UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME | RESEARCH

How to Determine the Appropriate Category and Process for Project Support

Subrecipient	Independent Contractor (IC)[1]	Vendor
A Subrecipient is a non-Federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a sponsored program.	An Independent Contractor (IC) is an individual whose expertise is required to perform specific aspect(s) of the project.	A Vendor is a business entity that is eligible to provide services to a project or program under a sponsored award.
A Subrecipient technical lead is usually a scientific collaborator and typically considered a Co-PI of the project. Both entities have PIs involved, though Notre Dame is the lead organization	An Independent Contractor provides technical or business expertise or specific tangible deliverables to the project. These are outlined in a statement of work (SOW). The IC cannot serve as senior personnel (e.g Co-PI, PI, etc.) on the project.	Vendor is a business entity that has multiple personnel. The Vendor cannot serve as senior personnel on the project.
Subrecipient services are uniquely designed in response to each project, and not provided commercially.		A Vendor operates a business in a competitive environment.
A Subrecipient uses sponsor funds to carry out a program rather than provide a good or a service.	An Independent Contractor's fee is based on provision of tangible deliverables on an agreed-to schedule. Fees can also be based on an hourly or daily rate. An IC cannot be an employee of Notre Dame, and is not eligible for employment benefits of any kind (e.g., health insurance, paid leave).	A Vendor's fee is based on services that are ancillary to the project. A Vendor provides a good or service that is narrowly constrained or defined by a service contract.
A Subrecipient retains rights to intellectual property.	An Independent Contractor's services are on a "work for hire" basis and all intellectual property or copyrightable rights should be assigned to UND.	There is no potential for patentable or copyrightable technology to be created through the project from activities of the Vendor.
A Subrecipient is responsible for adhering to applicable Federal or other sponsor's compliance and reporting requirements.	An Independent Contractor is not responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of the research.	A Vendor is not subject to sponsor compliance regulations.
A Subrecipient is responsible for assisting in the development and execution of the project's overall scope of work or research plan	An Independent Contractor does not develop or determine the objectives of the program or the scope of work.	A Vendor may or may not have a scope of work as part of the contract. All SOWs are determined by Notre Dame.
Subrecipient results are likely to be published in the scientific literature and/or a co-author on Notre Dame publications.	An Independent Contractor is not usually included in published documentation of the project.	Joint authorship of publications is not usually sought by Vendors, but could be included in a contract with a vendor such as a Consulting firm.
A Subrecipient has responsibility and authority to make administrative and programmatic decisions and to control the method and result of the work.	An Independent Contractor determines how to accomplish the work. They do not use university resources. They provide their own work area, tools, materials and supplies.	A Vendor does not make programmatic decisions or take actions that impact a program's overall success or failure.
A Subrecipient has responsibility for the end results of the research.	An Independent Contractor is not responsible for the overall outcome of the project.	A Vendor is not responsible for research results or the overall outcome of the project.
How to Secure a Subrecipient: Include the request in your proposal submission.	**How to secure an Independent Contractor:** Use the request form in ServiceNow.	**How to secure a Vendor:** Follow the process outlined by ND Procurement.

[1] Independent Contractors in this context are generally individuals. An individual may work through a business entity such as a sole proprietorship, partnership, or limited liability corporation. In this case, they may be treated as an Independent Contractor for tax purposes by Notre Dame. A firm that provides consulting services should be considered a Vendor.