**BRIDGE SUPPORT POLICY FOR RESEARCH PERSONNEL  
at The National Center for Physical Acoustics**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to clearly describe the procedure by which research personnel can request “bridge support” for salary in the event of a funding interruption. NCPA is a soft money organization in which 100% of salaries are derived from funding sources external to the University. While it is expected that researchers will manage their existing resources and plan proposals out far enough in advance to provide a continuous source of salary support for themselves and their technical support staff, it is understood that temporary breaks in funding do occur from time to time. The source of the bridge support funds will generally come from the main NCPA overhead account. These resources are generated by all research groups in the NCPA and should be managed to maximize the benefit to the entire organization.

**Eligibility**

This policy applies to individual researchers and group leaders (on behalf of their group) who are expected to write grant proposals and whitepapers and take the lead on research projects. In general, this means any researcher who is not fully supported by a Fund 30 account. The Director has the responsibility to decide if use of NCPA resources to support a given researcher or research group is wise. The criteria he/she will use are:

1. Previous need of bridge support
2. Track record of funded proposals
3. A demonstrated understanding of the funding sources applicable to their specialty and impact of current political and economic pressures.
4. Overall benefit that this person brings to the NCPA.

**Criteria for Triggering of the Bridge Support Policy**

The primary criteria for bridge support is the lack of fund 30 resources to fully support an entire research group, core research group, or an individual research scientist. The procedures for requesting bridge support are dependent on the amount and duration of support required and the likelihood of successful acquisition of additional research funds. Any requests for more than one month of salary support must provide a plan and timeline for acquiring sufficient fund 30 resources. The policy and procedures for bridge support are based upon the following criteria:

1. Bridge support for a gap of a “few weeks” between the end of one grant/contract and the beginning of a new one.
2. Bridge support for a period of “few months” to provide gap support subject to promised funding.
3. Bridge support for a period of up to one year to establish a new source of funding.

**Bridge Support Policy**

A request for bridge support under Criteria 1 (for a gap of a “few weeks” between the end of one grant/contract and the beginning of a new one) will include an accurate estimate of the amount of required support to the Director. The Director will decide whether to provide support for an entire group, core group, or individual researcher based upon the funding details of the new contract and pending funding efforts. The Director may have to work with the group leader to mitigate situations where it may not be feasible to fund an entire group. Under NCPA Governance Policy, any expenditure above $50,000 would have to be approved by the Executive Committee.

Bridge support under Criteria 2 (for a period of “few months” subject to promised funding) requires a formal application from the researcher or group leader. It should discuss the circumstance surrounding the “promised funding”, the probability of success, and the timeframe for funding to be awarded. The researcher or group leader should develop a plan for the promised funds and inform the Director according to the guidelines outlined in flow chart below, and a mitigation plan in case the promised funding does not materialize. In the case of group support it should also include a plan for reduction in size of the group.

Bridge support under Criteria 3 (for a period of up to one year to establish a new source of funding) requires a formal application from the researcher or group leader. Support under this criteria will be provided to individuals and core groups and may be limited to reduced salary support (tapered down to 50% minimum) out of building funds. The “salary tapering” timeline would be established in the initial agreement and is subject to the availability of NCPA resources. Since this effort has a lower probability of success the researcher or group leader must provide a well thought out plan for obtaining funding and a mitigation plan of action in the event that the effort is not successful. The researcher or group leader will work closely with the Director according to the guidelines outlined in flow chart below. It is vital that new opportunities be actively and diligently pursued. It would be encouraged that researchers apply for an internal Seed Grant to develop an idea into a full proposal. While these programs are not rigidly linked, there is a natural connection. In general, the milestones and evaluation criteria will come in the form of submitted proposals. The schedule will depend on resources available and funding cycles of relevant agencies, but will be on the order of months.

The schedule, exit criteria, and assessment of efforts funded using Bridge support will generally be established and performed by the Director. The Director is then obliged to report on the progress and outcomes to the Executive Committee. For resources exceeding $50,000, the Executive Committee must approve the bridge support plan and assess the progress of the effort. In the case that no further funding support is obtained over the timeframe of the bridge support agreement, the Executive Committee will determine whether the researcher’s position at NCPA is to be terminated (subject to a minimum 30 day notice) or if an alternative arrangement is feasible and in the best interest of the NCPA.

**NCPA Bridge Support Flow Chart**

