Notes on Collaborative Research

1. Please refer to the overleaf for the definition of collaborative research. (Collaborative research projects of AoE, GRF, etc. are not covered in the definition as their funding is considered as research grants.)

2. All colleagues are urged to obtain prior approval of the University via Projects and Grants System (PGMS) **BEFORE** submitting application/ solicitation for external research fund, which includes funding provided by all kinds of research funding scheme (administered by RIO or known to you through other means) and funding support from individuals or other entities for collaborative research projects.

3. While completing the application process via PGMS, the following documents should be uploaded to PGMS for RIO's follow-up:

   (a) Agreement ^{Notes}

   (b) Research proposal

   Notes:
   - *What have been agreed on the overhead charges and IPR? Please refer to the Policy Guidelines overleaf.*
   - *All research-related agreements should be approved by VP(RI). For details, please refer to the "Guideline on Establishing Research-related Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement" issued by the Research Committee in September 2020. The Guideline can also be found in the Handbook for Projects and Grants.*

Policy Guidelines on Collaborative Research

Collaborative Research is defined as the type of research for which funds are obtained from a private company or a public body where the funds received do not fully cover the total cost of the research to be conducted, i.e., the funds received may only be adequate to pay for the salaries of the research personnel or the stipends of the research students plus the purchase of equipment and consumables, but are not enough to fully pay for PolyU's overheads and for the time of our academic staff spent in supervising the research, etc. Under such circumstances, the funds provided by the external source go totally to the academic department concerned and our own existing staff do not receive remuneration for getting involved in the research project. Since the external source only partially meets the overall cost, one of the following applies, depending upon the size and proportion of funding provided by the funding-provider, with regard to the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) on the outcomes of such collaborative research:

(a)   PolyU fully owns the IPR but gives the company itself a non-exclusive right[#] to use the inventions generated from the project free of charge for their own use (however, this right is not transferable, i.e., the company cannot sub-license this right to third parties); or

(# Granting the sponsor the right to use an invention does not mean that the technology that underpins the invention is to be transferred to the sponsor.)

(b)   PolyU and the company share the IPR equally.

Our first choice should be (a). We should only accept (b) if the company is not willing to accept (a) and if the company has paid more than half of the total cost of the project.

The VP(RI) is the approving authority for such collaborative research projects, and the Research and Innovation Office is the administrative office.

In the Report on *Higher Education in Hong Kong* of March 2002, one of the final recommendations made by the UGC was "The Government to create more sources for research funding and to ask existing sources to fund projects on a full cost basis." The reason for this is to prevent the making of hidden subsidies to non-UGC-funded activities. The UGC is of the view that institutions should, as a matter of principle, levy overhead charges on such activities, including projects funded by other Government departments/agencies.

To follow the recommendation made by the UGC, PolyU requires all Principal Investigators to request a flat rate of 15% overhead (based on the total expenditure) in their application/proposal supported by all funding bodies. Deviation from the guiding principles stated above will be considered by the VP(RI) on individual merits, with full justification provided by the Principal Investigator concerned.