



Title: Space Oversight and Management

**Policy Statement**

The Vice President for Research serves as the space steward for the Office of the Vice President (OVPR) and all of its reporting units. To ensure strategic, efficient, and equitable use of space across OVPR units, space allocation and use is managed centrally by the VPR with support from the [OVPR Space Team](#). The Space Team serves as the primary liaison to the Provost’s Office of Space Planning and Utilization and manages communications with this office on behalf of OVPR units.

OVPR space management activities are supported by the following guidelines.

**Guiding Principles**

- Unit space assignments are not permanent. Space is assigned to activities and not individuals. As such, it may be reassigned as activities change. Space that is vacant or deemed underutilized should be reassigned or repurposed.
- New space needs / pressures should be addressed, if possible, within existing spaces before requesting new or additional space. Underutilized spaces should be repurposed to higher priority needs before requesting new space. Consider re-purposing:
  - Storage spaces / file spaces
  - Work rooms
  - Libraries / resource rooms
  - Conference rooms
  - Waiting rooms / reception areas
  - Training room
  - Kitchenettes or break rooms
- Construction / renovation should be avoided wherever possible. Furniture solutions should always be a first consideration.
- Technology solutions should be used wherever possible to reduce space issues or tensions
  - Remove paper files and image / digitize
  - Support remote working agreements where appropriate
  - Limit computer purchases to laptops to reduce space needs and support remote work
- Space renovations and/or rental to non-OVPR entities must support the strategic needs of the unit and require pre-approval.
- Research space, equipment, and materials must adhere to all health and safety regulations and procedures, as defined by U-M Occupational Safety and Environmental Health (OSEH).

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- Research conducted in University facilities must only support University interests and relationships. All research conducted in such facilities must adhere to University conflict of interest policies. Research space assignments must adhere to all University policies and procedures that prohibit discrimination.

To ensure alignment with these principles, the following types of requests require VPR approval:

- New or additional U-M space
- New or additional leased space
- Renovation of existing space
- Rental of current space to non-OVPR entities

Unit directors must first discuss any space requests with the OVPR Associate Vice President (AVP) that governs their unit. If their AVP supports the request, the unit director should submit the request to the OVPR-Space-Team@umich.edu for handling. The Space Team will review with the VPR and notify both the director and the governing AVP of the disposition of the request as soon as possible. If a request is approved, the Space Team will provide direction to the unit on next steps and assist with implementation.

**Policy Applies To**

OVPR unit directors and administrators  
 OVPR employees

**Relevant Definitions**

OVPR – Office of the Vice President for Research  
 AVP – Associate Vice President

**Responsible for Reviewing and Updating Policy**

OVPR Space Team Lead

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