technical objectives or expenditures
* Unexpended funds must be returned to the sponsor at the end of the project period
* Detailed technical, financial, or property reports or other deliverables are required
* The award contains provisions such as:
  + Restricts or monitors publications or use of results
  + Protection of sponsor and/or confidential information
  + Delivery of specific goods or services by the University (e.g., technical assistance or training)
  + Disposition of property whether tangible or intangible, (e.g. equipment, inventions, copyrights, or rights in data).

For assistance with sponsored awards, contact [osp@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:osp@andrew.cmu.edu)

**If Your Funding Does Not Fit into the Categories Above**

If your award does not fit in either category above, contact [osp@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:osp@andrew.cmu.edu) and we will work with Advancement, Financial Reporting and other CMU offices to find the correct office to assist with your award.

1. Funding from private foundations is exempt from this criterion. Private foundations may request the return of unused funds associated with a project, and it can still be considered a gift. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)