

# Negotiating Your Start Up Package

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## Overall Principles:

### What goes into an overall package? What might I expect to negotiate for?

- Start-up funds and space
- General support from department or institution
- Salary/compensation, health/retirement (in some cases), other benefits
- All items and customs vary widely by institution

### Know what you **MUST** have **BEFORE** you interview

- You can be more aware during interview process
- You will ask more intelligent questions of future colleagues (vs. chair) during the interview

### Gather some information *during* the interview

- Ask about “typical situations.”
- Do NOT discuss your own specific needs until you have an offer (see “The Negotiation Process”, below).
- Get a sense for what *cannot* be negotiated (what might be simply out of the control of the chair).

### Advice from prior panelists:

- “Don’t negotiate for the sake of negotiating. But DO make sure you’ll have what you *need* to succeed.”  
– Ron Vale, Chair, Dept of Cellular & Molecular Biology (2004-2009), UCSF

### Start-up Funds and Space:

#### Know the stats\*

Average startup costs for new Asst. Professor, Biology

- Private Research 1 University = \$403,071
- Public Research 1 University = \$308,201

High-end startup costs for new Asst. Professor, Biology

- Private Research 1 University = \$437,927
- Public Research 1 University = \$430,270

Source: Reed Science Group Academic Sourcebook, November 2005; Cornell Higher Education Research Institute, Survey of Start-up Costs and Laboratory Space Allocation Rules

\*NOTES:

- Numbers for the types of institutions above vary widely.
- Startup costs at teaching-focused institutions can be 1/10 or less of the above amounts.
- Startup budgets are typical for U.S. academic institutions, but may not be for other countries. For example, in some European countries it is standard for new faculty to be very successful at getting grants. Therefore, an individual institution may not offer any startup budget for research. (This packet provides tips specific to the U.S. Other aspects of negotiation may also be very different in other countries.)

### How are start-up funds structured?

- Lump sum?
- Funded exactly from your submitted detailed list?
- Typically 4 categories: reagents, equipment, staff, research support
- Key: Get enough to cover your costs until you generate another revenue stream. – Boss & Eckert

Enough:

- Reagents
- Equipment – expensive one time cost; you may need to share the equipment
- Staff – recurring cost, so most difficult to negotiate; one student, one postdoc, one technician could exceed \$150,000/year

Until:

- How long will funds be available? 3 yrs? 5 yrs?
- Do you have discretion on the per-year amount that you will spend?
- If you get a grant, do you immediately lose your startup funding?

### General Research Support from Department or Institution

Examples of support you may be able to request from the department/institution (instead of covering them through your own grants):

- Administrative/clerical support – grant writing support, other writing support, teaching prep, dealing with new hires
- Students/postdocs funded by departmental training grants
- Core facilities and shared research equipment/resources
- Office space, support, photocopying
- Computers and software
- Travel support
- Submission and publication fees (can be \$3000+ per year)

### Lab Space

- Space is money (electricity, etc. have a cost associated with them)
- Negotiating for space can be difficult, and may involve the department moving around other investigators, or asking to barter space from other departments. Be sensitive to these issues.
- Quantity, quality and location are all important
- Ask about:
  - Condition of lab space
  - Fit to your program
  - Renovations needed
  - Location/neighbors (this may be more important than quantity of space!)

- Space in animal facilities
- “400 – 1000 sq ft” is typical – Boss & Eckert – Sciencecareers.org
- Try to get the space agreement written into the official offer. Sometimes this can be difficult. Even if it’s in writing, don’t assume the space is yours until you’re there.
- If possible, try to go see the space yourself. If it’s empty, then that’s a good sign! If the space is not ready, ask “is it really realistic to expect \_\_\_ to retire?” (etc.)

### Equipment List

- You may be asked to provide an equipment list as early as the interview process.
- Make a detailed list in a spreadsheet; borrow other recent candidates’ lists as an example.
- Share a *summary* of this detailed list (no more than 1 page). For example, cluster into “Consumables”, “Small equipment”.
- List high-cost items explicitly within your budget summary: you may be asked why these are important, what alternatives (if any), and whether you can share with another investigator.

### Salary and compensation:

#### **Doctoral Institutions**

	95 <sup>th</sup>	80 <sup>th</sup>	60 <sup>th</sup>	40 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
Professor	\$161,179	\$132,969	\$118,809	\$109,662	\$97,807
Assoc professor	\$105,606	\$93,074	\$84,560	\$78,488	\$72,517
Asst professor	\$88,610	\$78,886	\$71,565	\$66,642	\$61,838

#### **Master's Institutions**

	95 <sup>th</sup>	80 <sup>th</sup>	60 <sup>th</sup>	40 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
Professor	\$115,553	\$98,485	\$89,231	\$81,38	\$74,062
Assoc professor	\$88,058	\$76,639	\$69,798	\$65,419	\$60,595
Asst professor	\$73,044	\$65,381	\$58,859	\$55,285	\$52,116

#### **Baccalaureate Institutions**

	95 <sup>th</sup>	80 <sup>th</sup>	60 <sup>th</sup>	40 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
Professor	\$120,125	\$92,311	\$79,853	\$71,534	\$61,690
Assoc professor	\$87,682	\$72,361	\$63,957	\$58,353	\$52,755
Assistant professor	\$70,990	\$60,584	\$53,978	\$49,612	\$45,757

Adjusted for 9-month salary period. Data from Chronicle of Higher Education/AAUP Survey, 2008-9.

[www.chronicle.com/stats/aaup/](http://www.chronicle.com/stats/aaup/)

Does not include faculty at Medical Schools, see AAMC survey

#### **Medical Schools**

	MD/Basic	MD/Clinical	PhD/Basic	PhD/Clinical
Professor	\$183,000	\$249,000	\$148,000	\$154,000
Assoc professor	\$120,000	\$216,000	\$102,000	\$109,000
Assistant professor	\$84,000	\$181,000	\$82,000	\$82,000

AAMC Report on Medical School Faculty Salaries, 2007-08

Salaries are reported for 12-month basis

### Salary structure may be very complex!

- 9-month vs. 12-month structure
- Base salary may vary widely in large univ system
  - Scale, rank, step
  - UCSF Asst Prof, Step 1, Scale 1 = ~\$61K
  - UCSF Asst Prof, Step 6, Scale 9 = ~\$181k
- Salary tables for UCSF and UC – see <http://acadpers.ucsf.edu>
- Plus add-ons at many institutions

#### **At UC:**

- “X factor” = base salary depends on dept’s “scale”, may be the same for all in dept at rank and seniority
- “Y factor” = compensation paid in addition to the base salary; negotiated depending on such factors as the quality, scope, and volume of a faculty member’s teaching, research, clinical and administrative activities
- Z factor” = incentive compensation or bonus; based on service to dept, or outside income.

#### **Other items that might be negotiated:**

- Personal:
  - Salary and compensation
  - Moving expenses
  - Housing assistance
  - House-hunting visit
  - Day care
  - Summer salary support
  - Parking
  - Salary advance
  - Spouse/partner appointments or other dual-career couple issues
  - Individual institutional issues
- Release time
- Teaching load requirements; teaching assistants
- Service requirements
- Tenure clock, contract renewal dates, start date
- Graduate program affiliations

### **The Negotiation *Process*:**

#### **Step 1: Receive the job offer; respond intelligently.**

- Express enthusiasm
- If they don’t offer a printed initial offer, then ask for the basics in writing/email.

Possible responses:

*“Well, this is great news. I felt there was a great potential fit when I was on campus and I’m thrilled to receive this offer.”*

*“It would be really helpful if I could see everything that you’ve just described in writing -- would it be possible for you to send me the basics of what you just offered in an email?”*

- This will give you time to consider the offer carefully and prepare before having a real negotiation discussion. Your goal is to respond only *after* having time to prioritize your requests. You cannot prioritize effectively during this initial conversation!

- Never tip your hand about individual items or overall offer during the initial offer conversation!
- Do not commit to anything.
- If it's clear that something important is missing, don't mention it yet.

**Step 2: Decide if you can succeed in that department. Decide if you MIGHT accept the offer. If so, plan to negotiate.**

- The negotiation process is a detailed conversation about how you will succeed.
- Negotiating is important, to ensure that both sides have thought through what you need to succeed.
- “As a rule of thumb you can expect to win roughly four important points of negotiation in your final offer.”  
*Emory professors Boss and Eckert*

**Step 3: Re-evaluate and prioritize your negotiation requests.**

Prepare private list:

- Make a prioritized list of what you want that is not provided in the offer.
- Re-evaluate your list of the deal-breakers without which you will fail

Prepare public list:

- Provide a 1-page summary (see “Equipment list”, above)
- If asked to provide a detailed start-up lab budget then “the more detailed the budget, the more credible”. This is particularly true if you are asking for an amount very close to or more than what the department can likely offer you.

**Step 4: Begin negotiating.**

**a. Start out with a positive and enthusiastic comment.**

Possible approach:

*First of all, I wanted to say again how thrilled I am to have received this offer...*

**b. Provide an overview of your requests and ask about how to proceed.**

Possible approaches:

*...I do have a number of questions. These questions run the gamut from salary issues, to whether or not my husband will find a job there, to how I will access necessary equipment...*

-OR-

*...I've outlined four main points to discuss with you about the items presented in the email you sent to me.*

*...Is this a good time to discuss these or would you prefer to do it later or perhaps by email?*

**c. Make and defend your first request.**

Possible approach:

*...As we discussed previously, I cannot even begin my research program without that microscope, which the department does not currently own. The total cost of that item alone is going to exceed \$200,000 which is half of the overall start up package offered. Purchasing it from my startup funds would compromise my ability to hire and retain the necessary research staff. I don't see how I can succeed if I have to purchase it from my startup funds...so I'm wondering if there is any way that item could be covered by other funds?*

**Note:**

By email, strategic delays are built in. Even if you are having a discussion on the phone, remember that you can ask to stop and continue later.

Possible approach:

*...Well, I feel like we're at a point where I need to back up and look at everything we've discussed. I'm encouraged by the progress we've made so far. Can we agree to move onto the next points later?*

**d. When at a stopping point, review progress and commitments, find out and/or agree on what happens next; always express appreciation.**

Possible approach:

*...I really appreciate your flexibility on these three items and I'm aware of how much effort it takes to request an approval for moving me to a salary step 2. I feel like we've made a lot of progress already, and I'm looking forward to the possibility of finishing this up. I will re-calculate my reagent budget as you requested and get back to you by tomorrow. What happens from here, on your end?*

**Step 5: Continue making requests and negotiating until finished.**

*Always ask for final agreement in writing.*

We have heard stories from junior faculty who had agreed to items in the offer in conversation, but once they arrived the space was different; or later on the chair changed and they were pushed to a different research/clinical/teaching balance. Getting the offer in writing will help you defend the offer in these situations.

**Principles to follow throughout the process**

- “Approach [the negotiation] as a partnership” (remember, this person also wants to see you succeed)
  - *Shaun Coughlin, Director of Cardiovascular Research Institute, UCSF*
- Always re-open and close each step with appreciation and enthusiasm.
- Negotiate with integrity.
- –This is not an ego trip -- give on some points.
- –Balance satisfaction with relationship issues.
- Be sure that points are documented in writing (email or letter) at every stage of the process.
- Avoid miscommunication when negotiating
  - Keep detailed notes of each conversation
  - Follow up each conversation with an email summarizing the agreed-upon points

- Suggest win-win's.

Possible approach:

*...I'm aware that John Smith and Carol Jones and several others would also benefit from access to this microscope. If you could help find departmental funds to purchase it, I will maintain it and schedule it.*

**Suggested reading:**

Check out from the OCPD library:

- “Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In.” Fisher R, Ury W, Patton B. Penguin Books.
- “Be Honorable and Strategic”, article on ScienceCareers.org by Carnegie Foundation Scholar Chris Golde.
- “Four Negotiating Tips for Women Executives”, Miller L. and Miller J. Wall Street Journal, [careerjournal.com](http://careerjournal.com).