

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Approved by the Regents  
July 19, 2012

REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and the Institute for Social & Environmental Research (ISER)

Action Requested: Authorization to enter into Agreement

Preamble:

A statutory conflict of interest situation was identified by the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects while reviewing the Proposal Approval Form which then triggered a review by the OVPR Conflict of Interest Review Committee. A plan for management of the possible risks associated with the conflict of interest was developed and approved by the Committee and agreed to by the parties involved.

This proposed subcontract agreement (“Agreement”) falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute because Professor Dirgha Ghimire is both an employee of the University of Michigan (“University”) and is the Director and a member of the Board of Director’s of the Institute for Social and Environmental Research (ISER). The law permits such an Agreement provided it is disclosed to the executive officers and approved in advance by a 2/3 vote of the Regents of the University of Michigan.

Background:

Dr. Dirgha Ghimire, Associate Research Scientist in Population Studies at the Institute for Social Research and Faculty Associate at the Survey Research Center, is also the Director and a member of the Board of Directors of ISER (the “Company”). The Company wishes to enter into a subcontract agreement with the University for the proposal submitted to Arizona State University (ASU) titled “CNH: Feedbacks Between Human Community Dynamics and Socio-Ecological Vulnerability in a Biodiversity Hotspot.” The University’s proposal is in support of a broader proposal by ASU to the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the proposed Agreement will conform to University policy. Dr. Ghimire will serve as the Principal Investigator at the University of Michigan with a total subcontract of \$292,884 that is anticipated to cover a period of four years. Since research projects are often amended, these agreements include provisions for changes in time, amount, and scope of each supported project. University procedures for approval of these changes will be followed and additional conflict of interest review will be done as appropriate.

Impact of the Agreement:

The Agreement will enable the University to participate in important research efforts to explore human culture/natural system biofeedback loops, the preservation of at risk human cultures, and the preservation of the biodiversity of the ecosystems which influence the development of those cultures, and in which these cultures exist.

Recommendation:

This matter has been reviewed and approved by the OVPR Conflict of Interest Review Committee. In light of the disclosure and our finding that the Agreement was negotiated in conformance with standard University practices, I recommend that the Board of Regents approve of the University's entering into this Agreement with ISER.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen R. Forrest". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Stephen R. Forrest  
Vice President for Research

July 2012