Establishing an Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

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Overview

• Define sponsored programs
• Research Administrator—a key team player
• Research Administrator’s role in marketing research activities
• Proposal development and submission
• Managing pre- and post-award activities
• Compliance
• Sustainability
• Continuing education
Sponsored Programs

- **Sponsored Programs**: Projects and/or activities that are conducted by faculty and staff members and supported by external funds awarded to the university.

- **Office of Sponsored Programs**: A structure/component of the institution that coordinates sponsored activities/programs; for example:
  - Identification of funding sources
  - Assistance with proposal development
  - Assistance with budget development
  - Proposal processing and review
Role of the Research Administrator

• Research administrators facilitate the link between research activities and research outcomes.
• Research administrators lead efforts to increase the effectiveness and productivity of institutional research by promoting the use of best practices in administration.
Academic Research Team

Principal Investigator manages and performs the science. Authorized Signing Official is authorized to sign on behalf of the institution. Research Administrator supports the business aspects of the grant and coordinates activities.
Research Administrator’s Role in Marketing

Identify Faculty Expertise and Institutional Research Facilities

• Prepare/maintain profiles of faculty research interests
• Prepare/maintain/update descriptions of labs and core research facilities

Disseminate Funding Opportunities

• Determine the best method for the institution;
• Enable faculty to focus on relevant opportunities, to the extent possible
Steps Before Proposal Development:
First Step: Register in Grants.gov

- Step 1: Obtain a DUNS number—Data Universal Numbering System.
- Step 2: Register with SAM—System for Award Management. Go to the SAM homepage at https://www.SAM.gov/
- Step 3: Complete your AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) profile on Grants.gov and create your username and password.
- Step 4: Have the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) at your organization log in to Grants.gov to confirm you as an AOR.
Second Step: Obtain an eRA Commons Account

• The eRA Commons is an online communication venue between the institution and NIH, sharing administrative information relating to research grants.

• The Signing Official must first register the institution with the eRA Commons; the Signing Official can then register the Principal Investigator by creating an account with the PI authority role.
Proposal Development

- Sponsor basic proposal-writing workshops;
- Provide editorial services to faculty;
- Provide proposal templates and remind faculty of guidelines;
- Coordinate the final packaging of the proposal;
- Consider development of an electronic spreadsheets, budget templates, or proposal development software to monitor budgets.
Proposal Review and Submission

• Provide final check for accuracy of the budget (i.e., application of correct rates, identification of investigators and their levels of effort).

• Ensure that proposals comply with federal regulations—make sure compliance reviews are completed as necessary.
Managing Grants: Pre-Award Activities

Award Review and Approval

• Respond to request for “just-in-time submissions”
  – Compliance information
  – Revised budgets
  – Other clarifications
• Review the Notice of Award (NoA)
• Receipt of grant payment (through the Payment Management System)
Managing Grants: Notice of Award

• Legally binding document
  – Award data and fiscal information
  – Grant payment information
  – Terms and conditions of award

• Grantee accepts terms and conditions of award when he/she draws down funds (i.e., starts to spend the money)
Payment of Foreign Grants

• For all awards to foreign institutions issued after October 1, 2012, payment is made through the Payment Management System (PMS) (http://www.dpm.psc.gov/access_pms/system_status.aspx).

• Foreign grantees must register in PMS.

• For foreign awards issued prior to FY 2013, payment is made by the NIH Office of Financial Management (OFM).
Post-Award Management

• Administrative and fiscal monitoring requirements
  – Annual progress report (PHS 2590)
  – Annual “Federal Financial Report” (FFR)
  – Final closeout reports
All NIH grants require an annual progress report. Program officers and grants management specialists review the report to make sure projects are proceeding as planned.

Submission of progress reports:

**Option 1:** Submit using the (PHS Form 2590).

**Option 2:** Submit electronically through the streamlined noncompeting awards process through the eRA Commons.
Federal Financial Report (FFR) SF 425

• Required annually.
• Must be submitted no later than 90 days after the close of the budget period (e.g., budget starts March 1 each year; FFR due June 1).
• Must be filed electronically via the eRA Commons.
• Questions re: FFR, contact Alan Whatley, OFM, (301) 451-9210 or whatleya@od.nih.gov for foreign institutions.
Closeout Final Reports

• Submit closeout documents electronically through the eRA Commons

• Documents are due **within 90 days of project period end date**
  – Final Federal Financial Report (FFR) SF-425 Expenditure Data
  – Final Inventions Statement and Certification
  – Final Progress Report
Compliance

• The Research Administrator’s “oversight responsibilities” ensure compliance with funding agency regulations and standards.

• We recommend developing a handbook or summary of funding agency policies and procedures for staff to ensure that all parties understand the required regulations and standards.
Sustainability: Maximize External Relationships

- Partnerships with industry
- Partnerships with other institutions
- Interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approaches to an area of scientific inquiry
Sustainability: Maximize Internal Relationships

Build cultural support by providing:

• Formal awards for research accomplishments
• An area on the website that can be devoted to the research accomplishments of faculty
Sustainability: Provide Information Tools for Faculty

• Adopt a web-based approach to providing information to faculty about funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) and new initiatives.

• Keep faculty up to speed on proposal processes and techniques (e.g., how to process a proposal through the institutional sign-offs).
Continuing Education: Why Should I Become Certified?

• Professional recognition
• Indicator of expertise
• Advancement opportunities
• Increased credibility with clients
• An individual must meet the requirements of the Research Administrators Certification Council’s eligibility requirements to be a professional research or sponsored programs administrator.

• Information is available at [www.cra-cert.org](http://www.cra-cert.org).
Additional Ways to Enhance Your Knowledge

• Practice the profession.
• Attend professional meetings.
• Join the RESADM-L mailing LISTSERV. Go to the website at http://www.hrinet.org and click on “LISTSERV.”
In Summary

• Understanding your role as a Research Administrator
• Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Sponsored Programs (proposal submission and management)
• Knowing your team players within the institution
• Brokering external relations to help maintain sustainability
• Building a “culture of research” among staff
• Establishing and maintaining your continued education as a professional