

Change of Scope – Prior Approval Requests (PARs)

What?

A change of scope is an activity whereby the objectives or specific aims identified in the approved grant application are significantly changed by the recipient after award.

This includes any of the following activities that are significantly altered after the project has been awarded: *the aims, objectives or purposes of the project; methodology, approach, analyses, or other activities; the tools, technologies used, and time frame needed to meet the project's objectives; research or training plan included in the original proposal or approved modifications.*

When?

Unanticipated changes to a sponsored project are sometimes needed after it has been proposed and awarded.

You will need to engage with the ORA for a **Change of Scope** when there are significant changes in the research from what was originally proposed and approved. This activity always requires notification and/or approval from the sponsor.

PIs are advised to contact the ORA as soon as possible in the following situations:

- Changes in objectives or scope
 - Neither the phenomena under study nor the objective(s) of the project stated in the proposal should be changed without first obtaining the sponsor's approval. In these situations, the PI should contact the ORA to ascertain whether formal approval is necessary.
- Changes in methodology
 - The PI may wish to pursue interesting and important leads that arise during the conduct of a project or to adopt an alternative approach that appears to be a more promising means of achieving the objective(s) of the project. In these situations, the PI should contact the ORA to ascertain whether formal approval is necessary.
- Significant changes, delays or events of unusual interest
 - It is appropriate for the PI to contact the ORA when they become aware of any delays or adverse conditions that may affect the ability to attain the objective(s) of the project or to meet any time schedules outlined in the original proposal.

How?

Change of Scope PARs are initiated by the PI and are usually submitted to the sponsor directly by ORA. Intentions to **change the scope of work must be communicated with ORA**. The ORA will assist with the review of the request and help the PI make the appropriate decisions regarding the request. The Change of Scope must be externally approved by the sponsor. Principal Investigators (PIs) generally submit/communicate change of scope requests through the ORA unless otherwise established in the terms and conditions of the award.

Many Federal sponsors allow the University to approve select types of unanticipated changes for grants and cooperative agreements. This is commonly known as expanded authority, issued through [2 CFR §200.308](#) and the [Federal Research Terms and Conditions](#). ORA is the designated unit that reviews, approves, and documents such types of prior approvals.

ORA is able to provide guidance on the appropriate method of approval and is also authorized to make the final determination on which method is required.

1. Reach out to the ORA team to determine the next steps for initiating a change of scope PAR with your sponsor. Generally, the terms and conditions of the award will explicitly state how to submit/communicate this type of PAR.
2. External approvals will be monitored by ORA pending the sponsor's decision. The final approval or denial from the sponsor will then be communicated to the PI once it is received. This response will be documented in InfoEd, WCU's grant management software.

Contact Information

For questions regarding this procedure, please contact researchadministration@wcu.edu.