

SIO Policy Regarding Bridge Funding for Researchers (Updated August 2018)

BRIDGE FUNDING

Continuity of employment for skilled Researchers is vital to the future productivity of Scripps. When lack of funding for salary support threatens employment, Scripps strives to provide bridge support if the overall institutional budget allows. This document describes the guidelines for this policy.

According to University of California policy, Professional Research Series scientists are not granted tenure or security of employment, even if they are granted partial salary funding from State resources. Appointment is contingent upon availability of funding, institutional need, and performance.

Eligibility

These guidelines apply to members of the Professional Research (Research Scientist) Series who are in good standing (see below) at the University.

Purpose of Scripps Bridge Funding

When a Scripps Research Scientist anticipates a loss of funding that would result in a salary shortfall, Scripps may provide a period of bridge funding so that the appointee maintains a consistent percentage level of appointment. The purpose of Scripps bridge funding is to provide the appointee with time in which to attempt to restore his or her extramural research salary support.

Amount and Duration

Subject to the availability of funds, salary support equivalent to 6 months at 100% will be available to Researchers who have not received bridge funding in the previous four years. For requests made at times less than four years from the last receipt of bridge funding, the amount available will be evaluated taking previous requests into account. Bridge funds may be used to support less than 100% salary. Bridge funding will not be provided for more than 12 months consecutively except under unusual circumstances.

The minimum criteria required for good standing are as follows:

1. Advancement in rank or step in last academic review (or equivalent satisfactory review), including fulfillment of University service commensurate with rank and step;
2. Maintenance of the participant's position as a leader in a chosen field of research;
3. Maintenance of good standing for all research contracts and grants (e.g., no outstanding agency reports or accounts in deficit).

Preliminary Efforts to Resolve Funding Shortfalls

It is the Researcher's responsibility to mitigate any deficits and to actively attempt to preserve funding resources. Whenever it appears that a funding shortfall could occur, the appointee should immediately consult with the Division Director, Section Head, and other section leaders as appropriate to assist the appointee in resolving any possible shortfalls.

Before bridge funding is provided, the appointee should:

- Pursue any opportunities for funding identified by the Division Director, Chief Administrative Office (CAO), and Section Head;
- Use all discretionary funds, start-up funds and "banked" funds;
- Demonstrate active pursuit of extramural and/or other sources of funding for future salary support;
- Disclose funding sources and describe all savings/downsizing that have been implemented for the research group of the person seeking funding.

The appointee, Division Director, and Section Head are expected to participate meaningfully in this process, and the appointee must demonstrate a proactive role in attempting to restore his or her funding.

Request to Bridge Funding Committee

When all preliminary efforts have failed to provide the needed salary support, the Division Director should submit a request for bridge funding to the Bridge Funding Committee, which is composed of the Scripps Deputy Director for Research, the three Section Heads (Biology Section, Earth Section, and Oceans & Atmosphere Section) and the Department Chair. The request should include:

- The name of the appointee and number of years of service as a Research Scientist;
- A description of what has been already done to resolve the funding shortfall, including evidence that the appointee has actively sought extramural support and that all present and future funding options have been pursued and that expenses have been reduced to the extent possible;
- Description and amount of any bridge funding previously provided by the division or section;
- Evidence that restoration of funding is possible during the bridge funding period;
- The amount and duration of funding necessary to restore salary.

Bridge Funding Committee Consideration

The Committee, in consultation with the Scripps Director, will determine, on a case-by-case basis, the appropriate bridge funding. The corresponding division will administer the funds in conjunction with the VCMS Business Office.

Implementation of Bridge Funding

a. Bridge Funding

The Division Director should meet with the appointee and inform him or her of the amount and length of Scripps bridge funding and to discuss any implications for appointment status.

b. Expectation of Service

Bridge funding is supplied out of Scripps Institution of Oceanography institutional funds, which are used to support service activities. As a result, there is the possibility that those receiving bridge funding support will be asked to provide some additional service appropriate to the amount of funding. Bridge funding recipients should consult with their Section Head to determine if additional service is appropriate.

Conclusion of Bridge Funding

a. Full Salary Support

Bridge funding automatically ends when the appointee is able to support his or her salary, even if this occurs sooner than anticipated by the appointee or Division.

b. Reduced or No Salary Support

If the appointee is unable to generate sufficient salary support, he/she may voluntarily reduce his or her time or appointment status may be changed. Reduction in time can include to zero percent, which can be maintained for one year.

If the appointee is successful in generating the required salary support by the end of the bridge funding period, any previously approved reduction in time will be withdrawn.

In the event regular funding does not materialize, the division may propose an adjustment in appointment status, as appropriate for the individual circumstances. If the appointee is successful in obtaining funding at a later date, such a proposal may be withdrawn.

c. Conversion from Indefinite End Date Appointment to Term Appointment

In cases in which there is evidence that long-term funding is not expected to continue, the division may wish to consider converting an appointment with an indefinite end date to a term appointment (with an end date) by way of a recommendation in the next academic review.

Restrictions

Bridge funding is not required where the appointee acted recklessly, did not mitigate deficits, or by his or her own actions lost funding.

Bridge funding cannot be used to provide summer salary for academic year (9-month) researchers.