

Dual-Career Funding Models

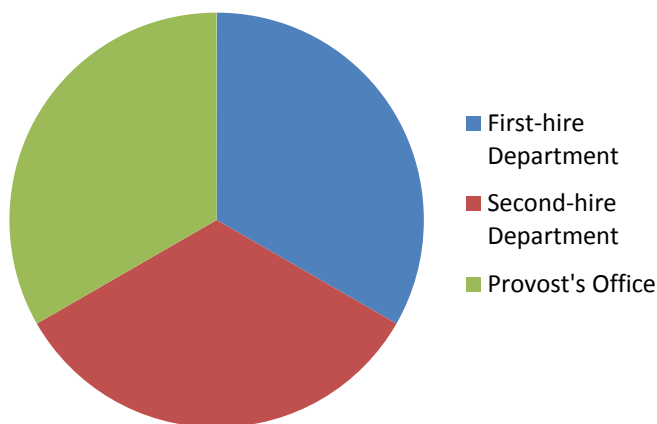
Dual hiring is today part of the cost of running a university. Although department chairs may be key to successful hiring, they are typically constrained by what deans or provosts will or can fund in terms of partner hires. Funding for dual-career hiring requires monies for salary and also startup costs, including laboratory and office space, equipment costs, research accounts, graduate student stipends, staff support, housing packages, support for child care, and other benefits. At any level—junior or senior—it can be expensive. Many provosts or deans reserve incentive or opportunity funds for unexpected hiring needs, and many now set aside such centralized pots of monies for partner hires. Universities with funding available to support partner hiring increase the speed and agility with which they can place qualified and desirable candidates. As one vice provost noted, “One must be nimble with resources.”

A Common Cost-Sharing Model

A common cost-sharing model, used by six of the 13 universities we studied (five public and one private), draws monies for a second hire from three sources: one-third from the department of the first hire, one-third from the department of the second hire, and one-third from the provost’s office. This arrangement can be permanent or guaranteed as bridge funding for anywhere between one and five years—with the most common solution being three years, at which time the hiring department is expected to pick up the full cost of the faculty line (possibly through retirements, increased student demand, or other means). Other universities

(including some who use this cost-sharing model) are flexible and may devise other fractional cost-sharing arrangements depending on the resources of a particular department or program.

Depending on the arrangement, monies for a partner hire revert to the central administration or department(s) paying the bill when a partner leaves or retires.



Centralized Funds

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Many universities allow centralized funds that support dual hires to be used for recruiting or retaining all tenure-track and tenured faculty. Others, by contrast, mobilize these funds only when dual hiring enhances diversity—in terms of either gender or ethnicity. In the past, this strategy has allowed great leeway to dual hiring, given that most couples (except for males in same-sex relationships) include a woman. Some universities, however, now restrict female diversity to those fields, such as physics, chemistry, electrical engineering, and orthopedic surgery, to name a few, where women are underrepresented (and prefer not to use opportunity funds for women candidates joining comparative literature, English, or other departments that have succeeded over the years in cultivating greater gender equity). One university in our study is considering restricting these funds further, using them to recruit women and underrepresented minorities as first hires only and, in this way, address both diversity and equity issues across the institution.

“One must be nimble with resources.”

— Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement



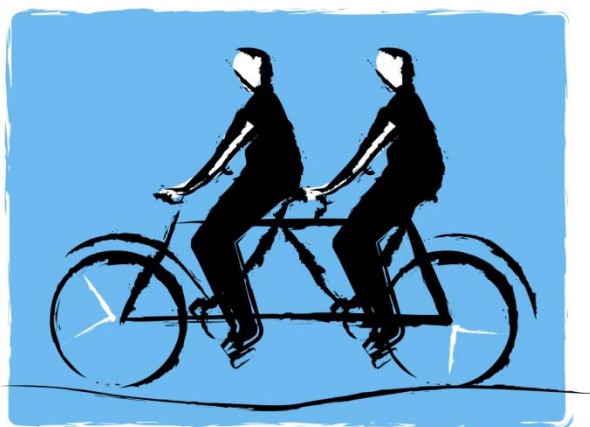
Each university has its own procedure for accessing centralized funds for partner hiring. At some large public universities, requests to the vice provost can be made only by a dean or his or her designate; at other schools, the request may be initiated by the department chair. In all cases, requests are intended to bolster the university's overall priorities balanced against the needs of particular departments or research groups and individual faculty. Once the resources are clarified, the evaluation of the potential hire begins (see What Counts in Hiring Decisions?).

Concerns

Concerns with the Common Cost-Sharing Model

The common cost-sharing model, however, also raises some concerns. Some faculty worry that a funding cutoff after three years can endanger tenure decisions for second hires. One professor wrote that when a second hire was not tenured, she was concerned that it was due in part to the expiration of the agreement by which the first hire's department supported the second hire's salary. Other faculty worry about what happens if couples divorce (a topic that warrants further research). As we suggest in this report, second hires must be carefully reviewed so that excellence is not compromised. A well-designed and communicated protocol outlines a process to ensure that both first and second hires add value to the institution.

It is impossible to say what dual-career programs are likely to cost universities; each university is unique in its administrative structures and resources. Placing a partner can be expensive, especially in science and engineering where start-up packages often require major resources. Losing faculty and this initial investment—for any reason, including partner issues—however, can also prove costly.



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