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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- The Uniform Guidance – Five Years Later
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ON THE COVER:

A very happy new year to everyone and welcome to the '20s!

Not ones to buck tradition, the *NCURA Magazine* editorial staff wanted to bring our readers something new this year and starting with this issue we are presenting two new features.

As research administrators it is often our job to watch out for our research faculty, staff and students, but who watches out for us? Our new feature, "*Self Care for the Research Administrator,*" takes a look at how we can better take care of ourselves both personally and professionally. In the kick-off article, "*What are you weighting for?*" Jennifer Shambrook opens the series with an always popular topic this time of year—weight.

Our second new offering, "*Region to Region,*" will highlight programs being developed and offered at the regional level. These programs truly are among NCURA's best-kept secrets and it is time to shine the light on them. Derick Jones brings us up-to-date on Region VI's highly successful *LEADMe Program* as it completes its first decade.

But not everything in this issue is new. We will revisit some old topics including continuing education, research noncompliance, diversity and inclusion, cost sharing and leadership but with new insights.

We are also marking the recent 5th anniversary of Uniform Guidance. Pamela Webb takes a look at what changed, what stayed the same, and what we're still not 100% sure about in her article, "*The Uniform Guidance—FIVE YEARS LATER.*"

This issue also includes reader favorites such as "Work Smart," "Notable Practices," and "Spotlight on Research." And there are updates on the much anticipated FRA and PRA conferences in San Juan, Puerto Rico in March as well as for AM62 in August.

So, we bring you something old and something new for 2020. Go out there and make it a good year!

Toni Shaklee, PhD, CRA, CPRA, *is senior editor for* NCURA Magazine. *She serves as Assistant Vice President for Research at Oklahoma State University. Toni is a peer reviewer for NCURA, is a member of the global traveling faculty, and serves on the N&LDC. She can be reached at* toni.shaklee@okstate.edu

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MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

By Denise Wallen, NCURA President

It is with great enthusiasm and gratitude that I start my term as the 2020 NCURA President. I thank you for the opportunity to serve the membership of this dynamic organization. I am committed to and will be focused on supporting diversity and inclusion, providing a venue where members can transparently discuss and share concepts that will advance Research Administration, and encouraging engagement and volunteerism as we move into the future. NCURA has impacted the profession profoundly for more than 60 years and will continue to do so in the future. The NCURA Board of Directors will have the opportunity to once again review the strategic plan to ensure that we are achieving our long-term goals.

NCURA has and will continue to take creative and bold steps into the future. We have an enduring commitment to our membership, our regional and national programs and global partnerships. We remain committed to enhancing the recognition and visibility of our profession, as well as developing and offering opportunities for emerging and senior leadership. This coming year and beyond we will continue to offer cutting edge professional development and innovative learning environments on relevant and critical topics.

We understand that research administrators must have the skills, knowledge and access to the tools to navigate the ever-changing landscape of our federal government, the array of non-federal funders, and our global network. To do so we must be able to look into the future and be ready to operate in this time of change and uncertainties and to embrace the opportunities that lie before us within our powerful research community and network.

We hope this issue of the magazine will help you question the future and help you formulate those questions, answers and strategies for plans and action.

As NCURA members, we have the ability to become involved to support the profession, our colleagues and NCURA's ongoing efforts as a leader in Research Administration.

Please mark your calendars for NCURA's 62nd Annual Meeting this summer from August 9-12 in Washington, DC. Vice President Rosemary Madnick and co-chairs Denise Moody and Jennifer Rodis are planning a stellar conference, I look forward to meeting our new members and reconnecting with colleagues at the annual meeting and throughout the year.

Best wishes for 2020!

Denise Wallen

Denise Wallen *is the 2020 NCURA President and serves as Research Officer, Center for Collaborative Research & Community Engagement/Research Assistant Professor, Language, Literacy & Sociocultural Studies in the College of Education at the University of New Mexico. She can be reached at* wallen@unm.edu

CRISIS, DANGER, AND OPPORTUNITY

Adventures in Research Administration

By Joseph Tomaras

It is often repeated, in online essays and TED talks and the like, that the Chinese character for "crisis" means "danger" and "opportunity." People who read Chinese have debunked this, but like any persistent legend, the frequent recurrence of the false etymology suggests it communicates something people believe to be true. I am referring to it precisely because, looking back on 16 years in research administration, I recall several moments of crisis in which danger and opportunity coexisted as strong possibilities and where resiliency enabled opportunity.

Moments of crisis are hardly unique to Predominately Undergraduate Institutions when key administrative functions are thinly staffed, such as when those individuals either leave the institution or have a major change in their responsibilities. However much we talk about "resilience" and "teamwork," when the number of trained people engaged in a particular mandatory task goes from three to two—or two to one—no amount of resilience can mask the fact that the workload for the remaining individuals just went up by 50% or 100%. Even in a temporary situation, the increased workload may continue after the new person is hired and trained.

If a crisis hasn't happened to you yet, it will. You can try to ride it out—and face the danger that an unsupervised cut corner will come back to haunt you some day. Or you can take it as an opportunity, to advocate for new resources, systems, and processes that will in fact make your office and your institution more resilient.

A key way that individuals and institutions can create resilience is by making sure that responsibility is aligned with authority and, that people have access to the information necessary to carry out their responsibilities in an informed way. Take, for example, the alignment between pre-award and post-award. At a prior institution, the sponsored programs office was regarded by institutional leadership as being exclusively pre-award even though we were responsible for reporting and mandatory pre-approvals. Post-award administration was assigned to one accountant in the controller's office (who also had non-grant-related duties). By keeping lines of communication open and clear, we stayed aware of issues that might trigger the need for pre-approval and nothing went too far off the rails.

Until, that is, the accountant accepted a position of higher responsibility at another organization. The time had come to make the case for a realignment and options were considered. The outcome was that sponsored programs integrated pre-award and post-award responsibilities, functioning as a "business center" by adding transactions and revenues for sponsored awards, subject to review by the controller's office, along with access to all the data we needed to support awards.

"Wait? You took on more work and that's a good thing?" Not exactly. After a three-month trial period, we were able to make a factual case that by having pre- and post- knowledge integrated we had caught questionable transactions before checks were printed, which resulted in a net savings of staff time and effort.

> "If a crisis hasn't happened to you yet, it will."

I won't claim that we handled the transition perfectly. In retrospect, we could have done a better job of explaining the significance to PIs. Some PIs shared a concern that they would be subject to fewer checks and balances and thus at greater risk of inadvertently doing something wrong. Over time, I believe they came to recognize that they were being held to the same high standards as before, but a bit more efficiently.

Perhaps more importantly, the change bought time for the new accountant to develop familiarity with our grants portfolio and to prepare the institution for the next moment of CRISIS: my own departure a few months later. But that is someone else's story to tell, not mine.

Joseph Tomaras *is Director of Foundation, Government, and Corporate Relations at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY. In sixteen years of research administration, with prior positions at the City University of New York (CUNY) and Bates College in Lewiston, ME, he has done pre-award and post-award, been departmental, college, and central, and taken on more than a bit of research compliance and research development, too. He can be reached at* jtomaras@sarahlawrence.edu

Becoming a Better Professional through Continuing Education

By Hagan Walker, Nicole Bryant and Emily Devereux

Thinking of going back to school or pursuing a professional certification? Continuing education is a mechanism to attain a new future. Education provides an expanded skill set, increased knowledge, broader opportunities, greater personal fulfillment, and rewarding professional development. While it is a large time commitment, especially if you are studying while juggling your day-to-day duties as a research administrator, the choice to pursue such a program can lead to numerous on-the-job benefits and open new doors for your career. As the saying goes, "The best way to predict your future is to create it."

EARNED BENEFITS

When considering the benefits gained from earning an additional degree or certification, the knowledge obtained in the program is only one aspect. Many other skills are also honed and contribute to your development as a well-rounded professional. These skills are of value not only to you personally but also to your employer.

Collaborative skills are reinforced through class projects and group work. Presentation skills are sharpened over time through assignments, workshops, and the need to adopt new technology platforms. Communication skills are refined in the many papers, discussion boards, and group chats. Proficiency in the use of technology is encouraged through various channels such as using statistical software, creating word clouds or developing infographics.

Your writing skills will grow and become more refined. As you write to an elevated standard, you naturally raise the bar on your own day-to-day performance, and the quality of your work improves. Some programs will require you to develop research skills similar to a PI's, which can help you provide better, more targeted support.

Through managing work, school, family, and other commitments, continuing your education can help you build excellent time management skills. Likewise, a personal resilience emerges after facing the challenges found in pursuing further education and attaining that goal. As research administrators working in a high-volume, deadline-driven field, such skills are crucial to managing stress and fulfilling commitments.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

In addition to improving numerous skills, there are myriad gains that come from committing time and energy to continuing your education. This could be a more informed perspective on your field, or a new career path that can lead to new opportunities and potentially higher financial returns. For example, some institutions may value a CRA or Master's degree and offer a pay increase. Within the academic workplace, the value of education is recognized; oftentimes, faculty will perceive you in a new light, resulting in an enhanced relationship as a peer, a greater consideration of your opinion and advice, and a better understanding between administrators and investigators. Relationships and networks that you develop in classes can be leveraged for additional collaborative opportunities.

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."

CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER

Weighing the cost of these programs includes not only financial commitments, but also taking into account increased stress that is likely to occur. Studies have found perceived stress to be present in research administrators, and enrollment in additional degree coursework was considered as a potential contributor to overall stress (Shambrook & Roberts, 2011). Incorporating school work with a professional career and other commitments may lead to an increased risk for burnout. Expectations for what comes after completing your program should be evaluated realistically, as there may not be an obvious advancement path within your current organization.

STEPS TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Continuing education opportunities come in many forms. Graduate programs to obtain a master's or doctorate are offered by many institutions through either on-campus or distance learning formats. Research administration certifications such as the CRA, CPRA, or CFRA may closely align with your career goals, but are likely to require either preparing on your own or forming study groups that meet in person or virtually. Training and leadership development programs offered by your institution or by professional societies such as NCURA are another option. You may have completed an on-campus program when first entering your position, but you could revisit the program to refresh skills or learn new material.

How can you get going? Learn if your employer offers tuition assistance and take advantage of this opportunity. Full tuition remission is often available for full-time employees. Understand the requirements for getting into a program and the time commitment needed to be successful. Make an investment in yourself. Additionally, consider the NCURA Education Scholarship Fund. NCURA is committed to the professional development of research administrators. This fund was established in 2011 to provide support to members seeking graduate education in research administration. Visit www.ncura.edu/Education/EducationScholarshipFund.aspx to learn more.

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Research Administrators as Catalysts for International Cooperations

By Ioannis Legouras

Collaboration lies at the heart of science and innovation, and so many scientific activities take place with an eye on the establishment of new collaborations. Research papers, scientific conference and workshops, access to research infrastructures, and multi-beneficiary funding instruments all evolve around bringing scientists together and providing the proper framework for them to collaborate. Whenever the topic of international cooperations is raised in the context of a university or a research institute, there is immediately a polarized discussion among different science managers and scientists. On one hand, we have the international cooperations that take place purely bottom up through pure scientific interactions that are initiated and carried out from the scientists themselves. On the other hand, we have the large strategic cooperations, which are more institutional, that are conceived and initiated at the leadership level and carried out top down depending on which research fields fit within the scope of the interaction. What is the exact role of science administrators in these two cases and how can we have an impact?

In the bottom-up scenario, it could be argued that the interaction is already set and there is no need for external support. That could be true when the financing is already secured and when the interaction takes place between partners who have experience interacting with each other. When either is not the case, it is very often the grant managers who will help the scientists identify the relevant funding opportunities and provide counsel on how best to secure the funding. Additionally, if the partners have no or limited experience in interacting with each other, the grants managers can be the only professionals that can lay down all the difficulties and link the legal, technology transfer and compliance departments. Without international competence, it would be almost impossible to analyze all possible pitfalls and design the cooperation agreement in a way that benefits both partners without causing any harm.

In the top-down scenario, it becomes more evident why the role of research administrators is indispensable. First, the international research administrators are the best persons equipped with knowledge and experience of international aspects of research cooperation, so they can be a perfect sparring partner of the leadership in aspects of initiation of international collaborations. Second, it is highly likely that research administrators can have a higher sensitivity and insight for the potential difficulties when embarking on an international collaboration. Language and terminology barriers can slow down a collaboration, and grant managers can counsel the leadership from the beginning to make sure to use all resources available at the institute to promote the new collaboration.

In both scenarios, the research administrators can combine the grant world with the world of international cooperations. As soon as the promise or the possibility of funding appears, there is much stronger support both from the scientists as well as from the leadership to invest many resources in the success of the collaboration. Additionally, the research administrators that are internationally focused have a wide network of international partners and experts at various institutes that they can mobilize to get answers to difficult questions in the initiation and implementation of a new research collaboration.

How can research administrators leverage their position to improve the acceptance of the profession and also the scientific success of the organization? One way would be to identify partners and initiate capacity building grants. The advantage of capacity building actions is that in the beginning they cost very little money, and they rely mostly on the effort of the individuals. After the best partners have been identified, the research administrators can establish interaction among themselves and engage in exchanges of best practices. After a certain level of trust has been established, capacity building grants can be identified from national or international sources. In Europe at least, there are many funding mechanisms with the aim to expand the capacities of institutions in diverse fields such as science communication, scientific training, grant management or excellence in human resources approaches. Additionally, there are grants that let a less experienced or established institution join forces with an already established institution to learn how to increase the critical mass and the excellence in a specific research direction. In those cases the research administrators can take the initiative and proactively identify topics for the institute to engage in and network. As soon as such capacity building programs exist, they provide the fertile ground for various further collaborations to flourish. Especially for large complicated grants, there is often some skepticism regarding whether or not the researcher can afford to take over the complicated task of managing the whole preparation process. If the research administrators are linked together from the beginning, they can relieve the researchers from so many strategic and organizational aspects, so that they can concentrate on their science.

It should be our goal and our approach to understand these advantages and use our research administrator networks (such as NCURA or other regional networks) in order to start more formalized interactions among our institutes that can lead to operational and scientific excellence in the long run. We should additionally make sure to stay close to our leadership and provide our clear arguments and make our senior management aware of our large networks and the support we can provide in order to increase our chances to really become catalysts for successful cooperations.

Ioannis Legouras *is an expert in funding strategies and international strategic cooperations. He is Vice Head of the Strategic Cooperations and Research Funding department and Head of International Programs at the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC), whose work includes establishment of international cooperations, science strategy and policy, identification of funding opportunities, proposal preparation and financial management of successful grants. He can be reached at* **Ioannis.Legouras@mdc-berlin.de**

Perseverance through *Determination*

Registration open! www.ncura.edu/fra

March 2 & 3, 2020
Financial Research Administration Conference

March 4, 2020
FRA and PRA Workshop Day

San Juan Puerto Rico

#NCURAFRA

As I look out my window at the frozen tundra I wonder how much longer until warm weather arrives. Then it hits me! NCURA's Financial Research Administration Conference is being held in San Juan, Puerto Rico March 2-3rd, with workshops on March 4th. What a wonderful opportunity to take a break from winter, recharge your vitamin D levels and fill your brain with new knowledge. It's a win-win!

The FRA conference kicks off Monday, March 2nd with a keynote panel of colleagues from local universities to talk about Hurricanes Irma and Maria and the effects on their institutions and research activities. These universities, as well as the people of Puerto Rico, exemplify the theme of this year's FRA Conference – "Perseverance through Determination." Whether you are new to research administration or a seasoned research administrator the conference will have something for you.

Session formats include concurrent sessions and discussion groups with topics such as F&A rates, how to survive an audit, effort reporting and updates from Federal agencies including National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and others. Need a break from finance topics? The Human Capital track has sessions on leadership, lean strategies and public speaking. You will also find the conference has many opportunities for networking with your fellow research administrators, either in the exhibit hall or on the terrace soaking up the sun.

Workshops follow the FRA conference on Wednesday March 4th. Join us for a full-day workshop such as "Certified Financial Administrators Body of Knowledge Review Session." Only want a half-day of workshops? We've got you covered there too. There are workshops for newer research administrators, or those who want a refresher course, such as "Introduction to Post-Award" or advanced level workshops such as "Empowering and Leading our Human Capital through Organizational Transitions and Change Management." There are sessions and workshops for all levels and interests of financial research administrators.

When not at the conference, San Juan offers something for everyone; three main beaches for relaxing, swimming or other aquatic activities, over 500 years of history in Old San Juan all showcased by walking and bus tours and an abundance of shopping and dining opportunities. Old San Juan features one-of-a-kind shops with souvenirs and locally made treasurers, while the Mall of San Juan and the Plaza Las Américas provides more traditional shopping. Be sure to check out the FRA microsite, which includes a link to "Discover Puerto Rico" that highlights all the places you can't miss while on the incredible Island of Puerto Rico.

There is no doubt that Puerto Rico was impacted by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. "Just by being there, you are helping the recovery," says chef José Andrés. "Puerto Rico is definitely one of the most beautiful places on earth, a place I hold close to my heart." Andrés, the James Beard Foundation's 2018 Humanitarian of the Year, was one of the first on the ground to help feed everyone impacted by the storms. ("Support Puerto Rico's Recovery Efforts by Eating at these Incredible Restaurants" Christine Quinlan, Foodandwine.com). By attending the NCURA FRA Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, you can help the island continue to recover from the catastrophic hurricanes, increase your knowledge on research administration topics, network and build relationships with fellow research administrators and enjoy the nice weather in the middle of the winter. It does not get any better than that. We hope to see you in San Juan, March of 2020!

Conference co-chairs,

Ben Prince
University of Massachusetts Medical School

Shannon Sutton
Western Illinois University

Truths, Consequences and What's Next in Grant Applications:

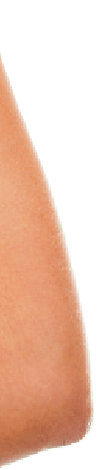
A Peer Reviewer's Insight into What Matters Most for Success in Grant Applications

By Jill Mortali and Allan Bieber

Anyone who has been involved in the grant application process has observed the last minute rush to compile all of the various components of the proposal, from the research plan to the administrative details. Did the researcher just start writing it last week? Last night? Pre-award offices often only observe the very rushed review process and, unfortunately, are often given limited time to review and reflect upon what makes a proposal successful.

While many departmental and central administrators tend to focus their review on the administrative components, understanding the peer review process is essential. I sat down with a researcher who has served on many peer review groups to get an insider's perspective.

Allan Bieber, Ph.D., of Dartmouth College's proposal development office, has served on many review groups, including NIH, DoD and the Multiple Sclerosis Society. His own research focuses on neuroscience and his study section experience has been related to neuroscience as well, including research grants, training grants and career development awards. I asked Allan to reflect on his service as a peer reviewer and his current role in grant development to highlight essential "truths" of success, "consequences" of mistakes and what's next on the horizon.



Truth #1:

Always read the funding opportunity, in particular the evaluation criteria. Allan points out that review groups often have a different focus depending upon their charge. Is the funding opportunity a regular research grant? Scholar or career award? What is the makeup of committee? These are all important to understand. Reviewers of research grants versus career awards focus on very different aspects of the proposal. It may seem obvious, but the research plan is the most important component of a research proposal, whereas the research plan is actually less important for career awards. Reviewers of career awards are focused on the career development plan, the background of the candidate and the track record of the mentor. Review panels for foundation proposals might include community members who are not scientists, which is important to keep in mind.

Truth #2:

Advise your researchers to get on a study section. The opportunity to review proposals and listen to the comments of the reviewers is an invaluable experience. There is no better way to learn what a good proposal looks like than to read a hundred of them; the good ones always stand out.

Truth #3:

When thinking about or planning an application, talk to everyone! Allan explains "Talk to program officers. That's what they are there for. Write the aims page and send it to them and ask 'does this fit' with the funding announcement? Program officers are not adversaries. They are there to help people get funded. They are really knowledgeable and may have actually written the call for proposals."

Consequences #1:

A common mistake is waiting too long to start writing. Researchers may think about a new grant proposal for months, but it is different to put pen to paper. Waiting to start writing doesn't allow time to deal with problematic areas that might otherwise be addressed. Problematic areas can be minor or major. As Allan further explains "Often, problems can be addressed if you think like a reviewer and address the problem with a solution." For example, not having access to a resource or animal model can be a problem, but it is a problem that can be addressed if time is available to arrange a collaboration and fine tune the proposal. Good advice from Allan: "Ignoring problem areas won't make them go away."

Consequences #2:

Not understanding the funding announcement and sponsor review criteria can be a fatal mistake. Among the top reasons why research proposals don't get funded is the absence of statistical analysis. With respect to career development proposals, lack of a track record for the mentor can be a big problem. The mentor's experience is weighted heavily in the scoring of career awards.

Consequences #3:

Using the peer review process as the only critique is time consuming, inefficient and painful. Get your colleagues and peers to review your grant before you submit it. Expert input from colleagues can prevent you from submitting a grant with weaknesses and flaws that might lead to a rejected proposal, and this can save you months of time in your pursuit of funding. Some researchers struggle with language. Take advantage of editing services, both general editing services and scientific review. Have the proposal written a month before the deadline.

In Allan's experience, if you are making changes at the very end, half of them will make the proposal better and half will make it worse while changes made early in the process tend to make it better. If you are far from the finish line, a big issue can be fixed. If you are close to the finish line, tweaking can make it worse. Have proposals reviewed by colleagues and listen to what they say. Work on writing and organization.

Emerging Issues

Rigor has emerged as a big topic since Francis Collins wrote a paper in 2014 and noted that too large a percentage of research couldn't be reproduced (Collins & Tabak, 2014). The paper makes the point that a "a complex array of other factors seems to have contributed to the lack of reproducibility" including poor experimental design and investigators lacking in training in statistics. Allan points out that "The pressure to publish sometimes means that research gets published before it is finished." Grant applications and study sections are now focused on various components related to rigor including data analysis, scientific premise, background in the scientific literature, techniques, considerations of gender differences and authentication of biological materials.

Another emerging area with the potential to impact proposal success is convergence research. As stated in a briefing from the National Academy of Sciences (National Research Council, 2014), convergence is "an approach to problem solving that cuts across disciplinary boundaries." As Allan explains, part of the conversation relates to "Scientific research isolated from society." Part of NSF's 10 Big Ideas, Convergence Research focuses on society's compelling problems and involves the integration of knowledge, methods, and expertise from different disciplines. Scientific discovery and innovation benefits by multi-disciplinary teams. In response to this report, NSF and other agencies have issued funding opportunities.

In summary, I asked Allan how to avoid "stupid mistakes" in proposal development. I will first note that he didn't say the cliché that there are no stupid mistakes. What he did say is "Talk to people. People are so secretive. Get your grant out front of people. Talk to the program officers at NIH and NSF. Talk to OSP. People don't want to get criticized, but you can't know everything."

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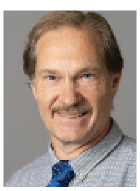

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Research, Data Mining, Artificial Intelligence, and Electronic Medical Records

By Christina Stanger

We all know big data and artificial intelligence are the trendy, now, happening thing in research. It can be applied to any area of research, and it has become the holy grail in medical research. Over the past few years our pre-award office at the MedStar Health Research Institute, located just outside of Washington, DC, has been inundated with business associate agreements, data use agreements (DUA), and data sharing agreements for all sorts of data-driven projects with no slowdown in sight. Like any research administrator working in the medical arena, our staff has learned to walk this landmine-filled terrain by exploring some fundamental questions.

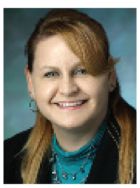
Who really qualifies as a business associate and a covered entity? What data points fall into the data elements defined for a DUA? Is there potential for intellectual property generation with these agreements? Can the principal investigator be trusted to define de-identified data in a legal sense? (By the way, the answer to that last question is always no, get a copy of the data elements to be shared before drafting your agreement. Trust me, I've been there.) However, these challenges are old news and just par for the course these days. So, what is next?

The next big data and artificial intelligence wave is at the crossroads of research, data mining, and electronic medical records. If you're risk adverse like me, you're shaking your head saying no way, no how! HIPAA, HIPAA, HIPAA, regulatory issues, and just no! Well little bird, it is time to flap your wings and fly out of your nest and your comfort zone. This is where big data and artificial intelligence are heading, and guess who must make sure it is done compliantly and legally? You got it, it starts with research administration.

The crazy, wonderful, flip side of this is the impact this new era will have on medical research and public health. For clinical trials, this could mean super-fast feasibility searches for studies. Imagine being able to enter your inclusion/exclusion criteria into software and in less than ten minutes know how many patients would be a fit for your study. With the proper IRB approval you may even be able to get a list of possible participants to recruit for the study. How much does negotiating a lengthy clinical trial agreement, only to have your research team unable to enroll participants, waste time and damage institutional reputation? This information would also be great during proposal development. Before spending months writing the next NIH clinical trial proposal, your research team would really know if they had the patient population in-house or if they'd need to collaborate with multiple external organizations to get the participants necessary to make their findings statistically significant. How much time gets wasted searching for new sites and asking for pre-approvals to add new subawardees to a clinical trial grant because this information is discovered months into the study? And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Health, quality, safety, and healthcare delivery research has been around for a while now, but our office is seeing a huge boom in research projects and we're not the only ones. Researchers are looking at usability and interoperability of electronic medical records that potentially affect or correlate with patient health and the impact on physician burden (Howe et al., 2018, Sittag et al., 2018, Khairat et al., 2018, Fry et al, 2019, Ratwani et al., 2018). Also, there are studies which use big data to predict pediatric sepsis infections (Le et al.,2019), diabetes and cardiovascular disease (Dinh et al., 2019), and more, but their key comment is that electronic medical records are the next step. This is valuable research that can only be achieved by moving forward into the research administration unknown. Okay, so maybe it's not "the unknown." It's just data mining, artificial intelligence, and electronic medical records. However, it is tricky, feels risky, and isn't done every day.

So, as a research administrator how can you help your researchers and still be compliant? This is one of those "it takes a village" answers. For me and my team, we work much closer with legal, compliance, privacy, information systems, and the IRB than we ever have in the past. Being co-located with those departments has been a huge advantage. We can set up quick group meetings to discuss barriers and figure out what we need from the research teams. We bounce issues off each other more regularly with a low threshold for engaging the other offices. We can easily check on action items required to help push projects forward. Working in a such an inclusive way has led to some creative solutions. For instance, working with our information systems team we learned that they could set up a fake electronic records system with dummy data to test algorithms and search engines that don't absolutely need our PHI. Our information systems team has gotten stronger in this process as well. They've developed a much more sophisticated system for vetting possible collaborators who would need to access our electronic records and systems. We've turned down numerous collaborators that simply didn't have adequate security or fully understand the requirements for managing PHI. Each project is different and unique in its requirements and complexity. Some projects are doable, while others we've had to walk away from. These days, I find myself spending more and more time coordinating meetings and connecting with other administrative offices for solutions. In the end, it does help me sleep better at night knowing that we've dotted all our i's and crossed all our t's. As the work of research teams begins to change, it is important that we on the administrative side take the time to ensure that we are protecting our institutions and our patients. At the same time, we need to be bold and progressive as we push toward that next era of research. We can't completely remove the red tape, but we can be innovative with how we apply it. N



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2 CFR 200

The Uniform Guidance

5 YEARS LATER

By Pamela Webb

UG - The Ghost of Regulations Past

Consolidating eight sets of regulations into one has settled in and research administrators have, by in large, gained comfort and familiarity with the December 2014 Uniform Guidance (UG) regulations. The consolidated set of requirements has reduced the learning curve, and in some cases, administrative burden for new research administrators and veteran research administrators alike. No longer needing to remember which specific regulations apply, for example, to non-profit organizations v. universities has helped bring consistency in practice and has expedited issuance of subawards and review of associated expenditures. Since many of the "old" A-21, A-110, and A-133 requirements survived the transition, the "shock" of transitioning to new regulations has proven less daunting than originally envisioned and has helped focus attention on areas that still need collective attention. A meaningful and often overlooked element of the UG is its definitions. The clarified and expanded set of definitions in the UG have proven helpful in reducing areas of confusion. While not perfect (for example, it remains unclear whether the definition of "non-federal entity" is supposed to include or exclude foreign entities), the UG definitions have done their job in reducing overlap and sharpening stakeholder understanding.

UG - The Help of Regulations Present

Agencies have done a solid job completing implementation of the new requirements, and happily, most auditors recognized the transition and "requirements-in-motion" elements of the first couple of years. Some elements of the new regulations were ultimately seen to be unnecessary (for example, agencies did not feel the need to implement agency-specific forms that their grantees would be required to use in order to document their determination of whether a given transaction was a subaward or a contract [vendor]).

Improved Clarity around Specific Costs. Several important changes in the UG have resulted in clarified expectations, and these in turn have reduced friction between investigators and their sponsored projects offices, and reduced audit risk. These include the ability to ask for funding for administrative or clerical services that are "integral to a project or activity" and the ability to fund computing costs less than $5,000 when such items are essential and allocable to the project to "acquire, store, analyze, process, and publish data and other information electronically, including accessories (or "peripherals") for printing, transmitting and receiving, or storing electronic information."(200.20) The UG clarification around programmatic salary costs, including costs related to protocol development and maintenance, managing substances/chemicals, managing and securing project-specific data, and coordination of research subjects, has proven to perhaps be even more beneficial and more broadly used than the long-desired "admin or clerical." The clarity offered by the UG on these and other topics (including short-term travel visas, utility cost adjustments, and participant support costs) have been noted and appreciated.

Effort Reporting -> Payroll/Project Certification. Most research administrators, if asked, would probably cite the ability to consider alternative methods of verifying the accuracy of salary charges or effort commitments as the most important (or at least among the top three!) changes offered in the UG. Institutions have banded together to build upon the FDP Project Certification pilot efforts through the efforts of a group called CERA (the Cohort for Efficiencies in Research Administration). Initially funded by NCURA, the Alternatives to Effort Reporting Initiative is helping institutions identify models for moving away from effort certification to project or payroll certification. The group documents key standards related to compliance with 2 CFR 200.430, shares best practices, works through challenges, and discusses outcomes of their work.

Micro-purchase/Purchasing Thresholds. Competing for "most important change offered by the UG" would probably be the micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds. Although unclear in December 2014, the tireless efforts of the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR), the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP), guidance in the National Defense Authorization Acts of 2017 and 2018, and strong partnership with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has borne fruit. Specifically, via the release of OMB Memorandum M-18-18 the federal micro-purchase threshold (MPT) has increased to $10,000 and the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT) to $250,000, and a process has been put in place for institutions who seek a threshold higher than $10,000. These significantly-increased thresholds help institutions expedite purchases for their research projects while still maintaining reasonable stewardship of federal funds. COGR's David Kennedy, speaking about this change, reported that while the implementation of the MPT and SAT created some angst (e.g., the recent 2019 Compliance Supplement language could have been smoother, and we still are awaiting final incorporation of the NDAA language into the FAR), most institutions are settled, in compliance, and comfortable with the new procurement requirements.

UG - The Hope of Regulations Future

Challenges continue, however, with the following areas still creating uncertainty: Proper use of the *de minimis* F&A rate, enhanced guidance applicable to for-profit partners, duplicative subrecipient monitoring, lack of clarity about conflict of interest requirements, whether the utility cost adjustment will be fully honored in F&A proposals, and federal enforcement of F&A obligations. Additional OMB and agency guidance in these areas would be most welcome – and some may come as early as 2020.

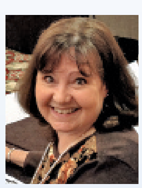
***De Minimis* Rate.** The *de minimis* rate (currently set at 10% total direct costs) was a welcome addition in the Uniform Guidance and offered some real administrative relief to foreign entities and small organizations that were not yet positioned to negotiate their own F&A agreement with the federal government or their pass-through entities. Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) welcomed the change and valued the OMB FAQ that allowed – but did not force – them to negotiate a rate with their proposed subrecipients (most IHEs do not have the bandwidth, nor sometimes the expertise, to negotiate F&A rates with a subrecipient). However, it quickly became clear that a problem still remained. Some proposed partners had previously held a federally-negotiated F&A rate, and though their rate had since expired, the existing *de minimis* rules do not allow the 10% rate to be used for these entities. This created uncomfortable pressure on federal agency officials and grantees alike to negotiate or otherwise approve a rate for this set of partners, as well as created confusion since pass-through entities did not always know whether their proposed subrecipient had previously held an approved rate. We hope that in the future, OMB will allow the *de minimis* rate to be used for all entities that do not currently hold an approved federal F&A rate.

"AGENCIES HAVE DONE A SOLID JOB COMPLETING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW REQUIREMENTS…"

For-Profits. There is also future opportunity to be able to address the historic issue of requirements applicable to for-profit entities. IHEs typically do not have insight into how the costing structure functions for for-profit entities, and many companies decline to share their costing information. Many years ago, IHEs were able to solicit information from their Cognizant Audit official or other federal representative to confirm the accuracy of rates contained in proposals, but with reduced levels of federal staffing, this is a function that is largely no longer available. The obligation for a pass-through entity to ensure proper costing continues (and should continue), but the tools to allow this to occur in a timely and meaningful way remains a future opportunity. As partnerships between the federal government, IHEs and non-profit grantees, and business continue to expand, this will likely become an increasingly important topic for discussion.

Subrecipient Monitoring. Even at the time of its creation, the UG topic of subrecipient monitoring (and in particular, the need to perform up-front risk assessments, including review of Single Audits) was a point of potential misunderstanding between the federal government and grantees. From OMB's perspective, the updated sections of the UG (particularly 200.331) were intended to provide regulatory relief for grantees by allowing pass-through entities to stratify their risk assessment process by taking into consideration the risk reviews already performed by federal agencies and auditors. Unfortunately, access to federal agency management decisions about prospective grantees was never able to be made publicly available, and the audit community has continued to expect pass-through entities to review and assess the Single Audits of their subrecipients. The 21st Century Cures Act specified that HHS should improve requirements for subrecipient monitoring, and that – as well as OMB's original intention to provide a remedy – may lead to more explicit relief in the next version of the UG. For IHEs, the request to the government has been for creation of an audit "safe harbor" that would eliminate the need for grantees to perform up-front audit reviews for their entities already covered by the Single Audit Act, instead relying on the already existing audit function and federal agency risk review process to identify and address areas of concern. Stay tuned to see if some relief may be in store for us in this area!

Continued Refinements. Finally, work continues on transforming the culture to implement many of the benefits available in the original version of the UG – at grantees, at vendors, in the audit community and within the federal government. Grantees are still in the process of planning and implementing project certification as an alternative to effort certification, and vendors are adjusting their effort products to facilitate this new way of doing business. Grantees continue to refine processes and policies to update citations and to adjust business requirements. Conflict of interest issues (beyond procurement) and conflict of commitment issues still need attention – and continued work in this area is underway at the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). F&A issues continue to need attention – some agencies continue to approve a reduced F&A rate for a number of their programs (without it being clear that such deviations meet the UG standards), or continue in their funding opportunity announcements to emphasize the merit of voluntarily reducing F&A rates, and more clarity is needed in what is – and what is not – acceptable. New, unexpected issues need to be addressed – like whether adjusting F&A on transfer grants to provide direct cost equivalency for incoming principal investigators could mean a violation of an agency's cost-sharing policy. Auditors are continuing to challenge the inclusion of the Utility Cost Adjustment in F&A rate proposals. The Compliance Supplement, providing guidance to auditors conducting their Single Audit reviews, continues to evolve as well. These sorts of bumps or wariness should be expected in the course of full implementation of this new set of rules. From the grantee community perspective, the time may be propitious to resurrect a request that could not realistically be achieved during the initial UG implementation; namely, that of having a single OMB ombudsperson – or a series of ombudpersons at each federal agency. Such an ombudsperson function could facilitate the agency-recipient partnership to take full advantage of the critical regulations and to help ensure they can continue to be refined and materially understood by all stakeholders. N



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Board Update

We wanted to let the NCURA membership know that the Board of Directors approved a change in the NCURA Administrative Policies effective December 2019 (see www.ncura.edu/AboutUs/Policies.aspx). Key changes include the following:

- Removed in its entirety the language in **Section III.E** regarding the procedures for regional meetings held outside of the regional annual meeting. The Professional Development Committee, in collaboration with regional leadership, will be reviewing these procedures in 2020.
- Added a new **Section X.B** to further demonstrate NCURA's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion: "*National and regional committees shall consider Diversity and Inclusion in all volunteer positions and recognition awards in accordance with the Council's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion. While it is recognized that past volunteer experience may be necessary criteria for consideration, no volunteer positions or recognition awards should intentionally exclude members from consideration*."
- Moved previous **Section XIII.A** from Policies to new separate Procedures section to clarify the procedure that must be followed for the membership to propose an amendment to the Council's Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws.

Please be on the lookout in the March/April issue for the Board of Directors update from the February board meeting. In order to be as transparent and available to our membership on an ongoing basis, we encourage our members to reach out to NCURA's Executive Committee and/or Board of Directors with any questions or concerns at any time.

Feel free to reach out to any member of the Board of Directors or NCURA staff if you have any questions, concerns, or comments!

Denise Moody *is the Senior Director of Research Compliance in Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences overseeing COI, export controls, IACUC, and research misconduct. She is the outgoing NCURA Secretary and serves as N&LDC Vice Chair, SPA II traveling workshop faculty, Peer Reviewer, Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion Member, and NCURA Research Program Chair. She can be reached at* **denisemoody@fas.harvard.edu**

Effectively Navigating and Managing Collaboration Agreements for Research under Gift and Other Unrestricted Funds

By Karim Hussein, Saiqa Anne Qureshi, and Noam Pines

There is an increased desire to expand, and specifically diversify, the funding of research to a wider variety of sources, including gift or philanthropic funds. Traditional research sponsors such as the federal government, state governments, and non-profit organizations have tightened their purse strings since the 2008 financial crisis. Additionally, changes in political support for research funding at both a state and federal level can also negatively impact research funding levels. Subsequently, universities, in an attempt to diversify research funding portfolios, have ushered in an increase in both gift–funded and industry-funded research. Additional funding sources also include faculty start-up funding, state tax revenue, residual funds from fixed-price agreements such as clinical trials, and revenue from fee-for-service agreements. As part of this phenomenon, principal investigators are increasingly using these new sources to fund research at partner institutions that would otherwise be funded as traditional subawards under contracts or grants.

This "University-Sponsored Research" puts universities in the role of grantmakers and sponsors as PIs request outgoing awards be made to fund research at other institutions. As this is an emerging and burgeoning area for sponsored projects offices, it is important to understand the unique characteristics of an outgoing award under gift or unrestricted funds. It is also essential to consider options for managing and tracking outgoing awards and purchase agreements under gifts, and to better understand the key items to communicate with collaborators and recipients to manage awards they receive funded by unrestricted funds. Traditionally the university flows down terms and conditions from a grant sponsor to a university, who in turn flow these same terms and conditions to any subcontractor. In the case of gift-funded or self-funded research, those conditions do not exist, and the universities themselves must generate the overall terms and conditions, effectively becoming the sponsor of the research.

At the University of California, San Francisco, San Diego and Berkeley (UCSF, UCSD and UCB, respectively), management of these awards has matured, and this article considers the processes involved in that management, as well as the stakeholders involved in the issuance of University-Sponsored Research Agreements. The actors at all three institutions include the sponsored research office or research management office (SPO in this article), the industry contracts team, the office of legal affairs, supply chain management (procurement), gift administration (university development), and departmental administrators. All three institutions had to consider how to facilitate transferring funds to another institution to conduct research without re-gifting (against UC overall policy) and without the presence of an initial contract from which to flow down terms and conditions (as would be done with a traditional subaward). They also considered which office was best equipped to support these awards, what would be easiest for PIs, who should have delegated signature authority, which office would be best situated to negotiate with recipients, who could best ensure compliance with donor intent (in the case of gift-funded research), and how compliance issues would be best managed (for example IRB, IACUC and export control).

> 'University-Sponsored Research' puts universities in the role of grantmakers and sponsors…

These considerations resulted in different strategies at each institution. UCB worked with supply chain management to handle transactions via a university collaboration agreement (SPO supported the initial writing of that contract), and for each contract a PO is issued as the record of

WORK SMART

Avoid Swimming Upstream in Billing Compliance

If you work in clinical trial billing compliance, there are moments when you realize something may be out of control, and you need to react quickly when you discover problems. In Academic Medical Centers and Community Hospitals alike, someone must discern submission of claims and react appropriately upon notice of issues. Timing is of the essence in billing compliance.

First, evaluate the coverage analysis process. Is it being done appropriately? Was it prepared with proper documentation on the national Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) guidelines of National and Local Coverage Determination, and all billing rules followed (CMS, 2007)? If not, the coverage analysis needs to be re-reviewed and documented appropriately. The coverage analysis should be done first and should drive the budget, contract, and consent. If those documents do not sync, there will be problems in reimbursement and billing compliance. Understand that when a coverage analysis is not initially reconciled with the other documents, there may be no way to get them consistent downstream.

Monitoring this process takes time and personnel. It is not easy to do. Evaluating who has the responsibility surrounding billing compliance will help you assess the processes that should be occurring in order to be compliant. Who segregates the charges against the coverage analysis? How do codes, modifiers, and the NCT # get placed on a claim? Who ensures that research related items are debited to the appropriate research account? Last but not least, where is the stop to work the Medicare Advantage claims for patients on drug clinical trials? Ensuring answers to all of these questions will aid in transparency for your program.

The CMS Clinical Trial Policy or NCD 310.1 has been in place since 2000 and the device rules since 1995 (CMS, 2007). Ask questions about how your site recognizes the different types of trials. Take billing compliance seriously by respecting that a false claim can lead to huge problems and pay backs! Remember that a $200 lab test can lead to nearly a $12,000 payback when you must add fines and penalties. You certainly want to be proactive and not end up swimming upstream in clinical trial billing.

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"On a practical level, all three institutions use an intake process but mange the process differently…"

agreement. At UCSD, SPO coordinates and works with university development to ensure donor intent for gift funds; for non-gifts they work with departments and collaborate with supply chain to route agreements that involve services or consulting. UCSF has a hybrid model with SPO managing contracts and supply chain managing POs, with all agreement tracking occurring at the departmental level.

On a practical level, all three institutions use an intake process but manage the process differently. UCB has PIs start with gift administration who refer them to donor-advised funds (for funds over $500k) or supply chain management. UCSD accepts the request at the SPO, which coordinates with all necessary offices, and UCSF relies on the department to refer to Research Management Services, RMS, or supply chain as appropriate.

Other factors that require consideration include indirect cost rates. UCB allows full recovery, UCSD has a range of options, and UCSF uses a case-by-case determination process, and some programs have a policy that defines a 0% or a 10% *de minimus* rate, agreeing that if a research program has a consistent policy, the contract for research can honor that.

It is important to consider that as many gifts do not recover indirect cost (IDC), the contract work done to support them is not compensating the SPO via traditional IDC return. UCSF has considered this reality and determined that this contract work is part of their mission to support research. However, as this type of funding increases as part of the sponsor mix, it is important to consider the potentially unfunded effort involved in administering these unique awards. N

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Blockchain

It's not just Bitcoin Anymore!

By Steve Dowdy and Lori Ann Schultz

Technology has had a major impact on the way research administrators work. In the span of 20-30 years, we have gone from rushing to the last FedEx pickup of the day with a heavy package of collated paper proposals to rushing to click the "Submit" button at 4:59 PM for the same transaction – disobeying the rules of the road in the first case and moving to the "information superhighway" in the second. In the same amount of time, many institutions have gone from rooms full of filing cabinets for sponsored projects to fully digitized files, accessible from anywhere. We use online tools to gather approvals on proposals, invoices, reports and contracts, and have considerably reduced the budget for paper and postage needed to mail these documents. We no longer have to use a modem with dial-up internet access to make Letter of Credit draws.

Research administrators are special when it comes to adapting to changes in technology – we become trusted experts in the "next new thing" for our faculty and make sure we can make it work. If any profession is great at adapting to the challenges that come with "now what?" it's us!

The biggest challenge we have faced in recent years is the amount of administrative burden associated with managing federal awards. The Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) has conducted three surveys to measure faculty workload over the past 15 years. These surveys were conducted in 2005, 2012, and most recently in 2018. Federally-funded faculty were asked how much of their time was devoted to administrative activities vs. the funded research. The results were, and are, staggering. Faculty reported that 42% of time was spent on administrative duties, instead of research, in 2005 and 2012. The percentage rose to 44% in the 2018 survey. These results have led our institutions and organizations to examine processes, implement systems, and hire new staff in an effort to reduce administrative burden and improve the grants management experience for our faculty. At the same time, we have taken on new responsibilities that add burden, including reporting on harassment, foreign influence, clinical trial reporting, and Single IRB. None of these changes have come with a reduction in workload and without something transformative we often can only make marginal improvements.

Blockchain could be that transformation.

Blockchain has become one of the biggest buzzwords in the field of information technology. Bitcoin's hype and recognition brought the term into everyday vocabulary. Blockchain can provide an environment that promotes and fosters a culture of sharing information.

But, what is blockchain? Simply put, blockchain is an immutable time-stamped series record of data that is distributed and managed by a cluster of computers. There is no single, mega-database managed by a proprietary source. The technology is open source and data is replicated in digital ledgers stored across the network. Each time a record is changed, a new "block" is added to the "chain" and all replicated nodes are updated. Each block is encrypted and each new block in the chain has a pointer that references the previous block. No single entity controls the entire system. Government has an inherent need to build, sustain, and protect public trust in information and systems. Blockchain helps enhance this trust. If one node in the network is down or if a particular block on one node is hacked, the other nodes in the network will identify, collaborate and reconcile the information, identifying a single source of truth.

Decentralized grant processing and information creating and sharing is already inherent in the grant management process. Many industry leaders that have already implemented the technology report significant business benefits, including greater transparency, enhanced security, improved traceability, increased efficiency and speed of transactions, and reduced costs.

Is research administration ready for such a transformation?

MITRE, a not-for-profit organization which operates the US Treasury Department's and seven other Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) conducted research to determine if blockchain technology could improve grants management for the entire lifecycle of research administration. The study concluded blockchain could "improve transparency, quality, and timeliness of grant financial and performance information" as well as reducing "redundant reporting to multiple grantmaking entities and auditors." The report did state that implementation would require "a modified grants management business operating model in addition to the use of blockchain technology."

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has issued Version 1.0 of the grants management standard data elements, developed as part of the "Results-Oriented Accountability for Grants" cross-agency priority goal (CAP Goal 8) under the President's Management Agenda. The goal seeks to "improve data collection in ways that will increase efficiency, promote evaluation, reduce reporting burden, and benefit the American taxpayer." The standard data elements have been published on the Federal Integrated Business Framework's (FIBF) website https://ussm.gsa.gov/fibf-gm. There are more than 400 data items in the standard.

The grants management data standards differ from the data standards developed under the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act) (Pub. L. 113-101). The DATA Act concentrated on financial data while the CAP Goal 8 focuses on grants management data.

We now have a set of data standards to target our collective efforts. Karen Lee, MITRE government administration and judiciary portfolio director and former chief of the Office of Federal Financial Management at OMB explains. "OMB and the federal grantmaking agencies led the charge to revise long-standing regulatory requirements and streamline reporting burden. But there remain opportunities to design how grantees interface with the federal government which can reduce their administrative costs and target more grant dollars to achieving real outcomes."

The challenge now is to create the interfaces to expose the data elements defined in the standard. To help foster the adoption in the use of new technologies and to improve the business operating models, OMB issued Presidential Memorandum M-19-26, which seeks to promote common services within the agencies. The memorandum requires the establishment of Quality Services Management Offices (QSMO) to identify centralized services and technologies within the government. Agencies will need to coordinate any changes to version 1.0 of the data standards with the respective QSMO.

MITRE recommended that a pilot to execute a grants management blockchain demonstration project (proof of concept) to validate a subset of benefits and further explore a subset of actions needed, challenges, and mitigation actions.

GrantSolutions was one of seven federal blockchain projects highlighted in the Data Foundation's new report, *"Bringing Blockchain into Government: A Path Forward for Creating Effective Federal Blockchain Initiatives."* The Data Foundation states that "As a lightweight, permissioned blockchain, the GrantSolutions approach limits the volume of information and the number of contributors, enabling a more controlled scalable approach. Given the need to only include permissions for those directly involved in federal grant administration or grant recipients, the constructed system could reasonably and rapidly be designed to cover the breadth of informational needs."

DHHS/NIH is collaborating with GrantSolutions on the use of blockchain technology for the notice of grant award. At this time, GrantSolution is working on a subset of the 400+ data items published on the FIBF website. NIH has been working on a standard notice of award over the past year or so. Grants have a number of commonalities that comprise a core set of data fields. A blockchain captured the 50 to 75 data elements at the heart of each grant and GrantSolutions is now creating the interface to consume those data items using blockchain.

GrantSolutions has contacted most of the major vendors that support research administration for our community and those vendors are now able to access the application programming interfaces (APIs) to consume notice of award information from NIH and a growing list of other federal agencies. Talk to and encourage your vendors to participate in this exciting pilot that will help pave the way to a future of eRA as we explore and expand the use of blockchain technology for the full lifecycle of grant administration, audit, compliance and financial transactions.

The work with eRA and Blockchain is only beginning, but the possibilities are endless. There are even bigger potential ways to improve processes along the sponsored projects lifecycle, freeing up research administrators to make a huge difference in reducing burden to faculty. Imagine a future where:

- Pre-Proposal Preparation: Agencies could use blockchain to post and update funding opportunities. Institutions could use the blockchain to consume this data and push it out to faculty in a timely manner.
- Proposal Preparation: Institutions could use data stored in the blockchain (including SAM registration data) to verify identity without having to enter the same data over and over.
- Receiving the Award: Agencies could push award data elements to awardee institutions via the blockchain and institutions could incorporate that information directly into their eRA systems, eliminating data entry. Blockchain can also enable a concept called "smart contracts" which can trigger actions as soon as defined conditions are met, which could mean that once a "just-in-time" request was satisfied, the award could automatically be issued.
- Postaward: Smart contracts could enable the faster release of renewal funds upon acceptance of an annual progress report and assist with subcontract issuance and management. Blockchain could create the conditions to satisfy SF425 reporting, and ease Letter of Credit draws.
- Closeout: Blockchain could communicate a closeout date, acceptance of final reports, etc., that could ensure we meet record retention requirements.

What to do?

Through ongoing work from the Research Business Models, Presidential Directives, the establishment of the Quality Services Management Offices, continued progress is being made to reduce administrative burden and to harmonize the grant lifecycle. Blockchain is another tool in the war chest to achieve these welcomed outcomes. Get ready, research administrators!

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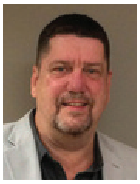

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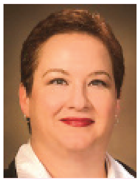

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Promoting Global Research Collaboration – NCURA in Italy

A glimpse of the NCURA workshop at the Politecnico di Milano: The opportunity to grow…*together!*

The NCURA Global Workshop on *"US Funding Opportunities and Management"* held December 4 -6, 2019 at Politecnico di Milano, in Milan, Italy represented a unique opportunity for European and Non-European research administrators. The event was a great success and gathered over 70 participants from 11 different countries – both European and Non-European.

Claire Chen, NCURA; David Richardson, University of Illinois; Stefania Grotti, Politecnico di Milano; Ara Tahmassian, Harvard University; Kim Moreland, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Stefano Lami, Embassy of Italy

The workshop, taught by esteemed NCURA global faculty, successfully focused on three major themes: the US research landscape, funding issues and collaboration opportunities. The event was informative, interactive and most importantly provided growth for our participants.

The panel discussions with high-level speakers from the Embassy of Italy in DC, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), and the US Embassy in Rome was the highlight of the event. The panel of experts gave crucial insights on bilateral trade opportunities between the US, Europe, and the rest of the world. They spoke on the importance of openness and the need to promote more collaborative research projects between countries. From the Politecnico di Milano's research office's perspective, the panel discussions added an important piece of dialogue - the need to make international collaboration easier for our researchers to work with their overseas colleagues.

The NCURA Global Workshop on *"US Funding Opportunities and Management"* set the stage for more future global workshops on scientific research collaborations. Reflecting on his experience teaching this workshop, David Richardson from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign commented,

> *It was my privilege to serve as an instructor of NCURA's Global Workshop "US Funding Opportunities and Management" hosted by the Politecnico di Milano. I was very fortunate to have been joined by Kim Moreland of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Ara Tahmassian of Harvard. Together, we presented the workshop to follow the sponsored project lifecycle covering everything from where to find funding to closing out accounts in a timely manner. While the audience was global, we were fortunate to have many of the leading Italian research universities present. Over the course of two full days, we covered a significant amount of material and was again reminded while we may have differences in our currency, language, and sponsors, the job of research administration is the same the world over. It was exciting to have an extremely engaged audience who was enthusiastic to broaden their knowledge of U.S. funding opportunities. As for our host, Politecnico di Milano, we could not have asked for a better partner in our inaugural efforts in Italy. From the preparing of the workshop to the venue and the active engagement of the participants, the Politecnico di Milano research staff provided excellent support and made the job of sharing our knowledge of working with U.S. funders much easier. We are very grateful to NCURA and especially to Claire Chen for all of her efforts in making sure the workshop was a big success! And as Ara can personally attest, if you ever find yourself with no luggage and in need of a fashionable suit, Milan is the city you want to be in!*

This workshop showcased the excellent partnership between NCURA and EARMA, with attendees from more than 20 EARMA member institutions. This ongoing successful partnership was one of the first major collaborations between EARMA and NCURA, since their executive leaders signed an MoU in August 2019. The mutual agreement provides members from both associations opportunities to access more research administration and management training programs like this workshop, and at reduced cost."

For more information on how to bring an NCURA Global workshop to your campus, please contact Global Initiatives: Claire Chen, chen@ncura.edu or Mende Yangden, yangden@ncura.edu.

No Compliance Approval? Uh Oh.

WHAT TO DO?

By Tracy Arwood

You oversee the compliance program at your institution. You read an article in the new university magazine that describes a research project that involves recombinant DNA, but it does not sound familiar. You consult with your Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) Chair, who does not recall reviewing this study. A check of the compliance database confirms your suspicions…no IBC approval.

Alternatively, you are asked to review a proposal that describes three years of preliminary work, including interviews in Kenya, but the project does not sound familiar. You search your compliance database, but you cannot find IRB approval for the human subjects research.

NOW, WHAT? How do you approach these discoveries?

Through many years of working in research administration, I have learned that there are several essential steps to take when handling any type of research noncompliance. Following these steps will provide a systematic approach avoiding further missteps and errors.

1. Sit down with the administrators who oversee the compliance area (e.g., the IBC Coordinator or the IRB Director). Share your concerns and ask if they recall a discussion of a project like the one in question. Maybe the compliance review occurred at a partner institution? Perhaps as part of a consultation, researchers were advised they did not need approval for that specific work?
2. You have determined approval was needed but not obtained. Discuss the researchers' track record with the program leads for the relevant compliance areas. Have these researchers had other compliance issues? Have they been responsive to requests? Do they routinely call to consult on planned projects? Have they completed the requisite training for this research compliance area?
3. Contact the researchers and schedule a meeting to discuss. Tell them what you have discovered and allow them to explain how this happened. Describe the process that will be followed by the compliance committee to evaluate this situation. If you have a policy that addresses noncompliance, provide a copy to the researchers. Follow up by sending an email to the researchers to document what you have discussed and attach any relevant policies.
4. Determine if the projects were externally funded. If so, by whom? The sponsor or related oversight agency may have specific requirements that must be followed in cases of noncompliance. You will want to know this before you begin an investigation and before the committee discusses the issue.
5. Contact the committee chair and other relevant committee staff. Advise them of the situation and discuss the next steps. These steps may involve beginning an investigation. Fact-finding is a critical stage that should not be overlooked or rushed.
6. Once you have gathered the relevant information, schedule a committee meeting to review and discuss. Always allow researchers the opportunity to provide information for the committee's consideration, either in writing or in person. Due process is essential.
7. The compliance staff should prepare a briefing describing the situation. It should be accompanied by documentation of the facts outlined in the briefing. Include citations of relevant regulatory requirements and ethical guidelines. It may also be helpful to include discipline-specific guidelines or ethical codes for the committee to review. The briefing and accompanying materials should be provided to the committee, along with any documentation provided by the researchers for consideration by the committee.
8. As the committee considers the noncompliance, remind them that the relevant regulations should guide their actions. They should consider what led to this noncompliance. There may be programmatic weaknesses that contributed to the event. Corrective actions should be identified that aim to reduce the likelihood of a reoccurrence. Those may include re-training, additional oversight, program improvements, etc. If the noncompliance is so egregious that the committee feels a personnel action is needed, they should send a recommendation to the Institutional Official (IO). The IO can discuss the recommendation with the relevant supervisors.
9. Provide the committee's decision to the researchers in writing. Offer to meet with the researchers to answer relevant questions.
10. Inform the IO of the committee's determination in writing. Advise the IO if sponsor requirements dictate further reporting or action. Follow up on any action items to confirm completion. Document all corrective actions.

Noncompliance is a stressful event for everyone involved. It is a delicate balance to address the problem while working to maintain a positive working relationship with the researchers. It requires a thoughtful approach. Focus on corrective actions, not punitive ones. Consider what led to this problem. Performing a thorough root cause analysis will not only help to address the current issue but will also help prevent future occurrences. Were the researchers unaware or confused about the requirements? Are there improvements to be made in training or communication? Should the researchers have known what was expected and simply avoided the established process? The answers to these questions help determine appropriate corrective actions. N

NOTE: This article is intended to provide general guidance. Consult your institutional policies and relevant regulatory requirements for specific action items.

Tracy Arwood *was recently named the Chief Ethics & Compliance Officer at Clemson University. Formerly she was the Assistant Vice President for Research at Clemson University where she managed the operations of the Office of Research Compliance and the Office of Research Safety. Ms. Arwood is a regular presenter at PRIMR and NCURA annual conferences and is also co-author of various CITI social and behavioral science modules. She can be reached at* **tarwood@clemson.edu**

PRA2020

PRE-AWARD RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE

WORKSHOP DAY | MARCH 4, 2020
CONFERENCE | MARCH 5-6, 2020
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

"No one person has to do it all but if each one of us follow our heart and our own inclinations we will find the small things that we can do to create a sustainable future and a healthy environment."
John Denver

We welcome you to join us for the 2020 Pre-Award Research Administration (PRA) conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico. We all find ourselves among the trees and thickets of research administration on a daily basis, engaged in the task(s) at hand and doing our best to move through the day. At times, it can seem overwhelming. The quote from the musician, actor, nature lover, John Denver reminds us that if we poke our heads up and see the forest for the trees, focus less on the details and more on the big picture, there is something we can each do that will collectively lead to a sustainable future. This is why we've chosen, Sustaining Research...*Together*, as the theme for the 2020 PRA Conference. Come to San Juan for an educational experience that will invite you to think, plan, and act differently – leading to a more sustainable research administration environment.

Sustaining NCURA's new tradition holding the conference workshops between the Financial Research Administration Conference (FRA) and the PRA Conference, full day and half day workshops will be held on March 4th. FRA/PRA workshops have been designed for everyone, whether you've been in research administration for less than one week or more than twenty years. Join a perennial favorite full-day workshop (and bring your laptop!) to practice "Excel Tips for Pre- and Post-Award Administrators." Get grounded in a half-day overview of "Foundations of Partnering with Federal Sponsors." Set yourself up for success in a brand-new workshop offering, "Business Communication: Beyond the Exchange of Words." Invest in your future as you "Mind the Gap: Women in Leadership." All workshops are designed to meet your educational needs.

We are looking forward to an engaging and inspiring keynote address by architect Jonathan Marvel. In the wake of the historic destruction caused by Hurricane Maria in September of 2017, Jonathan Marvel and his partners co-founded Resilient Power Puerto Rico (RPPR), and set out to help design and implement a sustainable energy solution that was "intended to ignite and maintain dialogue on urban resilience, preparedness, renewable energy, and energy independence" for the Island. By strategic placement of solar energy hubs on the rooftops of urban community centers, RPPR was able to create "distributed energy storage systems" to support the underserved urban residents of Puerto Rico. Their solar hubs, "resulted in immediate improvements to the quality of life after Hurricane Maria and represent a lasting contribution to urban sustainability in Puerto Rico."

The City of San Juan will sustain your interest in history, culture, and scenic landscapes. San Juan was founded in 1521 and is the second oldest European-founded city in the Americas. The city is filled with historic landmarks such as the Castillo San Cristobal and the Museo Casa Blanca. The dining options throughout the city are "endless, from pescatarian places like Verde Mesa to traditional locations like Hecho en Casa and Casa Cortés ChocoBar" (Yes, that means chocolate bar!). The Puerto Rico Convention Center, where the conference will be held, is stunningly beautiful. It boasts "a total of 600,000 square feet of amazing space for your enjoyment."

"Espíritu puertorriqueño" or Puerto Rican Spirit means one that is strong, resilient and ever joyful. Come to PRA in Puerto Rico and renew, recharge, have fun and reconnect!

Co-Chairs, PRA 2020,

Anthony Beckman
University of Rochester

Gai Doran
Yale University

KEEPING CALM AND CARRYING ON

Developing Effective Institutional Approaches to "Foreign Influence"

By Elizabeth H. Adams, Jules Blyth, and Keri Godin

Research universities in the U.S. are by their very nature international. Decades of deepening global engagement by our institutions have resulted in vibrant, diverse campuses that promote innovation and social good, domestically and internationally. It is thus challenging to respond to a growing number of "foreign influence"-related guidance from federal agencies. There is no question that we are now in a new era. But how did we get here?

In these times of heightened division between political parties, there is at least one topic on which there is bipartisan agreement: certain foreign actors are exploiting the openness of U.S. research universities. In early 2018, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director Christopher Wray testified to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, specifically calling out academic research institutions' "naivete" on the matter (Redden, 2018). This testimony set the stage for major federal sponsors to take action. Since then, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has led federal agency response in this arena, and the National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Defense (DOD), and the Education Department (ED) have followed suit with their own "foreign influence"-related actions and guidance.

Initial Concerns Raised from an Unlikely Source: NIH

In August 2018, NIH Director Francis Collins issued a *Statement on Protecting the Integrity of U.S. Biomedical Research*, elaborating on the risk defined by Wray. These risks highlighted to the U.S. research community by the Collins letter included violation of peer reviewer requirements through sharing of confidential information with foreign parties, the diversion of intellectual property generated under NIH programs to foreign entities, and researchers' failures to adequately disclose all sources of support for research, including contributions by foreign governments—which, if reported, may have impacted NIH's funding decisions (Collins, 2018).

A few months later, in a December 2018 *Nature* article, Director Collins confirmed that the NIH was actively "investigating more than ten institutions that have failed to comply with disclosure rules" (Reardon, 2018). In July 2019, NIH then abruptly issued "Reminders of NIH Policies on Other Support and on Policies related to Financial Conflicts of Interest and Foreign Components" (Office of the Director, 2019). The notice, which was effective immediately, "clarified" NIH's reporting and disclosure obligations to applicants and recipients, highlighting the critical need for transparency in Other Support documents as well as clear understanding of the agency's definition of a "Foreign Component." The agency later attenuated some of the new and very broad informational reporting requirements in Other Support originally set forth in the notice. The university community is now aware of approximately 200 letters from NIH asking institutions to provide information about investigators it suspects to have unreported links to foreign governments (Mervis, 2019).

Enduring Values

In the current climate, there appears to nonetheless remain within the federal government a fundamental respect for and commitment to the values of American universities and academic research centers: diversity, transparency, openness, and global impact. For example, the October 2019 letter to the academic community penned by Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, Dr. Michael Griffin, states the "[DOD] recognizes the contribution of research integrity principles, such as the free exchange of ideas, transparency, and collaboration across research communities…[and] principles of integrity, openness, reciprocity, merit-based competition, and transparency..." (Griffin, 2019). Many research institutions use these very terms in their mission statements, and have codified in policies an expectation of international collaboration and free sharing of ideas and information (*e.g.,* openness in research policies, non-discrimination policies). Academic research institutions strive to maintain and foster educational and research environments that are blind to country of origin, typically implementing restrictions only in those instances where required by export control regulations or otherwise mandated by federal law. Foreign engagement in research activities remains a deeply desired outcome for academic research institutions in the U.S.

Reframing the Conversation and Maintaining Evenhandedness

In implementing foreign influence-related changes on their campuses, the American university community is adopting alternative terms such as "undue foreign influence" and "inappropriate foreign engagements." These kinds of terms acknowledge the legitimate concerns in this arena, while differentiating those concerns from an enduring commitment to openness and international engagement. Beyond reframing the conversation, institutions are grappling with balancing these competing interests in a measured, strategic, risk-based fashion, recognizing both the need to devise short-term risk-management strategies and a need to play the long game. In this current climate, institutional leadership and administration may feel enormous pressure to "act" and quickly implement new policies and procedures for prohibiting or monitoring certain foreign engagements; however, we caution against a knee-jerk response and recommend a holistic approach, aimed at inventorying current processes, disclosure / reporting systems, leveraging established modes of outreach and education, bringing the right group of diverse experts to the table, and increased communication including with the researchers themselves.

Federal Enforcement Actions

While we currently live in a period of ambiguity and uncertainty, it is important and helpful to stay apprised of the federal enforcement actions in this arena. The Department of Justice (DOJ) has filed multiple indictments in calendar year 2019 related to alleged failures by individual academics to report foreign conflicts of commitment and financial conflicts of interest. In July 2019, two former researchers at Ohio's Nationwide Children's Hospital were charged with allegedly stealing the hospital's trade secrets and confidential information, subsequently leveraging the theft to form two companies and file patents in China. Just a month later, an indictment was filed against a University of Kansas Professor. According to the indictment, Associate Professor Feng Tao was an active researcher with two DOE contracts and four NSF awards, while simultaneously working as a full-time employee at Fuzhou University as a Changjiang scholar, a Chinese talent recruitment program. Tao allegedly failed to disclose this outside employment through institutional conflict of interest/conflict of commitment reporting and approval channels at the University of Kansas. In each of these cases, the investigators could face up to 20 years in prison. Notably, these indictments did not involve the researchers' institutions; nonetheless, as the recipients of federal grants and contracts, institutions must put into place controls that reasonably ensure compliance with sponsor requirements and award terms and conditions.

Practical Steps Forward

The developments and uncertainties described herein can seem daunting. It may be helpful to view the current environment as an opportunity to both reassert our institutional values as well as enhance our policies and procedures to address unethical and illegal activities. Below are some practical steps and questions to consider as you develop an institutional approach.

Who are the key stakeholders to invite to the table?

We recommend leveraging existing subject matter experts from export control compliance, information security, sponsored projects, procurement, conflict of interest, advancement / development, technology transfer, international students/scholars office, and government relations. Under the auspices of a senior leader, consider bringing these individuals together in a working group and subsequently establishing subgroups to tackle the different areas of institutional response.

Are there existing resources that my institution can leverage?

- The Association of American Universities (AAU) and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) issued a guidance memo in April 2019, *Responding to Undue Foreign Influence and Security Concerns on Campus*, and an accompanying document summarizing actions taken by universities to address security concerns and undue foreign influence (The Association of American Universities & The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, 2019). Consider reviewing the NIH's "Foreign Influences on Research Integrity: 117th Meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Director" slide deck from December 13, 2018 (National Institutes of Health, 2018), which includes recommendations that "Recipient Organizations Should Consider."
- The FBI has released a number of documents (FBI 2019, 2011) that specifically describe concerns and threats to academia. They provide valuable background information to help universities identify what areas may be targeted and offer strategies to address these threats.
- Various federal agencies have released notices containing reminders, including FAQs, regarding existing policies. The NIH, for example, released NOT-OD-19-114 (National Institutes of Health, 2019) in July 2019, clarifying requirements around Other Support and policies related to Financial Conflict of Interest and Foreign Component. Consider signing up for relevant sponsor listservs to stay current on evolving requirements and clarifications on existing policies.
- On the issue of Foreign Government Talent Recruitment Programs, the Department of Energy (DOE) provides a useful definition of "Foreign Government Talent Recruitment Program" as part of its DOE directive 486.1 (Department of Energy, 2019), issued in July 2019. Thus far, this is the only definition offered by a federal agency. Together with the FBI's leaflet (FBI, 2015) on Foreign Talent Programs, it offers a good start for anyone trying to maneuver this specific topic.

Where to start?

As your cross-institutional group of stakeholders convenes its first meeting, it may be a challenge to decide where to start. We recommend the following four areas as starting points:

1. Develop a "Risk Heat Map" of your campus. Identify what units on your campus bring in the most sponsored funding as well as the most foreign funding. What units have the most NIH-defined "foreign components"? Where might critical and/or emerging technologies being developed? What groups are the most IP active on campus? Are you able to leverage any enterprise risk management effort on your campus that may have already addressed to some degree "foreign influence" concerns? Creating such a risk map of your campus will help you match precious resources to risks when deciding where to focus and expand your effort and resources.
2. Review your existing data collection platforms and how they fit together. What reporting and disclosure (and perhaps validation) processes are already in place at your institution? Most institutions already have well-established conflict of interest and commitment reporting processes in place, but are they clear and explicit enough, relative to recent federal guidance? What about the faculty reporting system or effort reporting system on your campus? How accurate are your current and pending reports? How is gift funding tracked at

your institution? How does your institution identify and reconcile discrepant data in these different platforms? Would it make sense to interface systems, or create new business intelligence reports in your data warehouse?

3. Review how your institution on-boards visitors. This usually involves the office(s) or individuals on campus making the visitor appointments. Do you have existing policies and practices relating to visitors? How do you invite or learn about visitors coming to your institution? Do the visitors go through a central review/screening, approval, or onboarding process? What is your institutional appetite for and approach to sponsoring or hosting visitors from restricted entities or those on the unverified list? What about individuals from embargoed countries?
4. Develop broad and targeted outreach and education programs. Given the seriousness and sensitivity of concerns associated with "foreign influence," the presidents and senior research officers of many institutions have sent out campus-wide communications seeking to guide and reassure. It will also be advisable to design a targeted outreach and education program that offers a mix of in-person forums, such as faculty meetings or regular campus meetings of research administrators; online resources, such as a website devoted to "foreign influence" and international engagements; email communication to specific groups of people; and educational programs that are incorporated into existing formal training offerings, such as Responsible Conduct of Research training, research administrator trainings, and export control compliance trainings.

Your approach is uniquely yours

Ultimately, one institution's approach to "foreign influence" will not be quite another's—nor should it be. Every university has a different scope and scale and a different risk profile and appetite for risk. Addressing any gaps that your institution identifies in the area of "foreign influence" should be carefully considered in terms of technology, processes and people, including any focused or augmented training programs. Remember that you have many colleagues at your institution (and beyond your institution) who can help and who want to help. Last, it is important to stay apprised of resources and the range of best practices in this arena through organizations like NCURA. We look forward to staying in touch.

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Consider convening a cross institutional group of stakeholders under the auspices of a senior leader at your institution.
- Use existing external resources (e.g., AAU/APLU, federal agencies, ASCE) to help guide the development of new policies and procedures.
- Engage enterprise risk management to assess your institution's risk tolerance
- Review existing data collection portals – are there ways to leverage existing reporting and disclosure processes (i.e., conflict of interest & commitment reporting, faculty reporting systems)
- Review visitor processes; develop clear procedures around inviting and hosting visitors on campus.
- Develop a "risk map" of your campus based on where potential valuable IP and critical technologies are being developed.
- Design a targeted outreach and education program to raise awareness.

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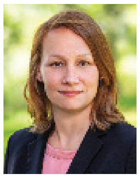


Elizabeth H. Adams *is currently the Director of the Office of Research and Project Administration at Princeton University. Previously, she was an Associate with the UIDP, consulting on public-private partnerships, the administration of federal funding, operations management and compliance. Her approximately 20 years of experience in sponsored programs management (spanning preaward, contracts, postaward and system/information functions) across four major research universities (University of Chicago, Northwestern University, University of Virginia and Princeton University) provides her a wide frame of reference for understanding university-based research. She can be reached at* **ehadams@princeton.edu**

Jules Blyth, M.Sc., MA, *is the Associate Director of the Office of Research Integrity at Brown University, where she is responsible for Conflict of Interest, Export Control Compliance, and Research Ethics Education. Prior to joining Brown, she worked in research compliance/conflict of interest at Partners Healthcare in Boston and at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. She can be reached at* **Juliane_Blyth@brown.edu**

Keri Godin, MS, *is the Senior Director of the Office of Research Integrity at Brown University. In this role, Keri oversees all research-related regulatory compliance at Brown, including human and animal subjects research, human embryonic stem cell use, conflict of interest, responsible conduct of research, research misconduct, export control compliance, and research data management and sharing. Prior to joining Brown, Keri worked for a decade at Harvard Medical School, first in a research laboratory then in a central compliance function. She can be reached at* **keri_godin@brown.edu**

SELF CARE FOR THE RESEARCH ADMINISTRATOR

What are you weighting for?

By Jennifer Shambrook

It seems that every year, one of the top New Year's resolutions we hear is weight loss. Achieving a healthy weight is a worthy resolution. In this article we are going to talk about why it is important, the status of healthy weight in research administrators, and go over some reminders of some evidence-based behaviors that can aid in reducing body weight.

Body weight is considered healthy when the Body Mass Index (BMI) kg/m2 is between 18.5 and 24.9. A BMI of 25 to 29.9 is considered overweight. Obesity is determined by a BMI of 30 or more. Why is this number important to know? It's far more than just looking good in a swimsuit. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease, excess weight may increase the risk of many health problems which include:

- Heart disease and stroke – the leading causes of death in the world
- Type 2 diabetes – which can lead to stroke, amputation, kidney disease and blindness
- Certain types of cancer – breast, colon, endometrial, kidney and gall bladder
- Kidney disease – which can result in kidney failure and the need for dialysis
- Osteoarthritis – from extra pressure on the joints and cartilage
- Pregnancy problems – overweight is associated with higher need for caesarean births
- Fatty liver disease – can cause liver damage, liver failure, and cirrhosis
- Sleep apnea and snoring – resulting in poor sleep and possible marital discord

Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in Research Administrators

The good news is that US overweight and obesity in research administrators has shown some improvement when comparing data from the 2010 and 2015 Research Administrators Stress Perception Surveys (RASPerS). It is interesting to note that unhealthy weight in US research administrators is improving while unhealthy weight in the US general population is worsening. The unhealthy body weight epidemic in the US rages on with an increase in overweight and obesity from 68.98% in 2010 to 71.63% in 2015. The RASPerS data show that research administrators with BMI scores of 25 or greater has decreased from 65.0% in 2010 to 62.87% in 2015. While this is an improvement, it is still very concerning to see such a high number of our US colleagues exposed to this dangerous health risk. (See Figure 1.)

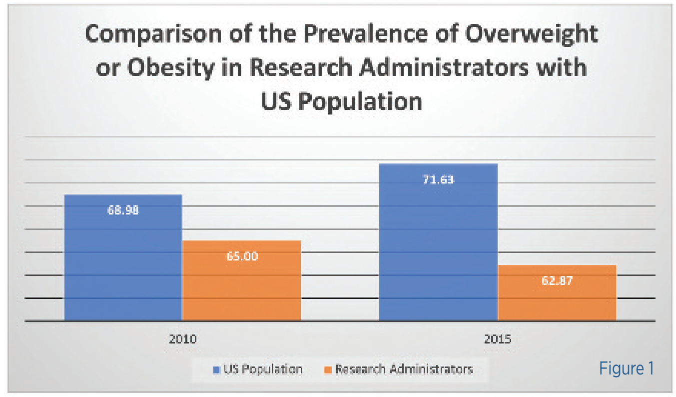


Figure 1

Global RASPerS data comparisons show this problem is significantly higher in the US when compared with research administrators elsewhere in the world. (Figure 2.) Overweight and obesity have been previously reported to be associated with high levels of stress in US research administrators. We will look specifically at selfcare and workplace stress in a future article.

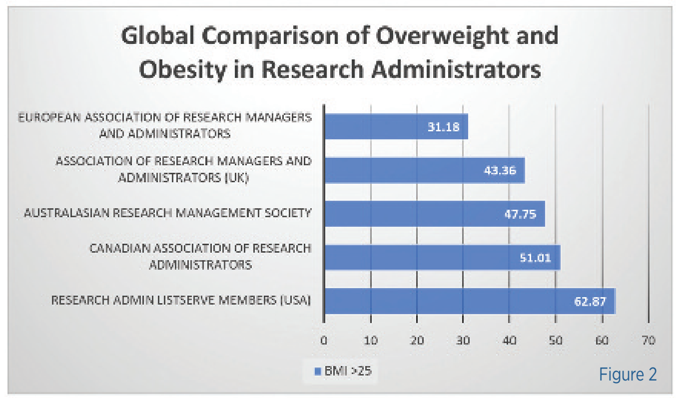


Figure 2

There are gender differences in the incidence of overweight and obesity, both in the general US population and in research administrators. This is an important factor when looking at overall data for research administrators, as our population is so heavily tilted toward those who self-identify as female (84.62% female in 2015 RASPerS.) The CDC National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey shows that in the general population, males are more likely to be overweight than females.

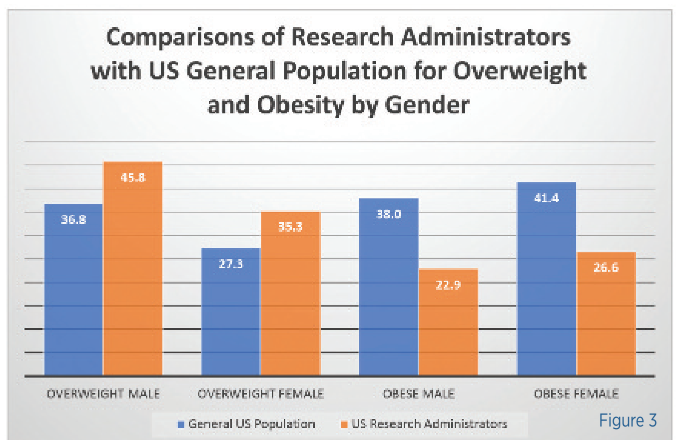


Figure 3

Males who are research administrators are also more likely to be overweight than females. We can also see that both male and female research administrators are significantly more likely to be overweight than the general population of the same gender (RASPerS, 2015). This is pleasantly counterbalanced by the fact that research administrators are significantly less likely to be obese than the general population of the same gender. As seen in the general population, a higher percentage of females (26.6%) are obese than males (22.9%) in research administration.

Now what?

We can clearly see that a BMI over 25 puts you at high risk for some really scary health concerns. We also see that US research administrators have a high prevalence of BMI >25. Many people decide to lose weight, but either give up after a short time, or lose the weight only to gain it back with a few extra pounds to spare. Below are a few tips for healthy weight loss and maintenance that may be helpful to you.

1. Set a reasonable goal with a reasonable time frame. It is unrealistic to think you can lose the weight you have gained over the course of years in just a few weeks. Setting a series of short-term goals is less daunting and more realistic than expecting to lose a large amount of weight in a short amount of time. You can reasonably lose 1-2 pounds a week or five pounds a month while still eating enough to be satisfied. Just think, if you lose just five pounds a month, you can lose 30 pounds in six months. I know that is true because two years ago, I did exactly that!
2. Record your progress. Keeping a record of your weight, whether you weigh daily or weekly will help you to see your progress. It is motivating to see how far you have come.
3. Keep a food diary. There is something magic about keeping a food journal. Those who keep a food journal with an iron-clad commitment that "what I bite it, I write it" are far more successful than those who do not. I found that I would rather not eat something than write it in my food journal or record on my food app. There are free apps available to help you keep a food diary.
4. Don't starve yourself. One sure way to set yourself up for a binge is by going on a crash diet. A well-balanced healthy diet, eating appropriate portions of all foods is something you can live with forever. You don't want to just lose weight, you want to maintain a healthy weight when you reach your final goal. Load up on low calorie and low fat foods. Eat smaller portions of high fat foods and sweets. If you need some chocolate covered pretzels, eat them. Eat them and enjoy them. Eat them slowly and savor every bite. Just limit the portion size and record it in your food diary.
5. Invest in your healthy diet. Healthy food can cost a little more than fast food…maybe. Menu planning for healthy meals and snack attacks may mean you eat out less and your food budget overall goes down. This is especially true if you bring a healthy lunch to work. Your diet investment may also include some kitchen gadgets like an air-fryer or Insta-Pot.
6. Find your people. There are online communities, weight loss programs, and friends and family who may be happy to join you on a healthy weight journey. An accountability partner can help when you need encouragement, when you reach a weight loss plateau, or are faced with a series of food-based temptations.
7. Take it a day at a time. Don't get discouraged and engage in negative self-talk if you have a temporary lapse in healthy eating habits. Just refocus and move forward. Do not tell yourself "I ate half that bag of Oreos, I might as well eat the rest." That's crazy talk, my friend. That would be like finding a flat tire on your car and saying "Since this tire is flat, I might as well stab a hole in all the rest of the tires." Tomorrow is another day. Just keep moving forward.
8. Move it, Baby! Move more. If you like to run, run. If you like to dance, dance. If you like to walk at the mall, have a ball! Find ways to move. Park at the far end of the lot. Take the stairs. Take a walk outside while you have a meeting or conference call. Do things that are fun for you.
9. Celebrate your victories. Celebrate those weekly or monthly victories with a reward. A non-food reward would probably be best. A pedicure, an article of clothing, a pair of earrings, a massage, an hour of quiet…whatever makes you feel pampered is what you should do. You might also consider a big reward for the end goal. My own big goal prize was an 8-day cruise.
10. How do you measure up? Take measurements of yourself and keep up with those measurements along the way. As you replace fat with muscle mass, you may think you may stop losing weight for a short period of time, but find you are losing inches. Measure neck, upper arms, chest, waist, hips, and thighs. Seeing the inches come off can be as satisfying as those bathroom scale victories.

For those with a BMI greater than 40 or a BMI of 30 who also have other serious health problem linked to obesity, such as type 2 diabetes or sleep apnea, bariatric surgery may be an option. There are various surgical procedures and devices that can assist with weight loss. Clinical trials have shown that many people with bariatric surgery lose about 15 to 30 percent of their starting weight. However, following good dietary habits is still required to maintain a healthy body weight once the weight has been lost.

How do we know all these things about disease risk and successful weight loss? Research administrators all around the world have played a role in the creation of this knowledge as they have helped prepare grant applications, issue awards, negotiate contracts, manage projects, insure participant safety, assist with publications, and file progress reports for our brilliant investigators who have designed studies to find out more about how to live long lives with better health. Let us reap the benefit of that information we have helped to facilitate and place in the public forum.

If weight loss is your resolution this year, resolve to stay resolved. If I can do it, so can you. N

> "It is interesting to note that unhealthy weight in the research administrators is improving while unhealthy weight in the US general population is worsening."

To find your own BMI and more information about weight loss, visit the NHLBI website at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/index.htm.

Jennifer Shambrook, PhD, *is the author of the 2007, 2010, 2015 and soon-to-be-launched 2020 RASPerS. She is Director of Sponsored Programs in the Office of Research and a member of the faculty for the Masters in Research Administration Program at the University of Central Florida. She lost 35 pounds over the course of 7 months for the NCURA 50th Anniversary Soul Source and No Cost Extensions last performance. She can be reached at* **Jennifer.Shambrook@ucf.edu**

NCURA
Supporting Research...*together*™

NCURA RESEARCH PROGRAM

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The purpose of the program is to create opportunities for NCURA members, faculty, and staff to innovate and pursue excellence in developing and sustaining critical partnerships and include but are not limited to: supporting the data-driven needs of NCURA and the profession; identifying, developing and implementing innovative programs for research and education; and building resources for new partnership programs that support global efforts.

DEADLINE: March 20, 2020 at 5:00pm Eastern Time

For more information www.ncura.edu/researchprogram

NFRI
NONPROFIT FUNDER RESEARCH INSTITUTION PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership between Nonprofit Funders and Research Institutions

By Vivian Holmes, Cindy Hope and Maryrose Franko

September 24, 2019 was the fourth meeting of NFRI, the recently-formed partnership between non-profit funding organizations and research institutions. Launched with early support from the National Academies Government University Industry Research Roundtable (GUIRR), NFRI is led by the Health Research Alliance (HRA) and the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR), with support and guidance from the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM). With representation from funders and universities, this partnership, based on mutual interests and shared goals, is addressing our shared administrative burdens by identifying causes and potential solutions and developing a long-term partnership based on mutual trust.

The responses to an initial survey of funders and research institutions highlighted significant issues and priorities where consensus was crucial and where a quick-win might be possible. The value in providing an opportunity for open conversation, to share the structures and the demands of our respective organizations, continues to be rewarding.

We identified three overall areas as particularly challenging and where collaboration could achieve common ground to build a framework for constructive negotiations. Based on these key areas, these working groups were formed: Streamlining Administrative Requirements, Research Project Support Costs, and Intellectual Property and Tech Transfer. Breaking out into focused workgroups allows participants to drill down into the details with their counterparts. Sharing our perspectives often revealed vast inconsistencies across organizations even within a sector in addition to misunderstandings across the sectors.

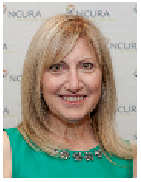
With a focus on proposal submissions, financial reporting, and clarifying terms and conditions, the **Streamlining Workgroup** discusses the application process, templates and timelines, and contracting language from the perspective of the funder and the university. The workgroup is divided into subgroups focusing on specific areas. The Applications subgroup addresses the accuracy of organizational contact information and authorized signatures, portal limitations, accessing the FDP Clearinghouse and the concept of Just in Time. The Reporting subgroup is strategizing to design standardized budgets and sample templates for reporting and invoicing. The Contracting subgroup has collaborated on a Compliance Contracting Whitepaper, providing suggested contract language for various laws and offering multiple options so that funders can customize their contracts. The whitepaper shares guidance and acceptable terms on topics including indemnification, export controls, animal and human subjects, conflicts of interest, research misconduct, and data sharing.

RPSC, the **Research Project Support Costs Workgroup**, has been sharing educational materials between nonprofit funders and research institutions on the intricacies of financing research. On the topic of facilities and administrative (F&A) costs, the workgroup agreed it would be helpful to provide a comprehensive presentation on the concept of F&A costs and the classification of costs. In a September 2018 webinar, Heather Snyder (Alzheimer's Association), Jim Luther (Duke University), and David Kennedy (COGR), explained how direct costs and F&A costs are defined and calculated and what contributions research institutions make in support of research. Similarly, a "FAQ's about Funders" document was drafted by Maryrose Franko (Health Research Alliance) outlining the many differences between philanthropic organizations due to their varying missions, board of directors, donors, management, and their IRS determination, distinguishing between private foundations and public charities. Learning more about the background and function of the organizations we represent is essential. The RSPC reviews and discusses the cost of research, various award mechanisms, and examples of project-specific expenses customarily captured within F&A cost rates.

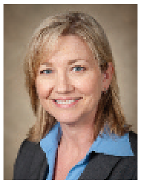
The **Intellectual Property and Tech Transfer Workgroup** is divided into four subgroups to address many of the issues raised from the initial survey of meeting participants. The Royalty Sharing subgoup has identified issues that funders and performers generally agree upon in sharing license revenue, issues that require further discussion, and considerations that should be taken into account when developing sharing provisions. The Royalty Sharing subgroup is also developing a principles and guidelines document. The Control of Licensing subgroup evaluates pre-license issues such as strategy, negotiation, and approvals and post-license issues like licensee progress and march-in rights. The Licensing subgroup also is developing a Principles and Guidelines document. The IP Definitional subgroup is currently drafting a definition whitepaper of guiding principles for intellectual property. The subgroup on Patient Assistance Programs (PAP) has drafted sample language for funders to include in terms and conditions regarding PAP-related reporting obligations in license agreements.

The accomplishments of the workgroups overlap, benefit, and strengthen the entire NFRI Partnership. Progress thus far has been through shared files, weekly and monthly conference calls, hundreds of emails, and in-person meetings, all creating an invaluable opportunity to reinforce our goals and generate enthusiasm. Work is underway, however, on a web-based resource to share information and tools and to sustain this partnership.

For more information visit NFRI's website
www.healthra.org/nonprofit-funder-research-institution-partnership-nfri



Vivian Holmes *is the Assistant Dean for Research Administration at Boston University School of Public Health. Previously she was Senior Director for Sponsored Research at Broad Institute. Vivian is currently a member of COGR Costing Policies Committee and co-lead of the NFRI Workgroup on Streamlining Administrative Requirements. Vivian is a past president of NCURA and serves on NCURA's traveling workshop faculty. She can be reached at* **vholmes@bu.edu**



Cindy Hope *is the Director, Academic Contract and Grant Administration, Office of Sponsored Programs, at Georgia Institute of Technology. Previously she was Assistant Vice President for Research and Director, Office for Sponsored Programs at The University of Alabama. Cindy has served on the Board of COGR, as its chair for the Costing Policies Committee, and as chair of the Federal Demonstration Partnership. She can be reached at* **cindy.hope@osp.gatech.edu**

Dr. Maryrose Franko *is the Executive Director of the Health Research Alliance (HRA), a multi-national consortium of approximately 80 nonprofit funders. Dr. Franko's background also includes over 20 years of program management experience at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Maryrose was integral to launching the Nonprofit Funder Research Institution partnership and is currently the organizational lead for NFRI. She can be reached at* **maryrose@healthra.org**

Education Scholarship Fund Select Committee Update:

Spring 2020 Recipients and 2020 Committee Members

Every year, the Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) Select Committee provides up to two scholarships in the Fall and Spring in the amount of $2,500 for NCURA members enrolled in a graduate degree program in research administration. After a highly competitive round of 12 applications, the Committee selected recipients based on their past and current NCURA involvement, as well as the importance of the scholarship to their career. Please join the ESF Select Committee in congratulating the Spring 2020 Scholarship Recipients: Lindsay Britt of the University of New Mexico and Andrew Gray of the University of Oregon. Both recipients are pursing the Master's in Research Administration and Compliance from the City University of New York (CUNY) through the School of Professional Studies.

More about Lindsay Britt:

Lindsay has been a research administrator for nine years and joined NCURA in 2011. She currently serves as a Contract and Grant Administrator in the Psychology Department of the University of New Mexico. She decided to pursue a master's degree in research administration after earning her CPRA in 2015 and realizing that she wanted to learn as much as she could about the profession. With aspirations of being a director of a sponsored projects office, Lindsay told us, "I wanted to show my two small children that we never stop learning and there are always opportunities to better yourself." After securing her master's, Lindsay plans to participate in the LeadMe program as both a mentee and mentor, present at conferences, serve as a traveling faculty member, and volunteer to serve on the Professional Development Committee and the Education Scholarship Fund Select Committee. Lindsay is honored to have been selected to receive this scholarship and looks forward to serving on the committee in the future to give this amazing opportunity to other research administrators. Congratulations, Lindsay!

More about Andrew Gray:

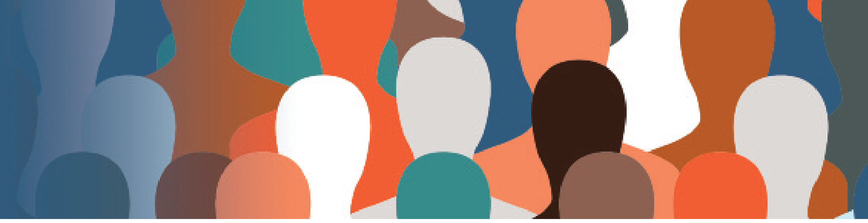
Andrew has an impressive twenty years of experience and excellence in institutional research administration and joined NCURA in 2004. Currently serving as the Executive Director of Sponsored Projects Services at the University of Oregon, Andrew demonstrates the importance of growing with the continuously advancing profession. He chose to pursue this master's from CUNY as a way of developing another tool to keep giving back to the profession. He shared with us that he wants to "continue to engage and empower the newer generations of research administrators as the landscape continues to evolve." He is eager to give back to NCURA and sees himself stepping into an NCURA leadership role, starting at the regional level. He plans to run for Region VI Chair in the future. We look forward to seeing what Andrew will do with his degree and leadership roles in NCURA. Congratulations to you as well, Andrew!

The 2019 Education Scholarship Fund Select Committee would like to thank you, NCURA members, for your support through donations and national and regional fundraising. Your support made these scholarships possible!

Congratulations are also in order for the 2020 ESF Committee Members. Ten statements of interests were submitted to fill four positions on the committee. Your 2020 Education Scholarship Fund Select Committee is:

Chair: Tanya Blackwell, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Vice Chair: Abby Guillory, North Carolina State University
Anne Albinak, Johns Hopkins University, NCURA Treasurer, Ex-Officio
Daniela Amadio, King's College London
Adam Carter, Marine Biological Laboratory
Lauren Causey, Augsburg University
Sarah Browngoetz, Olympic College (Fall 2019 ESF Scholarship Recipient)
Kallie Firestone, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Olive Giovannetti, University of California – San Francisco
Robyn Remotigue, University of North Texas Science Center at Fort Worth
Deborah Shaver, University of Idaho

To learn more about the Education Scholarship Fund Select Committee, please visit www.ncura.edu/Education/EducationScholarshipFund.aspx



Oh, the Places We Will Go! Diversity and Inclusion, Now What?

By Laneika K. Musalini

Diversity & Inclusion Task Force 2019 Accomplishments

The Presidential Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion is comprised of a very strong, intellectual, engaging and diverse group of individuals that not only contribute to advancing the field of research administration but to advancing and promoting diversity and inclusion around the globe. The year 2019 has been full of many wonderful successes for NCURA. The Task Force was charged with several major tasks for 2019. The Task Force came together as a team and accomplished every task put before them. As Task Force chair, I am proud of all that has taken place throughout the year.

2019 Accomplishments:

- NCURA's Commitment to Diversity Statement posted on the NCURA website
  - NCURA's Commitment to Diversity Statement incorporated in email notifications and all calls for volunteers
- Expanded online Membership Profile criteria
  - Promoted Membership Profile update requests
  - Collected and analyzed preliminary profile data
- Developed Member Volunteer Matrix
- Performed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training Video Feasibility Study
- Added Diversity column to NCURA Magazine
- Incorporated diversity criteria into all selections
- Promoted the inclusion of diversity and inclusion themes in meetings
- Developed future diversity and inclusion strategies
- Presented a poster on diversity and inclusion at AM61
- Promoted NCURA's Diversity & Inclusion initiative at all 2019 national conferences to include diversity and inclusion swag, alternative meal availability, creating a more inclusive and welcoming meal area, offering diversity and inclusion workshops and sessions on Tuesdays for each conference event, and incorporate NCURA's Diversity statement on all regional pages

2020 Diversity & Inclusion Outlook

The Task Force has been moving the needle for the last three years; however, there is so much more work to do. Thus, one may pose the question, "Now what?" Moving forward, the Task Force will be working more closely with each region on diversity, equity and inclusion strategies.

Equity is an important driver when considering inclusion. When equity exists, people have equal and fair access to opportunities. The executive board approved the new Membership Volunteer Matrix in 2019. This matrix will be introduced in early 2020. Implementing the Member Volunteer Matrix will help to provide a more inclusive and equitable pool of leadership candidates and organizational volunteers. Utilizing the Member Volunteer Matrix, members will have the opportunity to diversify their volunteer experiences within NCURA. All of our members and volunteers are valuable. Participating as an NCURA volunteer will broaden your network, as well as increase your knowledge base as a member and toolkit as a research administrator. Please know that this organization will function at its most efficient capacity when we are all unified and engaged.

Once the presidential charge for 2020 has been released, the Task Force will begin working towards accomplishing the tasks presented. The Task Force looks forward to continuing the great work of diversity, inclusion and equity, in addition to developing intentional inclusionists.

2020 Task Force Members

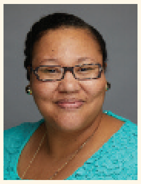
The 2020 Presidential Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion has further expanded to include representation from each region and various backgrounds. The diverse makeup of the Task Force will have even greater impact on the NCURA membership. The 2020 Task Force members are:

Laneika K. Musalini, Tri-County Technical College, *chair*
Theresa Caban, Lundquist Institute
Tolise Dailey, Johns Hopkins University
Rashonda Harris, Emory University
Derick Jones, Lundquist Institute
Sandra Logue, University of Colorado-Denver
Mario Medina, University of Kansas Medical Center
Denise Moody, Harvard University
Jaime Petrasek, Virginia Commonwealth University
Ben Prince, University of Massachusetts Medical School
Saiqa Anne Qureshi, University of California-San Francisco
David Schultz, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Samantha Westcott, California Institute of Technology
Natasha Williams, Kennesaw State University
Marianne Woods, Johns Hopkins University
Bonniejean Zitske, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In the words of Dr. Seuss, "We're off to great places! Today is our Day! Our mountain is waiting, so get on your way!" Oh, the places we will go when we truly learn to value, respect and welcome everyone despite differences. So, I invite you all along on this journey. Will you go with us? N

Reference:

Seuss (1990). Oh, the places you'll go! Penguin Random House LLC. New York: NY.
White, Nika (2017). Intentional inclusionist.



Laneika K. Musalini, MHRD, *is the Director of Grants Development/Sponsored Programs at Tri-County Technical College overseeing strategic funding initiatives, proposal and budget development, and sponsored programs compliance. She serves as chair of NCURA's Presidential Task Force on Diversity & Inclusion, PUI track co-lead for PRA2020 Program Committee, and diversity advisor for Region III. She can be reached at* LMUSALIN@tctc.edu

Mark your calendars
August 9-12, 2020

NCURA's 62nd Annual Meeting

Happy New Year and welcome as we enter a new decade! The Program Committee for NCURA's 62nd Annual Meeting ("AM62") is working hard and putting together a program that continues to meet the needs of its membership. We want to take this opportunity to introduce our AM62 Program Committee, led by Rosemary Madnick, University of Alaska, and Co-Chairs Denise Moody, Harvard University, and Jennifer Rodis, University of Wisconsin - Madison. We have put together a knowledgeable, diverse, and inclusive committee. Each individual on the committee brings a unique perspective for which the program will benefit tremendously.

Our theme, *The Power of You*, represents how we, as research administrators, have the power to inspire others, increase our success, and be a source of strength. It is practical and gives each of us a sense of controlling our own selves so we can positively impact others around us. The Power of You is an opportunity to discover our greatness from within, understand and cultivate every aspect of our professional lives, and reach our fullest potential with confidence.

The Program Committee met on December 10th to discuss and review last year's meeting evaluations and this year's session proposals. You can be assured that we have listened and integrated your comments and suggestions because this meeting is about You and for You. Some of the key words that the Program Committee used to describe what this meeting means to them included knowledge, usability, engagement, insight, connection, inspirational, enlightening, collaborative, synergy, woo, a-ha, dazzling, empowerment and fun!

62nd ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Vice President, AM62 Chair:	Rosemary Madnick, *University of Alaska Fairbanks*
Co-Chairs:	Denise Moody, *Harvard University* Jennifer Rodis, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*
Clinical/Medical	Angela Charboneau Wishon, *Prisma Health* Manilyn Matau, *University of California-Irvine*
Departmental	Sandra Logue, *University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus* Sinnamon Tierney, *Boston University*
Executive	Richard Seligman, *California Institute of Technology*
Federal/Sponsors/Agencies	Charisse Carney-Nunes, *National Science Foundation* Janet Strait, *Cornell University*
Financial/Post-Award	Alicia Asgari, *Cayuse* Tim Schailey, *Thomas Jefferson University* Bonniejean Zitske, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*
Global for US and Non-US	Eva Bjorndal, *King's College of London* Robin Riglin, *The Pennsylvania State University* Nicolas Schulthess, *Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts*
New Presenter Liaisons	Michiko Pane, *Stanford University* Georgette Sakumoto, *University of Hawaii*
Poster Session Liaisons	David Smelser, *University of Tennessee* Donna Smith, *Massachusetts General Hospital*
Pre-Award	Marc Haon, *University of South Carolina* Courtney Swaney, *University of Texas at Austin*
Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions	Michael Castilleja, *University of the Incarnate Word* Martin Williams, *William Paterson University*
Professional Development/ Personal Growth	Melanie Hebl, *University of Wisconsin-Madison* Stella Sung, *University of California-San Diego*
Research Compliance and Ethics	Carpantato Myles, *University of Alabama* Elizabeth Peloso, *University of Pennsylvania*
Research Development	Randy Ozden, *Streamlyne* Michelle Schoenecker, *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*
Systems/Data/Metrics	Lori Ann Schultz, *University of Arizona*
Workshop	Matthew Kirk, *University of Southern California* Robyn Remotigue, *University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth*

Pre-registration is open! www.ncura.edu

Stay tuned for more information in the next NCURA Magazine issue!

NSF OIG CORNER

Rooting Out Research Misconduct

By Aliza I. Sacknovitz

Have you seen the headlines?

"Professor Falsified and Fabricated Figures, Blamed Students, and Invented Colleague" "Graduate Student Falsified Examples to Support Her Conclusions" "Researcher Falsified Data in Multiple Publications." These are just a few examples of research misconduct cases we've described in our Semiannual Reports to Congress. In the last issue of NSF OIG Corner, we gave an overview of our role as auditors and investigators. In this article, we'll go more in depth about one of our missions—investigating research misconduct.

What is research misconduct exactly?

NSF's policy (45 CFR 689) defines research misconduct as "fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing or performing research funded by NSF, reviewing research proposals submitted to NSF, or in reporting research results funded by NSF." A finding of research misconduct requires proof by a preponderance of evidence that the act is a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community and that the act be committed intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly.

Who investigates research misconduct?

Our Division of Research Integrity and Administrative Investigations (RIAI) conducts administrative investigations of research misconduct related to NSF programs, personnel misconduct within NSF, and whistle-blower retaliation. We are the only OIG that employs Ph.D. investigators to address research misconduct allegations. (NIH's Office of Research Integrity also employs Ph.Ds. to investigate research misconduct, but they're a part of HHS's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health.)

How do you find out about research misconduct, and how do you investigate it?

Anyone can report research misconduct to us through our hotline. NSF program officers are required to report allegations to us, and NSF award recipients must inform us if they initiate a research misconduct investigation. We also conduct proactive reviews of funded and unfunded proposals. From FYs 2009 to 2018, we received 841 research misconduct allegations and conducted 683 investigations, resulting in 161 research misconduct findings made by NSF.

Once we receive an allegation, we initiate an inquiry to determine whether it has enough substance to warrant an investigation. For example, we may send the subject of the allegation a letter requesting an explanation and supporting evidence. We usually don't contact the subject's institution at this phase. If there is enough substance to proceed, we open a formal investigation. Research misconduct allegations can, and often do, close at the inquiry stage.

Investigations involve collecting and reviewing facts, assessing the elements required for a research misconduct finding, and determining whether research misconduct occurred. We generally refer research misconduct investigations, along with any evidence we obtained during our inquiry, to the subject's institution. We also provide procedural guidance to the investigation committee and encourage the institution to consult with its general counsel and follow its own research misconduct policies as it conducts the investigation. Once the institution completes its investigation, it sends us a report. We review the report for accuracy and completeness and decide whether to accept its conclusions. We may accept an institution's report in whole or in part, request additional information, or initiate our own independent investigation.

We close a case if we conclude that research misconduct did not occur. If we conclude research misconduct did occur, we write our own report that includes recommended actions for NSF management. NSF ultimately decides whether a research misconduct finding is made. We post research misconduct case closeouts on our website and report cases and outcomes in our Semiannual Reports to Congress.

Where can I find additional information?

Information about RIAI: https://nsf.gov/oig/office-inv/administrative.jsp.
Case closeouts: https://nsf.gov/oig/case-closeout.
Semiannual Reports to Congress: www.nsf.gov/oig/reports.

How can I report research misconduct or other forms of fraud, waste, abuse, or whistleblower reprisal?

- **Online report:** www.nsf.gov/oig/report-fraud/form.jsp
- **Anonymous Hotline:** 1.800.428.2189
- **Email:** oig@nsf.gov
- **Mail:** 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
  ATTN: OIG HOTLINE

Have a question or an idea for NSF OIG's Corner?
Please contact us at
OIGPublicAffairs@nsf.gov

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COST SHARING: Now What?

By Rula Karapatsakis

This article discusses the myths and facts about cost sharing, how cost sharing evolved over time, and the current status of including cost sharing on a proposal. The article will handle this topic in a question and answer method, laying down those important questions a research administrator would have about cost sharing and answering it through UG guidelines and other facts.

What is cost sharing?
The portion of project costs not paid by Federal funds. This may include the value of allowable third party in-kind contributions, as well as expenditures by the recipient (NIH, 2019).

Is cost sharing required?
Some sponsors require cost sharing in their program announcement's request for proposals. Cost sharing can be a mandated amount in the form of a percentage, or actual dollars. If cost sharing is required, then it is considered a mandatory requirement because the proposal will not be considered without the commitment. Look under the cost sharing section of an RFP to see if cost sharing is required. It is usually not required. See the example below:

> **2. Cost Sharing**
> *This FOA does not require cost sharing as defined in the NIH Grants Policy Statement.*

Is cost sharing even permitted?
Some sponsors, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), do not even permit cost sharing. Read through the RFP to see if cost sharing is even permitted.

What are the different types of cost sharing?
Cash Contribution: Where actual cash transaction occurs and can be documented in the accounting system. This includes allocation of compensated faculty and staff time to projects or purchasing of equipment by the institution for the benefit of the project requiring cost sharing.

In-Kind Contribution: Where the value of the contribution can be readily determined but where no actual cash is transacted in securing the good or service. Examples of in-kind contributions are: (1) The donation of volunteer time valued at a rate that would be reasonable for the time devoted had the volunteer been compensated for the time. (2) The donation of non-institution space where such space would normally carry a fee for purposes other than supporting this particular project. This might be utilization of a conference center without having to pay the published rate. In-kind contributions must be documented with official correspondence from the organization providing the in-kind cost sharing to include appropriate substantive documentation such as published rate schedules, time cards for volunteers, etc.

If we commit cost sharing, are we required to meet it?
If cost sharing is committed, then you have to meet your commitment. Whether it is in-kind or cash you will need to track it, report it, and be ready to answer to an audit.

At closing, if we have committed cost sharing but didn't spend the total awarded sponsor dollars, what proportion are we required to meet our committed cost sharing?
If you have committed cost sharing, but haven't spent the total awarded sponsor dollars, then you have to meet the cost sharing percentage of the spent / awarded amount. For example, if you committed \$100K and you spent \$800K of a \$1M authorized award, then you have to cost share (\$800K/ \$1M = 80%) of your committed cost sharing, or \$80K in this scenario.

What is the difference between voluntary committed cost sharing and voluntary uncommitted cost sharing?
If cost sharing is not required but you choose to commit cost sharing, then that is considered voluntary cost sharing. Voluntary cost sharing can be committed or uncommitted. See the definitions below:

Voluntary committed cost sharing: Cost sharing specifically pledged on a voluntary basis in the proposal's budget or the Federal award on the part of the non-Federal entity that becomes a binding requirement of Federal award. (UG, § 200.99)

Voluntary uncommitted cost sharing: Cost sharing that occurs during the life of the award that was not offered in the proposal and not included in the budget provided to the sponsor. Amounts and documentation do not need to be reported or submitted to the sponsor.

Will committing cost sharing help us get funding?

Per the Uniform Guidance, the Federal government does not expect voluntary committed cost sharing in proposals. It cannot be used as a factor during the merit review of an applications or proposals unless it is both in accordance with Federal awarding agency regulations and specified in the notice of funding opportunity. For proposals submitted after December 26, 2014, cost sharing may not be a factor in the review process unless it is both in accordance with Federal awarding agency regulations and specified in the notice of funding opportunity (Uniform Guidance, Title 2 Part 200 Cost Sharing).

How do I watch my cost sharing spent percentage?

If you have committed mandatory or voluntary cost sharing, you are required to meet it and report on it. It is not something you should ignore, only to find yourself surprised by it at closing. The best method to track cost sharing is to start planning to meet the required amount for each project year. So, for example, if you committed to cost share $1M during the life of a five-year project, then your goal is to meet 1/5th of that amount, or $200K each year.

What is allowed to be spent on cost sharing?

Uniform Guidance policies apply to both Federal funding and cost sharing, so if an expense is not allowed on the Federal side, then it is not allowed on the cost sharing side. Typically, what you included in your proposed budget to be cost shared is what you should plan to spend on your cost sharing.

What rules apply to cost sharing, if committed?

The same rules that apply to sponsor funds apply to committed cost sharing. It must be allowable, allocable, reasonable, and consistently treated.

How is cost sharing budgeted for?

Cost sharing has to be mentioned in the proposed budget and the budget justification, so for example if cost sharing effort, it can show as follows:

NAME	ROLE ON PROJECT	Cal. Months	Acad. Months	Summer Months	SALARY REQUESTED	FRINGE BENEFITS	TOTAL
B. OTHER PERSONNEL (Detail below)							
TBA	Java Developer	12.00			0	0	0

TBA, Java Developer (effort = 12.00 calendar months). This person will be responsible for....

- Funds are requested to cover 0.00 calendar months of this position's salary and fringe benefits.
- If cost sharing equipment, it can show as follows:
- $72,000 per year is requested for…equipment. Matching Institutional funds will be cost shared to allow for this purchase.

Will cost sharing help with the merit review?

Budgets are usually reviewed after the scientific review committee gives the proposal a good score. Therefore, cost sharing will not help with your merit review.

Cost sharing – now what?

So what is the best approach to handle cost sharing at this point? The answer is simple: Do not commit to cost sharing (unless required). Many pre-award research administrators calculate a budget to meet the aims of a proposal and ask for what is allowed on the sponsored side and commit to cost share the rest of the budget. When awarded, they find out that actual expenses are lower than budgeted and there is no need to use cost sharing funds. They end up having to count some of the sponsor expenses towards meeting the cost sharing obligation and end up deobligating sponsor funds at the end of a grant. That not only unnecessarily depletes institutional funds, but it also holds up available funds that a sponsor can award to other applications. If you have no cost sharing committed and your actual expenses are higher than the authorized budget, then you will need to cover the difference with other sources anyway;, consequently, there is no need to commit to cost sharing up front. N

References

NIH Glossary, 2019. Accessed from: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm#MatchingorCostSharing

Uniform Guidance 200.306 Subpart D. Accessed from: www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/ 2/200.306

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WHAT NOW?

Deliver – Evaluate – Revise

By Tricia Callahan

In 2019, we've shared at length on the instructional design process in creating your training program: defining the need, writing program objectives, and designing the training to meet those objectives. But what comes next?

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN PROCESS OVERVIEW

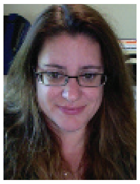
STEPS	CORE COMPONENTS	QUESTIONS TO ASK
Define the Need	Purpose Audience Skills - Attitudes - Behaviors	What is the purpose of the program? Who is the intended audience? Who are the key constituents?
Write Program Objectives	Program Goals Design-based Objectives Evaluation of knowledge/skills/attitudes	What are the program goals? What knowledge, skills, and attitudes need to be addressed? What levels of competency need to be demonstrated?
Design	Content Delivery Delivery Flow Materials	What delivery methods will be employed (lecture-style, on-demand, discussion-based)? How long does training need to be in order to accomplish program objectives? What materials are needed (presentations, case studies, video tutorials)?

The "final" step in the design process centers around IMPROVEMENT. It involves taking a pulse after the training has been delivered to purposefully evaluate the program objectives, design, and delivery to ensure objectives have been met. It involves conducting evaluations designed to address not only if the learners enjoyed the training, but did they learn a new skill or gain new knowledge; how they will use the new information or skill; and what are the long-term impacts of the training on the learner and their environment.

Process improvement is never "final," rather it is on-going. How often a program, individual offerings, and materials need to be evaluated and revised depends on a number of factors including how often training is held, available resources for revising materials, and changes in program objectives.

"FINAL" STEP	CORE COMPONENTS	QUESTIONS TO ASK
IMPROVE	Deliver Evaluate Revise	Was the material learned? Are participants using what they learned? What impact did the training have on the learner, on performance, on the organization?

As trainers, our role is to deliver educational information, evaluate learning materials, and revise program content to ensure that the organization's training platform is successful. N



Tricia Callahan, MA, CRA, *is the Senior Research Education and Information Officer at Colorado State University (CSU), a graduate of NCURA's Leadership Development Institute and the Executive Leadership Program (ELP). A long standing member of NCURA, Tricia currently serves as an NCURA Traveling Workshop faculty for fundamentals and global research administration. She can be reached at* callahtl@colostate.edu

The Federal Demonstration Partnership – Application for Phase VII Membership Now Open

By Jeanne Hermann-Petrin

The Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) will enter Phase VII in October 2020 and will begin receiving membership applications from organizations receiving federal research funding starting in early to mid-February. This includes universities, colleges, minority serving institutions, predominantly undergraduate institutions, non-profit research institutes, and hospitals/medical centers who would like to participate in this next six-year FDP Phase.

About the FDP

The FDP is a unique forum of volunteer representatives from federal agencies and federal funding recipients. These representatives are committed to the FDP mission of streamlining the administration of federally sponsored research and fostering collaboration to enhance the national research enterprise while maintaining high standards of stewardship and accountability.

The Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) is a program convened by the Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable of the National Academies. However, FDP began as an experiment in 1986 between five federal agencies (National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Office of Naval Research, Department of Energy, and US Department of Agriculture), the Florida State University System, and the University of Miami to test and evaluate a grant mechanism utilizing a standardized and simplified set of terms and conditions across all participating agencies. Over the past 34 years the FDP has evolved into an organization of 10 federal agencies and 154 research institutions dedicated to finding efficient and effective ways to support research by maximizing resources available for research and minimizing administrative costs and burden for all parties.

The unique forum FDP creates allows representatives from research institutions to work collaboratively with federal agency officials to identify and reduce the administrative burdens associated with research grants and contracts. Federal research funding recipients and federal FDP representatives gather three times per year for an in-person meeting. At these meetings, faculty and administrators talk face-to-face with decision-makers from agencies that sponsor and regulate research. They participate in frank discussions, identify problems, and develop action plans for change. When needed, the members test new processes prior to their implementation. The goal of improving the productivity of research without compromising its stewardship has benefits for the entire nation.

The FDP uses committees, subcommittees and working groups to accomplish its goals. The committees are divided into Operational and Programmatic Committees. The Operational Committees oversee the functioning of the organization, while the Programmatic Committees are formed around the areas of research administration where the FDP works in trying to gain efficiencies. As an all-volunteer organization the committees are chaired and staffed by representatives from the FDP member institutions and federal agencies. These representatives work on specific initiatives via collaborative working groups through video calls held between the in-person meetings.

The FDP Member Application Process

There are many opportunities for involvement with FDP!

You can find more information, as well as the membership application, on the FDP website (www.thefdp.org). The application process requires a letter of institutional support. This letter should be signed by an authorized institutional official (Provost, Vice President for Research, Chief Research Officer or equivalent) and contain a statement clearly indicating the institution's commitment to the financial and time commitments required for active membership.

The following are key dates:

- Applications will be due by the end of March 2020.
- Evaluation of applications and the selection of new members will be completed early May 2020.
- Potential new members are invited to attend the FDP meeting scheduled for May 20 - 22, 2020 at the Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC.
- All Phase VII members will be required to execute membership agreements before attending the September 2020 meeting.
- New members are expected to participate in the September 9 – 11, 2020 meeting, also held at the Marriott Wardman Park.

For further information please visit the FDP website (www.thefdp.org) or contact its Executive Director, David Wright, at dwright@nas.edu.

Jeanne Hermann-Petrin, PhD, *is the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Electronic Research Administration based at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. She partners with preaward offices and research compliance committees across the UT System to provide centralized proposal, award, compliance, and facility solutions. She is the Co-chair of the FDP Membership Committee and NCURA Region III Treasurer. Jeanne can be reached at* **jhermann@uthsc.edu**

The LEADMe Program: Leading Others with Passion and Purpose

By Derick Jones

Linda W. Patton, chair of the Educational and Professional Development committee for Region VI in 2008, approached the regional chair, Bruce Morgan, with a proposition to model the success of NCURA's Leadership Development Institute designed by consultant Gale S. Wood. Seeing the need for leadership development for the region, Linda developed the LEADMe Program with the aid of other industry veterans and began the important work of developing the next generation of seasoned leaders for NCURA and the profession. With the blessing of the chair, Linda set out to develop the curriculum for the program. In the summer of 2009, a call for applicants was sent to the regional members. I was one of the fortunate seven who responded to the call.

In 2016, Region VII was added to the program to provide the region with a leadership pipeline. This partnership has proven to be a successful collaboration and continues to produce stellar leaders each year. We just completed our 10th year of the program culminating with ten graduates at the regional meeting in Seattle, Washington.

The LEADMe Program has become the flagship program for both regions. The selection process for each class has become highly competitive. Applicants far outnumber the available slots per year for the program. We seek to identify the best and brightest from each region for the program. Each year we successfully recruit first-year mentees as well as Mentors-In-Training (MINTs) who are continuing their leadership journey. Mentors are selected from across our vast regions. These individuals give selflessly of their time and talents to help light the leadership spark.

The one-year program focuses on providing educational and professional development experiences to selected mentees while continuing the leadership journey of others (MINTs). "The LEADMe Program has been quite rewarding for me. I have taken master's level management courses and participated in other leadership development programs, but none has prepared me to lead a team more than this program. It forced me to examine myself, my role within my organization, challenged me to step out of my comfort zone, and has opened my eyes to the challenges and opportunities within my organization that otherwise I might not have thought about. Whether you are currently a leader or simply aspire to become a better leader within your role, I highly recommend this program as a starting point," said Jason Papka, Idaho State University. Cristi Williams from The Lundquist Institute said, "The LEADMe Program is a unique experience that allows research administrators to learn from one another no matter if you are senior or just getting started. As both a mentee and now a MINT, I find we are constantly learning from each other and growing together. Our shared experiences help push us all forward to being the best research administrators we can be. LEADMe just helps create the space for us to excel. "

We are currently seeking candidates for the Class of 2020 while embarking on a new initiative to support Region III with the expansion of its Research Administrator Mentoring Program (RAMP). We have issued a scholarship to Angela Garvin, Emory University, who is a RAMP graduate. She will be participating in the LEADMe Program Class of 2020, modeling the way for her region to develop new and creative ideas for leadership development. It is our goal to share our program with each region so that there is commonality in curriculum. Our goal is that through diversity and inclusion, we are creating a working model for others on how to develop a broad and diverse leadership pool. LEADMe has provided Region VI and VII with a leadership depth that will serve NCURA for years to come.

This partnership has proven to be a successful collaboration and continues to produce stellar leaders each year.

Derick F. Jones, *Program Manager for the Institute for Translational Genomics and Population Sciences at the Lundquist Institute for Biomedical Innovations at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center is a graduate of the LEADMe Program, NCURA's Executive Leadership Program, former chair of NCURA Region VI and current NCURA Board of Directors Member. Derick's responsibilities at the Lundquist Institute Management of the Genomics Institute include business development, pre-award activities, and post-award non-financial activities. He can be reached at* **derickjones@lundquist.org**

The Golden Era of International Cooperation in China

By Hongyang Xu

The history of China's development is a history of reform and opening-up. During the last four decades, we have strived for large-scale economic growth and development, made noteworthy progress in poverty alleviation, realized significant achievements in science and technology (S&T) focusing on improving people's health and wellbeing, and established worldwide formal diplomatic relations to facilitate more international cooperation for the shared interest of mankind.

China firmly believes that "science and technology are primary productive forces". This theory was first put forward by our former leader Deng Xiaoping during his meeting with Czech President in 1988. According to the statistics provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC, the 1970s witnessed a surge of establishing diplomatic relations between China and Western-developed countries. They enrolled with the governmental S&T memorandum of understanding in hand, and the multilateral cooperation has been intensifying since its beginnings in 1970s, which can be regarded as an indicator of China's determination to develop research.

Another indicator is the rapid growth of our national research and development (R&D) expenditures. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), China's spending on R&D increased from 67.89 billion yuan (about US$9.62 billion) in 1999 to 1967.7 billion yuan (about

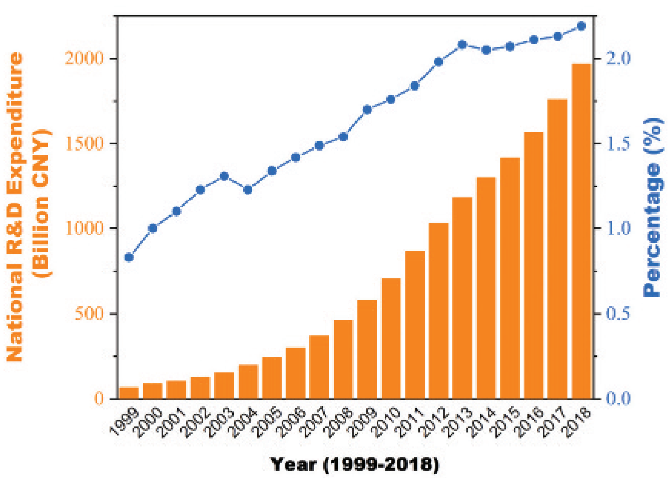


Figure 1. National R&D Expenditures (Billion yuan) and Percentage of GDP (%)

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), National R&D Expenditure Report from 1999 to 2018, www.stats.gov.cn

US$279 billion) in 2018, which reflects a compound annual growth rate of 40%. China's government also set the objective of increasing R&D expenditures to a minimum of 2.5% of GDP per year in the period up to 2020 in the *National Medium and Long-Term Program for Science and Technology Development (2006-2020)*, which suggests the sincere willingness of the government to prioritize research, thus making S&T the primary productive forces.

New Millennium of Innovation Policies and Resources

"One will fall behind without innovation, and just as much if one is too slow in innovation," said China's President Xi Jinping. China is now dedicated to the transformation from "made in China" to "designed and invented in China" from world factory to smart manufacturing. Innovation has been the key issue in China's economic development.

The transition to an innovation nation has been a declared aim of China's government since the turn of the millennium. Numerous policies and strategies at a national level to accelerate innovation in all fields have been promoted:

- 2006: The National Medium- and Long-Term Program for S&T Development (2006- 2020)
- 2013: Belt and Road Initiative
- 2015: Opinions of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee of Accelerating the Construction of a Global Innovation Center in S&T in Shanghai
- 2016: The 13th Five-Year Plan for National S&T Innovation
- 2016: National Innovation-Driven Development Strategy Outline
- 2018: The launch of S&T Innovation Board

The landing of these innovation-driven strategies demonstrates China's efforts to nurture innovation and promote high-quality, co-operative development. It is obvious to notice that behind the *Belt and Road Initiative* is China's willingness to build a community with a shared future for mankind by means of large-scale financial investment in education, research, technology, innovation, and international cooperation. Without precedent, the launching of the S&T board provides the fertilized soil for scientists actively performing translational science with the help of the capital market, thus, accelerating the transfer of technology to realize a better quality of life.

Mission-oriented International Big Science Research Plans

Among all the policies released, it is worthwhile to mention *Program for Taking the Lead in Launching International Big Science Research Plans and Projects*, which was officially released on April 10, 2018. It landmarked the attitude and determination of the government to support Big Science research plans and projects based on international collaboration. Shanghai took the lead to construct the global innovation center in S&T embedded with major science research plans and projects, noticeably, the Shanghai Synchrotron Radiation Facility and International Human Phenome Project (Pilot Project).

Shanghai Synchrotron Radiation Facility (SSRF) is the largest synchrotron research facility to date in China and one of the advanced third generation light sources in the world. Not far away(<3km) lies the Fudan-Zhangjiang International Innovation Center, which houses the Human Phenome Institute (HuPI) and Brain and Brain Inspired intelligence Innovation Center.

The overarching aim of putting so much effort into these big plans and innovation centers is to leverage and enhance the competitiveness and impact of the city by harnessing the economic, S&T and geographic advantages, thus, spearheading the reform and transform of the industrial/social mechanism to better serve the Chinese people.

Internationality is another key distinctive character of such Big Science plans and projects. For example, the Human Phenome Project is a project that addresses the influences of the interaction of environment and a person's lifestyle with their genes on health and disease risks. This requires the collaboration among physicists, chemists, biologists, clinicians, and engineers around the globe to contribute knowledge in their fields, thereby, drawing an "Atlas of the Human Disease" together and ultimately revolutionizing the definition of healthiness and realizing precision medicine.

Call for Collaboration from Research Administration Perspective

Globalization makes it no longer a question, whether to work with China. As a research administrator in charge of S&T international cooperation, the most frequently heard question when attending conferences and seminars is: how can I start an international research collaboration with Chinese institutions?

It is a question of identifying appropriate objectives, thematic areas, and collaboration mechanisms so that such cooperation benefits mutual sides. My suggestions from management perspective are as follows:

1. **Develop strategic top design of collaborative activities,** which necessarily involves checking state or local government's supportive policies, thus leading to probable specific funding;
2. **Communicate intensely with the domestic government officer.** With a different scientific culture background, it would be best to deploy prior resources from the home institute and form a memorandum of understanding with the collaborator to show a general intention to collaborate. Specifications come up later along with continuous exchanges would do no harm.
3. **Seize the right administrative division.** Nearly all universities in China have an independent S&T division or Institute of S&T. Some of them have an international cooperation division inside the institute/division, which may also have a direct relationship with the foreign affairs department in the school. The right point of contact will absolutely offer the latest policies and sources of external and nternal funding suitable for certain collaborative requests, hence, saving countless time to accurately target the mutual interests of projects.

With the open environment, policy benefits, and substantial infrastructures, China has entered a golden era of international cooperation. Collaborating with researchers around the world, we believe we can find innovative solutions to global challenges and create a community with shared prosperity for mankind. N

Hongyang Xu, PhD, *was the deputy director of the division of International Cooperation, Institute of Science and Technology at Fudan University. She was responsible for facilitating international collaboration by standardizing protocols of project management, establishing international joint platforms and promoting big scientific projects with global impact. She obtained her PhD in computational biology in joint institute of Max-Planck Society and Chinese Academy of Sciences, and she now serves as the assistant Dean of the Human Phenome Institute of Fudan University in charge of research international collaboration. She can be reached at* xuhongyang@fudan.edu.cn

Building Relationships

Research administrators often say they support faculty in their efforts to obtain and maintain research funding. Yet, faculty express frustrations and concerns that research administration increases faculty burden and impedes their ability to focus on research. These differing perspectives can lead to strained, less productive relationships while research administrators strive for positive relationships. How do we bridge this divide? Productive relationships require collaboration, communication and mutual respect. What can we do to achieve this?

While many institutions regularly host Faculty Orientations, only some institutions include research administrators. Those institutions that do provide the linkage between the institution's mission to grow research and the valuable resources available to aid faculty in their research pursuit. Developing this relationship from the onset sets the faculty up for success while also facilitating a productive partnership between faculty and administration.

Additionally, research institutions regularly hold meetings for their research deans to discuss research strategies, initiatives, concerns, and solutions. While their focus may be on their scientific needs, inevitably, their conversations shift to institutional policies, processes and systems. By including senior research administrators in these meetings, they can share perspectives and build partnerships as they identify solutions.

As you are looking for new approaches to build these relationships, suggest including research administrators in Faculty Orientation and Research Dean meetings. Both of these approaches create opportunities to improve collaboration and communication between faculty and research administrators and facilitate the research growth. N

Jill Frazier Tincher, MBA, CRA, *is a member of the Select Committee on Peer Review. She has participated in peer reviews and has more than 25 years of research administration experience, spanning pre-award, post-award, central and departmental, as well as education and training. She is the Executive Director of Pre and Post Award at The University of Georgia. She can be reached at* Jill.Tincher@uga.edu

What Dog Mushing Teaches Us– the Power of Leadership in a Team

By Sue A. Kelch

As research administrators, we continually find ourselves working as part of a team. Our positionality within that team is determined by our title, role, experience, goal, and more. We've all heard that quote "Unless you're the lead dog, the view never changes." That analogy is intended to make us strive to be the leader, right? But wait, wouldn't this mean that only the lead dog in the team has importance? After all, who would want to be in a position behind the top dog, given that scenario? Or shouldn't we really be aspiring to be the best leader we can in any position? Isn't every role important?

For me that slogan has always completely missed the mark and worse, creates unintended consequences by building on myths. Surely the value of leadership and the team teaches us that the most dynamic and successful teams work together and help lead one another regardless of title or role. Each member strives to successfully achieve the same goal without ego getting in the way.

Taking into consideration this leader dog, many good examples of animal teams exist – the Clydesdales, the Borax mule team, and perhaps the most famous animal team that comes to mind is dog mushing and the story of the Iditarod Trail.

The Iditarod Trail was used by Native Alaskan Eskimo Inupiaq and Athabaskan peoples for centuries for transportation and communication during the unforgiving winters. The Iditarod Trail traverses harsh landscape of tundra and spruce forests, over hills and mountain passes, and during commonly occurring weather events such as blizzard and white out conditions. The trail declined in the 1920s, when the airplane began to replace the dogsled as primary means of crossing the difficult terrain.

The most famous event in the history of Alaska mushing, also known as the "Great Race of Mercy," is the 1925 serum run to Nome. During that year, there was a large diphtheria epidemic and because Nome's supply of antitoxin had expired, Dr. Curtis Welch refused to use it and instead sent out telegrams seeking a fresh supply. The nearest antitoxin

No matter what role you play, every member of the team has value and plays a unique leadership role.

was found in Anchorage, nearly 1,000 miles away. The only way to get the serum in time was by sled dog, as no capable pilot was available and ships would be too slow. Ultimately, over a period of just five and half days teams of dog relays of more than 100 dogs not running more than 100 miles each, arrived in Nome with the 20-pound cylinder of serum.

So the concept of any team of animals — horses, mules, oxen, or dogs — should remind us of how much success owes to grooming and growing a team that works in harmony and complete synchronization to achieve success.

While the lead dog may be the first in the line of the mush team, each dog has a special role and unique skill set to meet the challenge. Understanding the dynamics of a team and using them to their best capabilities is crucial to success. So let's begin by examining a dog mushing team.

We'll start with the **lead dogs**, the first dogs in the pack. Lead dogs are picked and trained to set the pace while keeping the other dogs on the trail. They are the dogs that respond to the musher's commands and must be alert and intelligent so they can find and follow the trail when it is covered over with snow. They also keep the other dogs in the team moving by pulling the towline taut.

In the workplace, the **lead dogs** are the ones who understand and always keep the mission of the workplace, department or institution at the forefront. They take initiative to form and build a cohesive and seamless team. They may also have the most visibility and serve as representatives and gatekeepers for the unit.

Next are the **swag dogs**. The **swag dogs** are directly behind the lead dogs and help steer the team around corners. The swag dogs pull the team in an arc that keeps the other dogs on the trail and brings the sled and musher safely around the corner. If you've ever played "crack the whip" in the schoolyard, you know how important this role is.

Imagine who your **swag dogs** are in the office. They may be tasked with ensuring that deadlines are met or problems are solved efficiently. They keep everyone focused and moving in a positive direction, so that the team doesn't get distracted by multiple priorities and heavy workloads.

Team dogs are the team's brawn. They are charged with pulling the sled and maintaining proper speed. There are several pairs of team dogs, depending on the size of the sled-dog team, keeping in mind that the weight dogs can pull can be over 300 pounds.

The **team dogs** at work are the ones who are in the trenches and on the front lines; they are the ones working directly with faculty on their award submissions or reporting, talking to lab managers regarding expenses, or processing payments. They quickly assess tasks and efficiently outline steps needed to accomplish a goal so as not to waste time and to conserve energy to where it is best needed.

Wheel dogs: These are the two dogs closest to the sled and are usually the largest of the dogs because they are the first to take on the weight of the load being pulled, especially during starts and climbs. Wheel dogs should be even-tempered as they must withstand the constant slamming of the sled runners behind them.

Wheel dogs at work may likely be your most experienced staff; they've been through stressful deadlines before and they know the ropes. They accept the challenges of unexpected obstacles and roadblocks and take it all in stride without missing a beat. They help set the tone for the whole team, downplaying drama and cheering everyone on to the finish line.

Finally, with all of these various roles of the mushing team and skill sets required, it is imperative that roles be interchangeable. Circumstances like weather conditions, injuries or behavior can change in an instant. Dogs need to be rested, switched, or even removed.

At work this is called cross-training, as managers understand work dynamics can also change with little notice. Someone goes on leave, moves to another area, or retires; yet deadlines and workload do not change.

Ultimately, while research administrators may not be participating in the Iditarod, we constantly use the guiding principles of that mush team. The team works together with scientists, investigators and faculty with the common goal for cure for chronic and debilitating diseases, to ensure that our infrastructure is sound, or work to preserve priceless artifacts. No matter what role you play, every member of the team has value and plays a unique leadership role.

So the next time you hear that slogan "if you're not the lead dog the view never changes," remember the lesson of the mushing line, stay humble, and think of where you would be without the swag, team or wheel dogs. N

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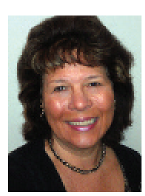

Sue A. Kelch, CRA, BA, *has spent her 35-year career at the University of Michigan promoting and advancing the science as a research administrator. An NCURA member since 2007, Sue's many volunteer positions include Region IV Chair, member of the Select Committee on Global Affairs and Regionally Elected Member of the Board. Sue was also selected into the NCURA Executive Leadership Program. She can be reached at* **suekelch@med.umich.edu**

Making Lemonade:

Capitalizing on the Federal Work-Study Program to Train Future Research Administrators

By Andrew Barton

Research administration offices are, in many ways, a microcosm of the professional labor force. They are staffed by people with diverse backgrounds, skillsets, and training, who work in concert in support of broader, shared goals. Much like the American labor force, research administration is effected by general shifts and trends as well. It should be no surprise, then, that a look around your typical research administration office is likely to yield an unfortunate insight: our workforce is aging into retirement.

With the ongoing retirement of the Baby Boomer generation, questions surround the following generations' abilities to take up the slack. Can we find individuals who have the skills, the experience, and the desire to rise to fill vital roles within the research administration framework at our institutions? Unlike many other professions, research administration is a niche field that requires specific competencies and background knowledge. Exacerbating this barrier to entry is the fact that formal education in research administration has only recently begun in earnest. A survey of these programs shows that most of their students are already employed in research administration positions. How, then, do we add skilled young professionals to the field?

Research administrators come from diverse fields-from law, medicine, finance, HR, or journalism to name a few. This influx ensures that research administration offices are staffed with people who bring complementary backgrounds to solve problems and consider all relevant angles of the projects they manage. Fortunately, nothing suggests that this will end soon. But it is possible that we are overlooking a potential vital source of talent—the undergraduate student population.

College presents a unique opportunity for students to explore all possibilities, personal and professional. In a world rich with possibilities, however, choice can be a burden. According to surveys, 20-50% of students enter college not knowing what career they would like to pursue and 75% of undergraduates change their major prior to graduation (Freedman, 2013). It stands to reason that very few of these undergraduates would cite "research administration" as a desirable career path, simply because they are unaware of its existence. Nonetheless, typical research administration positions present the same challenges, opportunities, and benefits as the most popular career paths. How, then, do we as administrators attract talent from this pool?

The answer may lie in a promising but often beleaguered program, the Federal Work-Study Program. The Federal Work-Study Program was established by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 with three goals in mind: to present an alternative source of education funding for students, to give undergraduate students vital work experience, and to strengthen bonds between universities and their communities (Northwestern University, 2019). In practice, the program is simple. Students receive work-study funds as part of their aid package and must then find an on-campus job to be paid from these funds. Positions are typically available in academic and administrative departments throughout the campus.

While few would contest the soundness of the idea, its application in academic institutions has met with mixed success. Students participating in work-study programs are more likely to graduate and get a job, but work-study students are also more likely to take on loans as work-study funds often replace need-based aid in financial aid packages (Fain, 2015). But by using it as effectively as possible within our institutions, could we help solve a looming generational crisis?

> Unlike many other professions, research administration is a niche field that requires specific competencies and background knowledge."

The Work-Study Program offers several advantages vis-à-vis recruitment to research administration offices. First, it takes advantage of artificial scarcity. Without having to compete with other external employers, research administration offices have disproportionate access to talent that might otherwise pass them over. In courting potential applicants from the undergraduate population, research administration offices can boost awareness among these job seekers. These positions also provide clear value. The funding, provided by the university at no expense to the recipient office, gives an administrative office the chance to train future research administrators for semesters, if not years. In an ideal scenario, students would have the chance to gain experience with the financial aspects of research administration, compliance issues, regulatory requirements, and other pertinent subjects. They would then emerge, upon graduation, as qualified and competent candidates to take professional positions in these subfields.

Though Federal Work-Study funds are subject to appropriations, and the accompanying political wrangling, leaders in research administration can employ several methods to gain and utilize work-study positions. First, they can ask institutional leaders to join with other institutions to request increased congressional funding for the Federal Work-Study Program. This may be a long-term battle, but one worth fighting. Secondly, research administration offices can request work-study positions in lieu of entry-level or temporary positions. This may be attractive to institutional leadership due to its low relative cost and to research administrators as it offers the prospect of reliable labor (outside of exam periods, at least). In order to mitigate the growing student debt crisis, institutions may use these work-study funds to replace loans rather than need-based aid as part of a student's aid package. Finally, administrative offices can create de facto apprenticeships in research administration through the Work-Study Program. During a student's employment, they should be given as much experience as possible based on their interest and the office's needs. This ensures that students entering the field of research administration have the tools necessary to make an immediate positive impact.

The Federal Work-Study Program, despite its challenges, can provide a viable avenue for research administrators to pursue the talent necessary to sustain their offices in the short- and long-term. And I should know. I stepped foot on Tulane University's campus in 2010 as a transfer student, knowing very little about my adopted school. I had vague notions of my eventual career path, but I knew I wanted to be a part of something positive and transformative. I answered an online listing for a position I barely understood in something called the Tulane Office of Research Administration (now Sponsored Projects Administration). The education I received in that office was instrumental to my future in research administration, and led eventually to my current position in Tulane's Office of Research Proposal Development. We should offer these same opportunities to every generation of students for their good and for our own.

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Andrew Barton, *Research Proposal Development Officer at Tulane University, received his Master of Science Degree in Research Administration from Johns Hopkins University. He currently assists research faculty with proposal development for submission to the NIH, DoD, CDC, and other federal funding agencies. He can be reached at* **abarton1@tulane.edu**

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Why Does it Matter: Grant Management

By Tomi Adesakin

Research administration is an important role that covers all aspects of grant management from application to grant control to monitoring milestones and goals as well as abiding by the federal regulations. Managing the grants that stimulate the organization can be a complicated and stressful process filled with paperwork, guidelines, rules, and deadlines. The research administration profession requires individuals to have a diverse set of skills and vast knowledge to properly manage contracts, grants, proposals, financial audits, and cooperative agreements.

To manage grant awards effectively, rules are essential. With private sponsors, the requirements and regulations can often be effectively handled through good communication, collaboration (cooperation), and excellent accounting practices. Some specific topics in research administration are mandatory to have the required skills and accomplishments such as:

- Financial Compliance (high- and low-risk areas)
- Understanding the difference between Grants v. Gifts
- Uniform Guidance (significant highlights)
- Budget Justification
- Award Setup

Grant management, also known as a management plan, includes all the administrative responsibilities one must complete during the timeframe of the awarded grant. However, grant management is more than basically ensuring the terms of any grant are met on time and on budget. Successful institutions or organizations have a firm grant management program that starts long before any grants are awarded. Grant management involves strategic planning, program development, well-organized grant design, and having adequate resources to manage the process efficiently.

The Types of Grants that Require Grant Management:
Grant management is required for every type of grant, including the following:

- A Project of Program Grants
- Start-Up Grants
- Capital Grants
- Technical Assistance Grants
- General Operating Grants

What are the benefits of Grant Management in Research Administration?

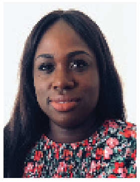
It Improves the Grant Process: Strong grant management, with distinct roles and responsibility as well as clear leadership, enhances efficiency. There will be more time reporting the successes of your organization and less time spent chasing data, which can lead to more grant awards to accomplish the organization's mission.

Strong grant management, with distinct roles and responsibility as well as clear leadership, enhances efficiency.”

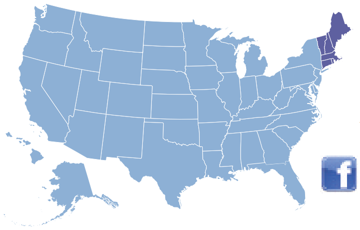
Avoid Penalties and Complications: If grants are mismanaged, one can expect a range of consequences to the organization. If reports are not submitted promptly or deadlines are not met to meet the goals of the grant, there will be high revenue grant loss and future grant awards may be affected.

Avoid Frustration: How often do we scramble to gather the report we need for our funder? This happens to a lot of us. Measuring and tracking grant progress is one of the greatest frustrations among grant recipients. Grant management can help monitor grant performance, improve the ability to collect data, and compile reports and keep stakeholders informed.

With proper grant management, we can spend our valuable work time dedicated toward ensuring quality compliance, developing relevant metrics, and communicating with all appropriate parties during the life of the grant or contract. Grant management puts the time back into the work that matters and less time focusing on the areas that do not. Consider developing a grant management system that strategically aids in accomplishing your goals.



Tomi Adesakin, BS, *is a full-time Master's in Research Administration student at the University of Central Florida. Her experience has included working for one of the top oncology hospitals and pharmaceutical companies in Houston that focuses on research, patient health, safety and well-being, and seeing patients who, despite their life-threatening conditions, depended and hoped for the best quality healthcare. She can be reached at* tadesakin@knights.ucf.edu



REGION I
New England

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Happy New Year! We hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday season.

By way of introduction, I am Louise Griffin, from the University of New Hampshire, and the 2020 chair of the region! The incoming treasurer is University of Vermont's Sonya Stern and the incoming secretary is Laurel Cobban from Brigham and Women's Hospital. On behalf of the regional leadership, we look forward to engaging with all of you in the coming year.

What will 2020 bring! For quite a few, the new year is a time for setting new goals! Proclaim how you want the new year to be better and then figure out how best to do it! In 2020, let's set some firm goals that we can actually track and achieve together through our participation in NCURA!

1. **Learn a new skill**. As an example, if you have always worked in pre-award, consider attending the spring meeting and participating in a post-award session or even better, attending a pre-conference workshop.

2. **Create at least one new professional networking connection per month.** The NCURA Collaborate professional networking platform allows members to easily interact and communicate online, empowering members to work effectively.

3. **Find a mentor. How you ask?** The region's mentor program enables newcomers to quickly and easily network with seasoned NCURA professionals who have volunteered to share their expertise, guidance, and support.

4. **Volunteer.** Volunteering is a great way to positively affect your professional development and feel good about yourself. Consider signing-up to volunteer at the spring meeting.

5. **Attend one professional networking event.** Did you know that the region offers workshops and RADG meetings throughout the year? Never been to Newport, RI? Plan on attending the spring meeting – you will not be disappointed.

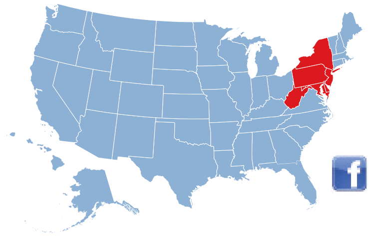
Spring Meeting. Mark your calendar for our premiere annual event (May 3-6, 2020 at the Newport Marriott). Under the leadership of chair-elect, Eva Pasadas it's shaping up to be one fabulous meeting.

Please remember to:

- Take advantage of the Early Bird Discount when registration open
- Reserve your room now to lock in the conference rate.
- Register for the pre-conference workshop to round out your conference experience.
- No budget! No problem! Consider applying for a travel award!

Stay connected! Follow **#region12020** on Twitter for all the latest spring meeting updates!

Louise Griffin *is the Chair of Region I and serves as Senior Director of Research and Sponsored Programs Administration at the University of New Hampshire. She can be reached at* **louise.griffin@unh.edu**



REGION II
Mid-Atlantic

www.ncuraregionii.org

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Happy New Year! 2019 was a great year in our region and I would like to start my term as Chair by thanking our outgoing officers for all of their hard work and dedication: Charles Bartunek (Chair), Dennis Paffrath (Immediate Past Chair), Ted Fehskens (Treasurer), Catherine Parker (Secretary), and Ady Villegas-Estrada (Immediate Past Treasurer).

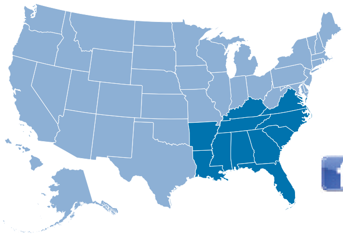
I am very excited to work with all of my fellow incoming officers in 2020. Please join me in welcoming Catherine Parker (Chair-Elect), Lamar Oglesby (Treasurer), Danielle Brown (Secretary), Gabriela Anglon (Treasurer-Elect), and Tim Schailey (Regionally Elected Member to the National Board).

Region II was very busy in 2019 and I wanted to touch on a couple of highlights. Last year our Steering Committee decided to implement a rotation schedule for regional meeting locations in the upcoming years to enable our members to plan for travel. Our first rotation will start in Delaware where we are looking forward to our Fall Regional Meeting in Wilmington, October 25 – 28, 2020, at the beautiful Hotel Dupont. Our Program Committee Chair to plan this meeting will be Sandy Collier from the University of Maryland and her Co-Chair is Kris Wolff from Fordham University. Please be on the lookout for information regarding the hotel and registration. If you would like to be involved in the planning of the regional meeting on the Program Committee, please contact Sandy Collier at collier@umd.edu

If you are looking for other ways to get involved within our region, please reach out to our Chair-Elect, Catherine Parker at parkerca@email.gwu.edu or myself and we can work with you to find a volunteer opportunity that suits your interests.

Finally, I would like to thank the Professional Development Committee (PDC) for another successful year! Thank you to all of the institutions across Region II that hosted a workshop in 2019! I look forward to working with the incoming PDC Chair, Tolise Dailey. For the full list of offerings and the upcoming workshops already scheduled, please visit the PDC website (https://ncuraregionii.org/pdc). If you are interested in hosting a PDC workshop at your institution, please contact Tolise Dailey at tdailey2@jhu.edu.

Katie McKeon *is the Chair of Region II and serves as an Assistant Director in the Office of Research Administration at the University of Maryland, College Park. She can be reached at* **kpetrone@umd.edu**



REGION III Southeastern

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Happy New Year! Here's what we've got in store for 2020. With support of the current chair, Emily Devereux, and the executive leadership team, Region III now has a Diversity & Inclusion ad hoc committee. The **Diversity & Inclusion Committee** aligns with NCURA's commitment to diversity and inclusion. This committee will work to learn the climate of Region III, advance Region III through education on topics related to diversity and inclusion, advise the regional leadership board on membership needs, and promote equity and inclusion throughout the membership/volunteerism. The committee held its kickoff meeting on November 21, 2019 and we're thankful to the following volunteers who have taken on this important initiative: Laneika K. Musalini (Coordinator), Tanta Myles, Celeste Rivera-Nunez, Justo Torres, Gregory Adams, Rashonda Harris, Jaime Petrasek, and Tanya Blackwell.

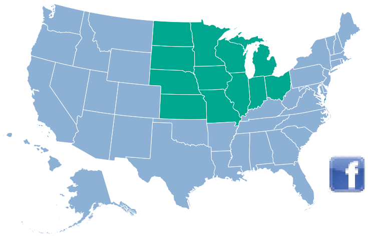
Region III members should keep their eyes out for emails and surveys so they can provide input on a variety of topics the committee will be covering.

Region III is also pleased to announce that Dr. Vonzell Agosto, Associate Professor in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the College of Education at the University of South Florida, will deliver the keynote address for the 2020 joint Region III/Region IV spring meeting! Dr. Agosto's areas of research are curriculum leadership, disability studies, and cultural studies. She is Co-PI on a Department of Education grant, H325D110049, "Preparing Leaders for Faculty Roles in Special Education Administration and Policy Studies (SEAPS)." She earned her PhD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We are thrilled to have a keynote speaker who is academically connected with both regions, whose work as a funded PI gives her direct experience with research administrators, and whose research interests align so well with our conference theme, "Expanding the Circle: One Profession, Diverse Perspectives." We are sure members of both regions will enjoy and appreciate Dr. Agosto's address.

For more information on the Region III/Region IV 2020 Spring Meeting, visit http://ncuraregioniii.com/2020-spring-meeting. Don't forget to sign up for one of the many volunteer opportunities to get the most out of the meeting!

We look forward to seeing everyone in St. Pete Beach, Florida for preconference workshops April 25-26 and for the meeting April 26-29. Until then, stay connected with us on the Region III Collaborate Community, our website, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook!

Scott Niles *is the Region III Secretary and serves as Research Associate/Contracting Officer at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He can be reached at* **scott.niles@osp.gatech.edu**



REGION IV Mid-America

www.ncuraregioniv.com

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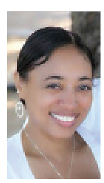
Happy New Year Region IV! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and have been enjoying this time of renewal and reflection. As I look back on the work of NCURA Region IV over the last year I am proud of several things – our commitment to diversity and inclusion, the wealth of knowledge we have shared with each other, and our remarkable volunteerism! I am humbled to be a part of this amazing region.

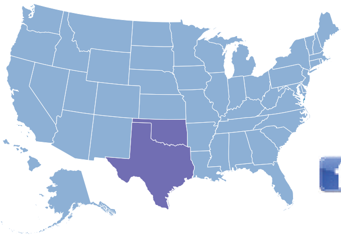
Make sure to vote in the Regional Board Elections – we will be electing a Chair-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, Secretary, and two At-Large Members of the Board. To learn about our wonderful slate of candidates, visit our website at: www.ncuraregioniv.com. Election results will be announced just prior to the 2020 Spring Regional Meeting!

Speaking of which, get a jump on beautiful spring weather by joining us April 26-29, at the Tradewinds Island Grand Resort in in St. Pete Beach, Florida! This joint meeting with Region III will be a great opportunity for learning, networking, and fun! The theme is "Expanding the Circle: One Profession, Diverse Perspectives," and topics covered include pre-award, post-award, research compliance, professional development, wellness, and more. Visit https://ncuraregioniv.com/conferences for more information.



Region IV is thrilled that Dr. Vonzell Agosto, Associate Professor in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the College of Education at the University of South Florida, will deliver the keynote address for the 2020 joint Region III/Region IV spring meeting! Our current Past Chair, Bonniejean Zitske, was instrumental in introducing Dr. Agosto to the spring meeting leads from both regions. Dr. Agosto earned her PhD at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, so we are pleased that she will represent the best of both regions.

Nicole Nichols *is Chair of Region IV and the Research Administrator for the Computational Biology and Medical Oncology Sections of the Department of Internal Medicine at Washington University in St. Louis. She can be reached at* **n.nichols@wustl.edu**



REGION V
Southwestern

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Happy New Year ya'll! 2020 holds a variety of opportunities for Region V members, and we encourage you to take full advantage of them: First, don't forget make plans to attend the Region V Spring Meeting, which will take place on April 26-29, 2020 at the Hilton Fort Worth. The theme of this year's meeting is "Round V Roundup: Where the Best Begins," a play on Fort Worth's motto. Chair-Elect **Becky Castillo** and her committee have an exciting program planned for us, including a few surprises associated with this year's theme. Meeting registration and the hotel room block will open soon, so watch your inbox for the e-blast announcing this information and more.

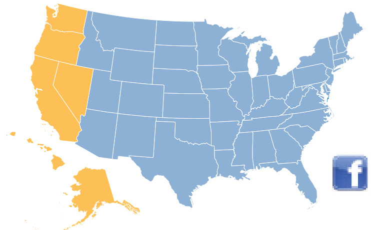
Next, the Region V Nominating Committee is preparing to issue their call for nominations for regional officers. In accordance with Article V of our regional bylaws, we'll be electing a new **Chair-Elect**, **Secretary**, and an **At-Large Member** to the regional executive committee. Position descriptions for each position, including eligibility and time requirements, are posted on the Region V website. We encourage you to review these descriptions, ask questions of current and past officers, and consider running for office.

Finally, the region's Site Selection Committee is seeking feedback from our members in determining where to hold future regional meetings. Are you interested in returning to San Antonio or Oklahoma City in the near future? How about the possibility of a joint meeting with one or more of our regional peers? I encourage you to contact our Site Selection Committee Chair, **Michael Castilleja**, with your ideas.

As always, the Executive Committee wants feedback from you, our members, in planning future meetings and other professional development opportunities. To that end, we encourage you to email or call us with recommendations. Your Executive Committee members (including me) as of Jan. 1, 2020 are:

- Chair-Elect: **Becky Castillo** (UT Southwestern)
- Immediate Past Chair: **Michael Castilleja** (University of the Incarnate Word)
- Secretary: **Liz Kogan** (The University of Texas at Austin)
- Treasurer: **Roxanne Smith Parks** (Lamar University)
- Treasurer-Elect: **Vanessa Lopez** (The University of Texas at Austin)
- At-Large Members: **Tribbie Grimm** (Texas A&M University), **Adrienne Blalack** (University of Tulsa), and **Lizette Gonzales** (Texas A&M University-Kingsville)
- Volunteer Coordinator: **Susan Hurley** (Sam Houston State University)

Katie Plum *is the Chair of Region V and serves as the Director of Sponsored Projects at Angelo State University. She can be reached at* **katie.plum@angelo.edu**



REGION VI
Western

www.ncuraregionvi.org

www.facebook.com/groups/729496637179768

Happy New Year, Region VI! First, I would like to thank our outgoing officers: Chair Amanda Snyder; Secretary Erika Blossom; and Immediate Past Chair Kevin Stewart. I am happy to announce that Amanda will continue on with the region on the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) as the Immediate Past Chair as well as the Chair of the Education and Professional Development Committee and Erika will continue serving the region on the Site Selection Committee as well as on the RM2020 Planning & Logistics Committee. Kevin has done a wonderful job with our website and he will continue on as our webmaster. I thank them for their service and dedication to region and look forward to continue working with them.

The 2020 Officers took the reins on January 1. The Executive Committee includes Secretary Krista Roznovsk; Treasurer Manilyn Matau; Chair-Elect Lisa Wottrich; Kari Vandergust and myself. We are looking forward to serve you.

As you know – we are all volunteers and the region runs with your help. We are successful because of you, our members' dedication, support, participation and ideas. We are a diverse region with more than 900 members from more than 120 institutions – this creates a number of opportunities for your interests. We are more than happy to have you participate in any way you can.

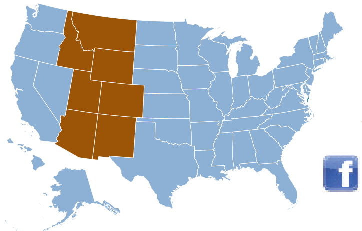
If you would like to volunteer, please reach out to Mich Pane, Membership and Volunteer Committee Chair, at michiko@stanford.edu.

In 2019 we contracted with a designer to create a new logo for the region. She was able to take our ideas to develop a logo that we believe encompasses the vast differences and similarities of our region – Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands - from *Tundra to Tropics.* In fact, we were so happy with her designs, we decided to keep both versions for our use.

And, last but not least – Save the Date! Region VI/VII will be in warm and sunny, Tucson, AZ for RM2020, October 25-28! If you are interested in being on the Program Committee or Planning & Logistics Committee, please let me or Mich know as I strongly believe – it is never too early to start planning.

I am looking forward to this year as Chair and we will see you in Tucson!

Vanessa Quiroz Hotz, MPA, CRA *is the Region VI Chair and serves as Assistant Director for Finance at the Washington National Primate Research Center at the University of Washington. She can be reached at* **vmqh@uw.edu**



REGION VII
Rocky Mountain

www.ncuraregionvii.org

www.facebook.com/groups/NCURARegionVII

Happy New Year Jackalopes! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season!

Photos from the phenomenal R6/R7 Regional Meeting in Seattle are posted on our website! Thank you to the Program Committee for building such a strong program and to our presenters for lending their knowledge and expertise. You did an excellent job meeting last year's meeting theme, "Research Administration Meets Bigfoot: Confronting mysteries and challenges in our changing environment," a reflection of our growing concern for the environment and a reminder of our constantly shifting regulations and policies, which certainly sometimes seem incredibly mysterious. Thank you to the Planning & Logistics Committee for contributing to registration needs, AV needs, and planned activities. And finally, a HUGE thank you to all the volunteers whose efforts made this a highly successful meeting. For Region 7, we had 89 attendees, 11 new members, 29 presenters, 4 workshop faculty, and 16 volunteers.

Congratulations to our 2019 Region 7 LeadMe Graduates!

Rachel Chapman - Colorado State University
Liz Grinstead - Colorado State University
Jason Papka - Idaho State University
Kenwyn Richards - University of Idaho

If you missed the previous announcement from the fall magazine, 2020 election results are in for Region VII:

Chair-Elect: **Trisha Southergill**, Montana Technological University
Secretary: **Joelina Peck**, Arizona State University
Treasurer-Elect: **Liz Grinstead**, Colorado State University
Member-at-Large: **Nicole Quartiero**, Colorado State University, Pueblo

We are pleased to welcome **Beth Kingsely**, Denver Health and Hospital Authority, as a Chair Appointed Executive Committee Member. Thank you to all our members who voted and a special thank you to our members who volunteered and ran for one of these important positions. Your remaining Region VII Officers for 2020 include:

Immediate Past Chair: **Diane Barrett,** Colorado State University
Immediate Past Treasurer: **Jennifer Lawrence,** University of Arizona
Treasurer: **Chelo Jorge,** Colorado State University
Member-at-Large: **Natalie Buys,** University of Colorado, Denver

Additionally, **Vicki Krell** (Arizona State University), will serve another year as the Regionally Elected Member of the National Board of Directors, and **Christa Johnson** (Colorado State University), will serve another year as our Region 7 representative on the national Nominating and Leadership Development Committee.

SAVE THE DATE: Region VI/VII 2020 Meeting will take place in Tucson at the JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort October 25 – 28. Hope to see you all there!

Ashley Stahle *is the Chair of Region VII and serves as Assistant Director of Sponsored Programs, Director of Post-Award at Colorado State University. She can be reached at* **ashley.stahle@colostate.edu**

REGION VIII
International

www.ncuraintlregion.org

Happy New Year to all! The 2019 Rugby World Cup livened up Japan! Many people in Japan regardless of their nationalities cheered up "Brave Blossoms" (Japan) which was defeated in the quarter-finals by "Springboks" (South Africa), the 2019 World Cup champion. Unlike other national teams in Japan, Brave Blossoms consisted of both Japanese and non-Japanese players. Despite the cultural difference, they worked hard to win under the slogan "one team."

In October 2019, Region VIII—diversity rich in nationality—elected the new members of the Region VIII Executive Committee, and it is my great pleasure to introduce:

Chair-elect: **Bruno Woeran**, University of Vaasa
Secretary: **Lisa Kennedy**, The University of Queensland
Treasurer-elect: **Ioannis Legouras**, Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association
Volunteer Coordinator: **Elly Pineda**, University of Technology, Sydney.

I also thank the members of Region VIII Executive Committee whose terms ended in 2019: **Fadia Homeidan** (Volunteer Coordinator, American University of Beirut), **Stefania Grotti** (Secretary, Politecnico di Milano), **Julie Ward** (Immediate Past Chair, Australian Research Data Commons). Thanks to the strong leadership by **Bella Blaher** (The University of Melbourne), who will continue to support the us as the Immediate Past Chair. 2019 Region VIII activities include the joint regional meeting with Region II and the NIH workshop after the annual meeting.

2020 is special to me because INORMS 2020 will be hosted in Japan. We have decided to hold the 2020 regional meeting in Japan on May 24 (Sun) before INORMS 2020 (May 25–28, 2020). The venue is TKP Garden City Hiroshima, which is a 10 minute walk from International Conference Center Hiroshima, the main venue for INORMS 2020. This event will be co-organized with Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST). In this meeting, some bilateral programs supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) will be introduced. My OIST colleagues and I will introduce case studies in pre- and post-award for the program in which OIST becomes a host institution for foreign postdocs and a counterparty for foreign research institutions. Please come to Hiroshima, Japan a little earlier if you plan to attend the INORMS 2020.

Tadashi Sugihara *is the Chair of Region VIII and serves as the Manager of Grants and Research Collaborations Section, Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST), Okinawa, Japan. He can be reached at* **tadashi.sugihara@oist.jp**

$3M Grant to Create Cybersecurity Modeled After Human Body

By Emily Dieckman

L-R: Doctoral student Clarisa Grijalva Lugo; University of Sonora, Mexico professor and UA alumnus Jesus Horacio Pacheco; doctoral student Pratik Satam; professor Salim Hariri; doctoral student Shalaka Chittaranjan Satam; and assistant research professor Cihan Tunc.

Electrical and computer engineering researchers are training a future cybersecurity workforce and creating bioinspired methods or keeping computers secure.

A woman touches a hot stove, but thanks to the nervous system, she snatches her hand away before she gets too hurt. A virus enters the body, but the immune system fends off the invader before it can cause too much damage. What if our computers and smartphones could respond to security threats in the same proactive way our bodies respond to health threats?

University of Arizona (UA) researchers are developing a form of cybersecurity inspired by these human biological systems that detect and address threats in their earliest stages. The team will also offer training and research opportunities to students from underrepresented backgrounds.

The Partnership for Proactive Cybersecurity Training project is funded by a three-year, $3 million grant from the National Nuclear Security Administration's Minority Serving Institution Partnership Program. The UA is collaborating with Howard University, Navajo Technical University and Argonne National Laboratory.

"I felt we could learn about how the body protects us by reacting to threats and maybe apply it to cyber by building a 'cyber immune system,'" said Salim Hariri, UA electrical and computer engineering professor and the project's principal investigator. "We're trying to build these abilities where, when somebody attacks your computer, these measures can detect the attack and act on it before you're even aware something is compromised."

The term "cybersecurity"might bring to mind images of government secrets and companies managing large quantities of information, but it's an important issue for anyone who owns a computer or smartphone.

"You carry around this phone that's networked to all kinds of servers, and your information is very vulnerable," said Tamal Bose, head of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and co-investigator on the project. "Cyberspace is the domain where most wars are going to be fought in the future."

Machine Learning to Improve Security

Traditional approaches to cybersecurity have been reactive and ad hoc. A device is attacked, or threatened, and then the cybersecurity system tries a handful of strategies to mitigate the damage or counter the attack. The team hopes to create a scientific approach that catalogs exactly which strategies attackers have at their disposal, almost like a playbook in football. Then, researchers can develop their own playbook of defense methods, carefully monitor the "vitals" of the cybersystem, and be ready to respond at the first sign of an attack.

"The moment we see abnormal behavior, we want to be able to say, 'Oh, that's play No. 5 and I already have a way to respond to it, and I can act on it quickly,'" Hariri said. "An attacker can reach hundreds of thousands of devices in a fraction of a second, so we need our ability to detect threats and protect a system to work just as quickly."

The team is using machine learning methods. In this type of artificial intelligence, machines teach themselves how to recognize patterns and learn new tasks, meaning humans don't have to step in and program the machines every time they want them to do something new.

To teach a machine to recognize a cactus, for example, a researcher would show the machine thousands of photos of cactuses until the machine learned to recognize the color, spines and size that make a cactus a cactus. Likewise, a machine exposed to thousands of examples of cybersecurity threats through machine learning techniques would come to recognize such threats on its own.

Machine learning is especially useful in a cybersecurity context because attackers, with a whole playbook of tactics at their disposal, often evolve their methods. How they attack a computer today might be different from the way they do it tomorrow, so the cybersecurity system must be able to learn as it goes along, detect changes in the environment and even anticipate changes before they occur.

Co-investigator and electrical and computer engineering assistant professor Gregory Ditzler continues the analogy of a hand on a hot stove. "Once you put your hand down on that stove, you know not to touch it again, because it's hot," he said. "But how can you be prepared to recognize other dangers, like putting your hand in a toaster? This is where machine learning comes in.

Training Opportunities for Underrepresented Groups

The grant takes a two-pronged approach to improving the science of cybersecurity. While researchers develop these new techniques, they'll also be training students from the UA, Howard University and Navajo Technical University – especially underrepresented minority groups and women – to become highly skilled members of the cybersecurity workforce.

"The hottest jobs, and some of the highest-paid jobs, today are in cybersecurity," Hariri said. "If I were a student who wanted job security, a high salary and the chance to make a big impact on our society, this is the field I would want to study."

The initiative will include an eight-week summer education program on the UA campus, set to begin in 2020, and a cybersecurity class that takes place in a virtual lab, which can be accessed from anywhere with internet connectivity. It will also provide students opportunities to do internships with the Department of Energy and in other government labs, where they will conduct research and learn about emerging technologies, preparing them to go on to jobs in the cybersecurity field. In addition, the team will integrate cybersecurity modules into existing UA courses.

Originally published at:
https://news.engineering.arizona.edu/news/3m-grant-create- cybersecurity-modeled-after-human-body

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NCURA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NATIONAL TRAVELING WORKSHOPS

An Auditor's Guide to Research Administration Workshop
January 27-29, 2020 .... Savannah, GA

Contract Negotiation and Administration Workshop
May 27-29, 2020 .... Las Vegas, NV

Departmental Research Administration Workshop
February 10-12, 2020 .... Los Angeles, CA

Financial Research Administration Workshop
June 15-17, 2020 .... West Palm Beach, FL

Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Workshop
February 10-12, 2020 .... Los Angeles, CA

Level II: Sponsored Project Administration Workshop
February 10-12, 2020 .... Los Angeles, CA
May 27-29, 2020 .... Las Vegas, NV

Senior Level Workshop: Research Administration – The Practical Side of Leadership
April 19-21, 2020 .... Charleston, SC

NATIONAL CONFERENCES

Financial Research Administration Conference
March 2-3, 2020 .... San Juan, PR

Pre-Award Research Administration Conference
March 5-6, 2020 .... San Juan, PR

Annual Meeting
August 9-12, 2020 .... Washington, DC

ONLINE TUTORIALS – 10 week programs

- A Primer on Clinical Trials
- A Primer on Federal Contracting
- A Primer on Intellectual Property in Research Agreements
- A Primer on Subawards

WEBINARS

- Introduction to Impact Reporting
  January 14, 2020, 1:00-2:30 pm ET
- Implementing Impact Reporting
  January 16, 2020, 1:00-2:30 pm ET
- How to Audit-Proof Your Department
  January 29, 2020, 2:00-3:30 pm ET

REGIONAL MEETINGS

Region I (New England)
May 3-6, 2020 .... Newport, RI

Region II (Mid-Atlantic)
Oct 25-28, 2020 .... Wilmington, DE

Region III (Southeastern)/Region IV (Mid-America)
April 26-29, 2020 .... St. Pete Beach, FL

Region V (Southwestern)
April 26-29, 2020 .... Fort Worth, TX

Region VI (Western)/Region VII (Rocky Mountain)
Oct 25-28, 2020 .... Tucson, AZ

Region VIII (International)
May 24, 2020 .... Hiroshima, Japan

For further details and updates visit our events calendar at www.ncura.edu