

Step-by-Step Guide for Departing Faculty

Completing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Departing Investigators

PURPOSE AND WHO MUST COMPLETE THE MOU

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Departing Investigators is required for all faculty members who are planning to leave the University of Kentucky (UK) and who have active sponsored projects, previously funded sponsored projects, and/or pending proposals with external sponsors.

This guide is written for faculty and is intended to provide guidance about what you need to do, when to do it, and who will help you. Completing the MOU ensures compliance with sponsor and University requirements and helps support a smooth transition for you, your research team, and the University.

The MOU form is available here: <https://research.uky.edu/sites/default/files/2025-03/mou-for-departingpi-fillable-form-final-jul-2023.pdf>

Appendices A–G are available here: <https://research.uky.edu/sponsored-project-services/stage-7>

WHEN TO BEGIN

You should begin the MOU process as soon as you decide to leave the University, even if your departure date has not yet been finalized. Many steps, such as sponsor approvals, equipment review and surplus processing, require significant lead time.

Early planning reduces delays, avoids last-minute issues, and helps protect your research program.

Step 1: Notify Department Leadership and Begin Planning

Recommended timing: 6 to 9 months before departure

As soon as you decide to leave:

- Notify your department chair/center or institute director.
- Notify your unit business officer or administrator.

Together, you will establish a preliminary departure timeline and discuss which sponsored projects and research assets may remain at UK and which may be eligible to transfer to your new institution.

If your college or unit has additional faculty departure requirements, your unit administrator will help ensure those steps are coordinated with the MOU process.

Step 2: Coordinate with College Leadership (ADR)

Recommended timing: 4 to 6 months before departure

Meet with your Associate Dean for Research (ADR), or equivalent college leadership, to:

- Review the MOU requirements.
- Discuss the status of all active, expired, and pending sponsored projects.
- Agree on which projects will remain at UK and which may transfer, if permitted by the sponsor.
- Understand college-level expectations and establish internal deadlines.

Early agreement at the college level helps avoid delays related to project transfers, replacement PI assignments, and equipment disposition.

Step 3: Review Research Equipment and Assets

Recommended timing: approximately 3 months before departure

Work with your unit administrator or business staff to:

- Generate a complete eBARS equipment inventory under your purview.
- Identify equipment that may be eligible for transfer with sponsor approval.
- Identify equipment that may require surplus processing or additional approvals.

Key points to keep in mind:

- Equipment purchased on active sponsored projects may be eligible for transfer if approved by the sponsor.
- Equipment purchased on expired awards, non-grant cost objects, or with university funds often requires additional approvals.
- If equipment is sold to your new institution, the University must issue an invoice, and payment must be received before equipment can be released.

Because surplus and approval processes can take time, early coordination with the Office of Capital Assets Accounting is essential.

Step 4: Notify Collaborative Grant Services (CGS)

Recommended timing: 3 months before departure

Once your department and college leadership have been informed, notify your CGS Post-Award Manager of your planned departure.

Provide: -Your anticipated departure date - Your new institution (if known)

CGS will:

- Provide you with a list of your active awards and pending proposals
- Coordinate internally with OSPA to support award transfer or closeout planning
- Serve as your primary central point of contact throughout the MOU process

Step 5: Complete the MOU and Initiate Approvals

Recommended timing: 2 months before departure

Work closely with your unit administrator, CGS, and college leadership to:

- Complete the MOU form accurately and fully.
- Attach required documentation, including your eBARS equipment inventory.
- Initiate requests for sponsor approval to transfer awards or equipment, if applicable.

You may also need to coordinate with other University offices depending on the nature of your research, including:

- Environmental Health & Safety
- Office of the Attending Veterinarian and Division of Lab Animal Resources
- Office of Research Integrity (IRB, IACUC, ClinicalTrials.gov)
- Technology Commercialization

Step 6: Finalize and Submit the MOU for Institutional Approval

Must be completed no later than 3–4 weeks before departure

Before your departure:

- Obtain required signatures from your department chair/center or institute director and ADR (or equivalent).
- Submit the signed MOU to your CGS Post-Award Manager.

CGS will route the MOU to the Office of Sponsored Projects Administration (OSPA) for final institutional review and approval.

All required approvals must be in place before you leave the University.

Summary Timeline

- **6-9 months before departure:** Notify department leadership and unit administrator; begin planning
- **4-6 months before departure:** Meet with ADR; review projects and expectations
- **~3 months before departure:** Generate eBARS inventory; begin equipment review

- **2–3 months before departure:** Notify CGS; receive award and proposal list
- **2 months before departure:** Complete MOU and initiate approvals

Need Help?

Your CGS Post-Award Manager is your primary point of contact throughout this process and can help answer questions, clarify timelines, and coordinate with central offices.

Early planning and clear communication help ensure compliance, protect your research program, and support a smooth transition for you and your team.

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