



Council of Principal Investigators

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CPI Newsletter – June 2017
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Update from Dr. Penny Riggs, CPI Chair

Dr. Karen Butler-Purry became Interim Vice President for Research on June 1st. CPI looks forward to working with her on behalf of Principal Investigators.

The CPI executive committee held its regular meeting on June 7, and received updates from Dr. Butler-Purry. Mr. Michael O'Quinn previewed the Government Relations update and overview of the state legislative session and Dr. Richard Gomer provided an update on changes related to Technology Transfer. We will hear from all three of them today.

Administrator Searches

- The Vice President for Research (VPR) search committee is chaired by Dr. John Gladysz and Dr. Eli Jones and will work with the Witt/Kieffer search firm.
- The search for Vice Chancellor and Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences is underway. Input and nominations can be submitted via the search website: <http://agrilife.org/vcdeansearch/>.
- The Provost Search Committee met with President Young regarding recent candidate visits to campus. Information will be distributed to CPI as updates become available.

SRS

SRS hosted demonstrations of the Electronic Research Administration Systems (ERA). PIs are encouraged to evaluate the three ERA systems that have been identified as potential replacements for MAESTRO.

CPI News

Congratulations to Dr. David Threadgill who was elected CPI Vice Chair, along with all the new Principal Investigator Representatives. The complete list of all CPI Representatives for 2017-2018 can be found on the CPI website at <http://cpi.tamu.edu/membership>.

Contact Rebecca Luckey, rluckey@tamu.edu or 979.862.9166 for more information.

The July CPI meetings are canceled. The next general CPI meeting will be held August 9, 2017. I encourage CPI members to communicate with their constituents, and bring forward items of concern or interest for the research community. All new CPI representatives are invited to participate in the August 9th CPI General meeting, along with the outgoing CPI representatives. The CPI will continue to communicate with administrators regarding topics and issues of importance for the research community. Please continue to bring research-related issues (and solutions) to my attention at CPI@tamu.edu, or contact me directly at riggs@tamu.edu or 979.862.7015.

New iRIS Interface is Live

The iRIS application was updated to version 10 at the end of May. The primary change is the change in URL. The new URL is now <http://iris.tamu.edu>. Any bookmarks should be updated. For any questions on the changes or new features, contact us the research compliance and biosafety office at 979-845-4969 or outreachrcb@tamu.edu.

Changes to the IRB Application

The IRB application will be updated this week to show a new section that provides investigators a quick method to request the determination "Is this project human subjects research?" There will also be a section for researchers to request to defer to an external IRB. For any questions about this section, contact the IRB at 979-458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Write Winning Grant Proposals – NIH *and* NSF

Seminar, Writing Program

When: Seminar on September 21-22, 2017 (tentative)
Proposal Writing Program to run Fall 2017 through Spring 2018.

Where: Seminar Venue TBD

Contacts: Shannon Prescott, Senior Administrative Coordinator, sprescott@tamu.edu
Jorja Kimball, Executive Director, jkimball@tamu.edu

Expanded to include NSF proposals, the Division of Research will host a 1-1/2 day seminar for researchers interested in submitting grant proposals to the NIH and NSF on September 21-22, 2017. As in the past years, Dr. John Robertson of Grant Writers' Seminars and Workshops (GWSW), will again speak on NIH proposal development and add information related to NSF to the seminar in an additional half day.

The seminar will be comprised of three units: (1) Sep 21 morning: CORE – Principles, Funding Priorities, and Preparation of the Overview/Executive Summary; (2) Sep 21 afternoon: NIH; (3) Sep 22 morning: NSF.

The Division will also expand the semester-long 2018 Grant Proposal Writing Program (with GWSW) to include both NIH and NSF. A maximum of 30 candidates will be accepted to the program.

NSF CAREER Academy

Workshop, Writing Groups, Mock Review Session

TEES and RDS are creating a new eight-month professional development series called **NSF CAREER Academy**. This program will include: the annual NSF CAREER and other Young Investigator Programs workshop; a Broader Impacts workshop; writing groups; and a mock review session. The Division and TEES recently piloted a mock review session that received great reviews and featured Dr. Z. J. Pei, professor in industrial and system engineering, TEES research professor, and NSF rotator, as keynote speaker. The Academy will continue to involve Texas A&M faculty who are prior NSF rotators (program officers) or reviewers.

The Broader Impacts workshop will be expanded in Fall 2017, and open to all PI-eligible researchers. Junior faculty who are planning or considering an NSF CAREER proposal submission in July 2018 are strongly encouraged to attend. They should also consider joining an NSF CAREER writing group, which provides which provides in-depth knowledge of, and practice in, writing proposals to the NSF and, in particular, for the NSF CAREER solicitation each year. The program runs March through July, with biweekly sessions scheduled March to May and one-on-one NSF CAREER proposal consultation and development from May to the July submission deadline.

Additional information about Academy events will be available September 1, 2017.

NEW! Program with FAPESP, San Paolo, Brazil

The Division of Research will add a new international research program in AY 2018 with FAPESP (São Paulo Research Foundation) in São Paulo, Brazil, for funding joint research partnerships. Details and an application process are being established, and information will be available on or before August 1, 2017.

NSF Moving Headquarters

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is moving its headquarters to Alexandria, Virginia. Email addresses and phone numbers for NSF employees and NSF offices will not change. Due to the move of NSF's Data Center, NSF.gov, FastLane and Research.gov will be unavailable from Friday, June 30 at 8:00 PM until Tuesday, July 4 at 6:00 PM EDT. This move has been scheduled around a holiday weekend to minimize downtime and reduce the impact on the research community and NSF staff. During this outage period, proposals cannot be submitted in FastLane, and project reports and cash requests cannot be submitted in Research.gov. However, previously saved information and uploaded documents in FastLane and Research.gov, including in-process proposals and reports, will be accessible after the Data Center moves.

Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) Funding Opportunities

The CDMRP, managed by the Army, annually releases funding opportunities, typically in the first six months of the calendar year. A variety of award mechanisms are offered, including Innovator, Breakthrough, Distinguished Investigator, Fellowships, Career Development, Early-Career, Investigator-Initiated, Clinical, Translational, among several others. Several of the programs have specified areas for research focus. Programs announced for FY2017 are listed below. It is common that submission of a pre-application is required. Several have fast-approaching pre-application due dates. Three programs (marked by an asterisk) have expired pre-application due dates.

A complete listing of current programs and funding opportunities may be found at <http://cdmrp.army.mil/funding/reftable>.

- [Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis](#) *
- [Bone Marrow Failure](#)
- [Breast Cancer](#) *
- [Defense Medical Research and Development Program](#) *
- [Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy](#)
- [Gulf War Illness](#)
- [Lung Cancer](#)
- [Multiple Sclerosis](#)
- [Ovarian Cancer](#)
- [Peer Reviewed Cancer](#)
- [Peer Reviewed Medical](#)
- [Peer Reviewed Orthopaedic](#)
- [Prostate Cancer](#)
- [Psychological Health/Traumatic Brain Injury](#)
- [Tick-Borne Disease](#)
- [Tuberous Sclerosis Complex](#)
- [Vision](#)

* *programs with expired pre-application due dates.*

To directly receive announcements of CDMRP News and RFP releases, you may subscribe at: <https://ebrap.org/eBRAP/programSubscription/Subscribe.htm>

National Institutes of Health News

- **New Video Tutorials on Preparing and Submitting Your NIH Grant Application.** The NIH Office of Extramural Research has prepared [four interactive video tutorials](#) (titled Overview, Prepare to Apply, Write Application, and Submit) that “walk you through the basics of preparing, writing, and submitting your application.”
- **Tips for completing your Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources Authentication Plan.** Wondering what resources to include or authentication details to provide in the “Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources” grant application attachment? Or what to exclude? (Hint: exclude authentication *data*.) For guidance, refer to two recent blog posts ([Resources That Should be Addressed](#) –and– [Information to Provide](#)) in the *Extramural Nexus* and to [NOT-OD-17-068](#).
- **New FORMS-E Coming.** For NIH and AHRQ proposals due on or after January 25, 2018, you will need to use new and updated FORMS-E grant application forms and instructions. NIH will start posting funding opportunities that will use FORMS-E packages in October 2017. For more information see:
 - [Getting Ready for the Next NIH Forms Update](#) (*Extramural Nexus*).

- New NIH "FORMS-E" Grant Application Forms and Instructions Coming for Due Dates On or After January 25, 2018. [NOT-OD-17-062](#)
- New AHRQ "FORMS-E" Grant Application Forms and Instructions Coming for Due Dates On or After January 25, 2018. [NOT-HS-17-015](#)

Implementing Limits on Grant Support. To address the hypercompetition for research grant dollars, to ensure funding availability to early and mid-career scientists, and to minimize the impact of diminishing returns (among other goals), NIH is considering using a *Grant Support Index* (GSI) to limit the amount of grant dollars to any individual laboratory. For details and to read and offer feedback, see Mike Lauer's blogs: [Implementing Limits on Grant Support to Strengthen the Biomedical Research Workforce](#) and [Following Up on Your Feedback on How to Strengthen the Biomedical Research Workforce](#)

State Relations Update

The conferees on SB 1, state appropriations for FY 18-19, have produced a conference committee report. SB 1 is expected to be voted by both the House and Senate today or tomorrow. And thus, caveats apply as we fully assess the bill.

Broadly speaking, the conferees decided to continue to distribute base funding appropriations using the established formula methodology and adopted slightly higher rates for general academic institutions and slightly less for health related institutions. However, in response to the session-long concern over special items, the conferees made significant cuts in special items varying by program type.

Because debt service on revenue bonds is included in the General Revenue numbers—and an important funding item that institutions request—it is not used in instruction and general operations. Therefore, changes from 2016-17 to 2018-19 below are presented with both perspectives:

| Biennial Change | Texas A&M | TAMUG | HSC |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| GR With Debt Service | \$19.1 million (3.3%) | \$ 2.7 million (6.6%) | \$ 12.2 million (4.4%) |
| GR Without Debt Service | \$ 13.6/\$9.3* million (2.4%/1.7%*) | -\$ 1.9 million (-6.8%) | \$ 2.1 million (.9%) |

Because Texas A&M grew in enrollment and semester credit hours from the last base period and has fewer special items relative to other institutions, the effects of cutting special items (33% for each A&M item) were not as severe as for other general academic institutions (in some cases over 60%).

* Research funds are cut by 10 percent and reallocated based on updated data. In addition the \$4.3 million that A&M received from the Emerging Technology Fund last biennium was not renewed. This results in a reduction of \$8.95 million from the Texas Research University Fund for Texas A&M. Thus the General Revenue is up, but operationally the increase for the university is \$9.3 million.

Because TAMUG had more of its funding in special items, particularly in Institutional Enhancement, its cuts are more severe relative to total General Revenue.

The Health Science Center did experience cuts in special items, from 8% to 22%. In terms of the overall operations funding level compared to the current biennium, the cuts were countered by the HSC's enrollment growth in the formula, despite a decline in the per student (FTSE) rate, as well as funding provided in the Graduate Medical Education Formula for 550 added medical residents.

As we are able to process the appropriations bill more fully, we can provide greater detail and analyses. And please keep in mind, the governor has 20 days to veto funding items.

Federal Relations Update

President Trump released his FY18 Budget Request (PBR) on May 23rd. **This is not the final budget and Congress has already made it clear that there are major issues with this PBR.** Indeed, there is broad bipartisan Congressional support for many of the programs and agencies which are important to us (as evidenced by the FY17 Omnibus). We continue to communicate regularly with our delegation regarding our priorities and our specific concerns with this PBR.

President's Budget Request:

This update is a high level analysis of the PBR. If more detail is desired in any of these areas, please let us know (contact information is available at the end of this newsletter).

Overview:

The PBR, A New Foundation for American Greatness, proposes \$3.6 trillion in total spending reductions over 10 years and would balance the budget in 10 years, assuming the enactment of the President's policies and projected future economic growth from tax cuts and regulation reduction.

This PBR:

- Undoes the budget caps for defense spending with a \$54 billion increase for national defense discretionary budget authority and a reduction of \$54 billion for nondefense discretionary programs
- Includes funding to plan, design and construct a wall along the U.S. southern border
- Reduces funding for nearly all nondefense discretionary programs and proposes to eliminate more than 60 agencies and programs
- Includes the Administration's infrastructure plan to support \$1 trillion in private-public infrastructure investment

The documents related to the PBR are available at the following website:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget>.

Department of Agriculture (USDA):

National Institute Food and Agriculture (NIFA) — \$1.253 billion, a \$110.13 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted

- Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)— \$349 million, a \$1 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted

Department of Commerce:

National Institute of Standards and Technology

- **Eliminates** the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program and would provide \$6 million for the "orderly closure beginning in 2018"

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

- **Cuts** \$262 million in targeted grants and programs supporting coastal and marine management, research, and education
- **Eliminates** the Sea Grant program (with the Marine Aquaculture Program)

Department of Defense (DoD):

- DoD Science and Technology (6.1-6.3) at \$13.2 billion, a \$812 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- DoD Basic Research (6.1) at \$2.229 billion, a \$47.8 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) would receive \$3.17 billion, a \$281 million **increase** from FY17 enacted

Department of Education (ED):

- Pell Grant program— \$22.475 billion to \$22.432 billion, which is sufficient funding to retain the maximum Pell Grant of \$5,920. The proposal would rescind \$3.9 billion from the Pell Grant program's surplus
- Other student loan and work study type programs are significantly **reduced** or outright **eliminated**
- Title VI International Education and Fullbright-Hays programs—**eliminated**
- Institute of Education Sciences **level** funded at FY16 enacted

Department of Energy (DOE):

- DOE Office of Science — 4.473 billion, a \$919 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) — **eliminated**
- Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) — \$636 million, a \$1.454 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (EDER) — \$230 million, a \$110 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Office of Nuclear Energy (NE) — \$703 million, a \$314 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Office of Fossil Energy (FE) — \$280 million, a \$388 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Office of National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) — \$13.9 billion, a \$993 million **increase** from FY17 enacted

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

- Reconfigures and restructures the EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD)
- Office of Science and Technology would be funded at \$451 million, a \$256 million **reduction** from the FY17 enacted

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):

- National Institutes of Health (NIH) — \$26.9 billion, a \$7.2 billion **reduction** from FY17 enacted. To help achieve these savings, the PBR proposes a reorganization and restructure of NIH programs, which includes consolidating the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality within NIH. The PBR proposes NIH would conduct a review of health services research across NIH, identify gaps, and propose a more coordinated strategy. It also would “curtail unnecessary global health research” and eliminate the Fogarty International Center which supports international research capacity and training of researchers overseas.
- The PBR would also **reduce** support for facilities and administrative (F&A) costs, “so that available funding can be better targeted toward supporting the highest priority research on diseases that affect human health.” The budget plan would cap F&A for NIH grants at 10 percent of total research for any grants with a rate currently higher than 10 percent.
- The PBR proposes **eliminating** funding for almost all Title VII and Title VIII health care workforce programs.
- The PBR includes a provision to limit salaries paid by HHS grants (including NIH) to Executive Level V, equivalent to \$151,700. The current salary cap is Executive Level II, \$187,000.
- The PBR funds Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) and other programs related to biodefense at **current** FY17 enacted levels.

Department of Interior (DOI):

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

- Water Resources Research Institutes— **eliminated**
- Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research units—at \$17.3 million, about a \$100,000 **reduction** from FY17 enacted

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA):

- Aeronautics — at \$624 million, a \$36 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Exploration — \$3.934 billion, a \$390 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Science — at \$5.712 billion, a \$53 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
- Space Technology — at \$679 million, a **reduction** of \$8 million, from FY17 enacted
- PBR would **eliminate** the Office of Education, which includes the Space Grant program (funded at \$40 million in FY17 enacted). The PBR includes \$37 million for Office of Education close-out costs.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH):

PBR would **eliminate** the NEH and provide \$42 million for funds to close the agency. This amount represents the salaries and expenses required to shut down the agency and the amount required to honor pre-existing grant commitments (specifically, matching funds).

National Science Foundation (NSF):

Overall, NSF would be funded at \$6.653 billion, an \$819 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted

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- Research and Related Activities account — at \$5.362 billion, a \$672 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
 - Education and Human Resources — at \$761 million, a \$119 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
 - Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) — at \$183 million, a \$26 million **reduction** from FY17 enacted
 - Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy, and Water Services — at \$24.4 million, a \$55.7 million **reduction** from FY16 enacted
 - Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science (INCLUDES) initiative — at \$14.9 million, a \$91,000 **reduction** from FY16 enacted
 - I-Corps program — at \$26.1 million, a \$3.6 million **reduction** from FY16 enacted
 - Understanding the Brain initiative — at \$134.5 million, a \$38 million **reduction** from FY16 enacted

Sign Up for Notifications about Limited Submission Proposal Opportunities

The list of current Limited Submission Proposal (LSP) opportunities, maintained by the Division of Research, is available at <https://u.tamu.edu/LSP>.

To receive notifications about new LSP opportunities as soon as they are announced, email Ms. Shelly Martin at shelly.martin@tamu.edu.

Bulletin for Principal Investigators

The Division of Research at Texas A&M University issues a brief weekly bulletin for Principal Investigators that highlights research accomplishments and projects, funding opportunities, honors and promotions, workshops, and other items that may be of interest to the PI community. [Click here](#) to subscribe or unsubscribe to the bulletin.