CPI Newsletter –January 2021

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Update from Dr. Stephen Maren, CPI Chair

January CPI News – The Council of Principal Investigators Executive Committee (CPI-EC) met with administrators on Wednesday, January 6, 2021. Discussions and updates during the CPI-EC meeting were on the opportunities for PIs to utilize resources the Statistical Collaboration Center has to offer and an update from the Graduate School Task Force. Both presentations will be shared with all PIs and guests at the January 13th CPI General Meeting.

I invite you to contact me, Dr. David Stelly, 2020-2021 CPI Vice Chair at cpi@tamu.edu or Rebecca Luckey, rluckey@tamu.edu, for more information or to suggest agenda items for CPI's monthly meetings. The CPI Executive Committee continues to meet with the interim president, interim provost and chancellor on a regular basis.

CPI Contacts–The complete 2020-2021 roster of CPI Representatives and the CPI Executive Committee can be found on the CPI website at https://cpi.tamu.edu/membership/2020-2021_Membership. Previous membership lists can be found in the council archive.

AnSRS4U – Presentation on Project Compliance - Export Controls
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TAMU Sponsored Research Services (SRS) is providing Answers for You (AnSRS4U).   SRS is offering via Zoom a series of monthly informational sessions on various research administration topics. Our target audience is the department and college staff that support the research enterprise but everyone is welcome to attend.

The next presentation via Zoom will be on ***Thursday, January 21 from 10:00 to 11:30am*** and the presentation will be on **Project Compliance - Export Controls.**   The presenters will include SRS Sr. Project Administrators and Export Control Officers from TAMU and the research agencies. The presentation will include an overview of export controls and the processes each members uses to review and ensure compliance. A review of what needs to be in place before project funds can be released for spending will be covered.

Register in advance for this meeting at the link below.

https://tamu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEvc-2tqjIsGtUl3oO3NKcdeCF3Q0rRfrYA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you prefer to receive notices of these presentation via the SRS listserv please email ansrs4u@tamu.edu and request to be added to the listserv.

2020-2021 Research Development Fund Update *(resubmission from December 2020)*

The Research Development Fund is supplied by 15% of the indirect costs generated by research expenditures in Bryan/College Station. The CEOs of Texas A&M University, TEES, AgriLife Research, and the HSC agreed that, in order to provide resources for mitigating COVID-19 impacts on research, the payments into the RDF would be reduced to 7.5% of indirect costs for a 15-month period beginning June 1, 2020. As a result, approximately half the usual amounts are available for awards during the current academic year.

The RDF Advisory Committee, appointed by the CPI, along with the RDF Management Committee, reviewed the proposals submitted in the Fall 2020 cycle and unanimously agreed that there were sufficient meritorious and time-sensitive proposals to commit all funds available to awards in this cycle. Therefore,

we will not have a call for RDF proposals for equipment in Spring 2021. We do anticipate holding a call for RDF-RF (recurring fund) proposals in the Spring, as these involve much smaller amounts.

I realize that some PIs were anticipating the Spring 2021 funding cycle. There are a number of sources available for capital equipment and core facilities from Federal agencies, including NSF, NIH, and DOD. As always, our Research Development Services (RDS) office stands ready to assist you with these proposals.

Update on Undergraduate Research/LAUNCH Opportunities

Explorations: The Texas A&M Undergraduate Journal
Undergraduates
Please encourage your undergraduate research students to submit. Publishing in Explorations does not preclude students from publishing in a professional journal because our journal is designed for articles in a short format meant for a general audience.
- Undergraduates are invited to submit to the journal. The process begins with a synopsis due **in late-January, early-February.** Team submissions are accepted. If the synopsis is selected to move forward, the student(s) will be invited to submit a full manuscript by mid-March. If selected, undergraduate(s) attend an Author Orientation and are assigned an editing team to work with throughout the remainder of the semester. Before publication, a faculty mentor overseeing the project must sign off on the work. Additional information and approvals, including copyright and media releases, are collected from undergraduate authors between April and May. Please encourage your students to submit.
- **Synopses**
  - **Synopsis Deadline:** February 1, 2021 at noon
  - **Synopsis Application Link:**
    https://launch.tamu.edu/Applications/Explorations/Explorations-Synopsis-Submission
- **Full Manuscripts**
  - **Full Manuscript Deadline:** March 16, 2021 at noon
  - **Full Manuscript Application Link:** TBA

Faculty
- Faculty can mentor undergraduate researchers and encourage them to apply to the board and/or to submit to the journal. If a student's full manuscript is selected to move forward for publication, the work must be approved by the faculty mentor overseeing the project.
- Faculty can also review for the journal. Reviewer registration is collected on a rolling basis. Submissions are assigned by discipline and expertise. Faculty will be asked to review up to 3 submissions at a time. ***Publishing in Explorations does not preclude students from publishing in a professional journal because our journal is designed for articles in a short format meant for a general audience.***
- **Volume 13 Review Timeline**
  - **February 2, 2021:** Synopses distributed for review no later than this date
  - **February 16, 2021:** Deadline to return synopsis reviews
  - **March 17, 2021:** Full manuscripts distributed to reviewers no later than this date
  - **March 30, 2021:** Deadline to submit full manuscript reviews
- **Registration Deadline for Volume 13 Synopses:** January 29, 2021
- **Registration Link:** https://launch.tamu.edu/Applications/Explorations/Faculty-Reviewer-Registration

Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS)
Faculty Participation at the URS Symposium

This year the Undergraduate Research Scholars Symposium will kick off virtually on February 24, 2021 and be open to the campus community until March 3, 2021. With all of the disruptions this year it is more important than ever for us to support our students. We know you might feel overwhelmed, but if you could find an hour or two to volunteer as an active listener again it would really mean a lot to our students.

Active Listeners are asked to focus on the four areas below and provide helpful written feedback. The purpose of these presentations is to help students improve their oral communication skills as well as their virtual presentation skills. Remember, this might be a student's very first time presenting.

The format of the event will look different than in the past:

- All presentations are virtual and will be made available to the public online on the ForagerOne Symposium platform. Presentations will remain available for Active Listeners to review from February 24-March 3, 2021.
- All students will present on camera and provide a video of their research presentation. Each presentation will be 10 minutes maximum.
- Students may also prepare supplemental materials such as a poster PDF, PowerPoint Slides, or an embedded video (of a performance, creative artifact, etc.) to accompany their research presentation.
- Active Listeners will complete a Feedback Form in Google Docs for assigned presentations. Assigned presentations will be emailed prior to the event.

We ask active listeners to comment on the following in the Feedback Form (in Google Docs):

1) Body language and delivery
2) Effective communication of the research question and why it is important
3) Effective visual aids (if used)
4) NEW: Effective presentation skills in a virtual space

REU/SURE Coordination Meeting
1. January 28, 2021
2. 8:30 AM CST to 10:00 AM CST
3. via Zoom (*Meeting ID: 919 8399 5805; Passcode: 523081)*
4. Bring your own danish and coffee! □
5. RSVP by January 25: https://tamu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5bBH4TYvma0OSwJ
6. At this meeting, we will discuss policies for summer programs including the process for admissions, course enrollment, fee waivers, general deposit, student health services, international students, on-campus housing, as well as Title IX, honor code, student conduct, and other summer activities. We will also provide available updates on COVID-19 policies and guidance on planning for contingencies.

Call for Undergraduate Research Ambassador Applications
***Please encourage your undergraduate research students to submit. ***
The LAUNCH Undergraduate Research Ambassadors work to inspire broader engagement in undergraduate research by educating and serving the Texas A&M University community and beyond. New Ambassadors are chosen each spring.
Students in the Undergraduate Research Ambassador program share advice with fellow undergraduates on how to get started in research, find projects, and communicate with faculty members. Ambassadors represent LAUNCH at research, recruiting, and outreach events, such as the UGR Expo, URS Symposium, Getting Started in Research Workshops, and more. They are also available for customized presentations to students, staff, and faculty.

Students in the program will gain knowledge in networking, public speaking, leadership opportunities, and will have increased competitiveness on graduate and professional school applications. Ambassadors often receive additional grant opportunities and other professional development experiences as a result of their involvement.

LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research seeks Ambassadors that will represent diverse academic disciplines across campus, including science, engineering, arts, humanities, business, and social sciences.

Applications are accepted until March 4, 2021 at noon. A letter of recommendation from a faculty research mentor is required as part of the application.

Application Details: http://launch.tamu.edu/Undergraduate-Research/Ambassadors/Apply

NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide published in the Federal Register *(resubmission from December 2020)*

NSF published a notice today in the Federal Register announcing the availability of a "For comment" draft of the *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG). The Foundation is accepting comments from the external community until **cob February 12, 2021**. The draft PAPPG is available on the Policy Office website. To facilitate review, revised text has been highlighted in yellow throughout the document and explanatory comments have been included in the margins, where appropriate.

This draft version will incorporate the revised 2 CFR §200: *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Award* that was effective November 12, 2020. It should be noted that we have not highlighted the revised references throughout the document. Please note that if there is a discrepancy between the current PAPPG (NSF 20-1) and the revised 2 CFR §200, the applicable NSF award conditions apply.

In addition, NSF also has released revised Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Current and Pending Support. These FAQs are effective for proposals submitted in response to the current PAPPG (NSF 20-1).

Any questions should be directed to the Policy Office at policy@nsf.gov.

eRA Commons landing page updates and implementation of a Two-Factor Authentication process effective September 15, 2021
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eRA Commons will be unveiling a new landing page Tuesday, January 12, 2021. The streamlined design will utilize a navigation icon in the upper left corner of the page. For more information and screenshots, please click the following link: https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2020/12/22/new-era-commons-screens-are-almost-here/

According to the NIH eRA Commons website, a new log-in method (login.gov) will be required in 2021 for the users of eRA Commons, Commons Mobile, IAP and ASSIST. This new initiative will allow researchers and administrators the ability to log into multiple sites using a single username and password.

The requirement will be phased in for reviewers meeting by meeting, effective for review meetings February 1, 2021 and beyond. As the reviewers are enabled for meetings, their accounts will be transitioned to require login.gov to access IAR. All users of eRA Commons, ASSIST, IAR and Commons Mobile are encouraged to switch prior to the *mandatory deadline of September 15, 2021*.

At this time, you may only have one login.gov account associated with one eRA Commons account. (If you have multiple TAMU affiliated eRA Commons accounts, you will need a login.gov account for each Commons account.)

Guidance for investigators can be found at https://era.nih.gov/register-accounts/access-era-modules-via-login-gov.htm, under the "Initial Setup at login.gov" heading. There is also a link for frequently asked questions that may be of assistance. https://era.nih.gov/faqs.htm#XXIV

Should you have any questions, you may contact your SRS proposal administrator.

Certified Research Administrator Exam Review Sessions

TAMU Sponsored Research Services (SRS) beginning in February 2021 will host a series of review sessions in preparation for the Certified Research Administrator (CRA) exam. These sessions held via Zoom consist of weekly presentations and additional study material. SRS has been continually offering these session since 2016. For the fall 2020 session, there were participants from TAMU, TAMHSC, TAMUG, AgriLife, TTI, TEES, TAMUCC and TAMUI.
The TAMU Vice President for Research, Dr. Mark Barteau and SRS encourages their staff engaged in research administration to earn the CRA certification. An eligibility requirement for the CRA is a combination of years of profession experience in research administration and education. The sessions are open to all TAMUS staff. Over 55 employees on the College Station campus have obtained the CRA designation. Earning the designation of Certified Research Administrator means that an individual has met the requirements of the Research Administrators Certification Council's (RACC) eligibility requirements and has demonstrated a level of knowledge necessary for a person to be a professional research or sponsored programs administrator. RACC was created to promote a culture of integrity and competency in the profession of sponsored research administration. To learn more about RACC and the certification process visit the RACC website at | RACC (cra-cert.org).
Contact David Hollingsworth, dhollingsworth@tamu.edu in SRS if you want to participate in the review sessions or want more information.

IACUC Issues Personnel Training Updates for New Animal Use Protocols Beginning January 1, 2021 *(resubmission from December 2020)*

The IACUC has updated personnel training and certification requirements for new animal use protocols beginning January 1, 2021 **for all campuses**. Investigators are encouraged to review the updated training requirements to avoid unexpected delays in new approvals. For details see TAMU-G-029 Guidelines for Animal Protocol Participation and Handling available at https://rcb.tamu.edu/animals/guidance (TAMU NetID authentication required). Please contact the Animal Welfare Office staff at 979.845.1828 or animalcompliance@tamu.edu for assistance in determining training requirements and required timeline for completion.

2020-2021 Bridge Funding and Support Funding Requests

Reminder that Graduate and Professional Studies is accepting funding requests from faculty PIs or Co-PIs for Ph.D. GARS funded on external grants and contracts. Conditions are outlined below.

Graduate and Professional Studies is continuing to accept 2020-2021 bridge funding requests and support funding requests on a rolling basis and pending funding availability. **Both forms are for faculty PIs or Co-PIs to request funds for Ph.D. GARS funded on external grants and contracts that meet the following conditions:**

1. Academic Year 2020-2021 Bridge Funding Requests:
   a) Purpose: Address grandfathering as the tuition mandate was expanded to include required fees
   b) Funding available for: University required fees
   c) Requests will <u>only</u> be considered for awarded proposals where
      i. the proposal submission deadline was prior to 1/1/2020, and
      ii. the granting agency did not permit payment of fees, or
      iii. the granting agency did permit payment of fees.
         1. An explanation of the extraordinary circumstance detailing why funding beyond tuition (i.e. university required fees) is no longer available and how funds were reallocated must be included.
         2. Requests for funding to add additional GARs beyond what was included in the original budget will not be approved.
   d) The announcement for Academic Year 2021-2022 requests will be sent in late spring/early summer 2021.
2. Academic Year 2020-2021 Support Funding Requests:
   a) Purpose: Address challenges that PIs have had paying tuition and fees when the funding agency does not permit such payments. Graduate and Professional Studies will leverage limited 2020-2021 funding to support PIs now responsible for paying resident tuition *and* required fees for PhD GARs.
   b) Funding available for: resident tuition and university required fees.
   c) Requests will <u>only</u> be considered for awarded proposals where
      i. the proposal submission deadline was on or after 1/1/2020, and
      ii. the granting agency does not permit payment of resident tuition and/or fees.

3. Eligibility for Bridge and Support Funding Consideration
   a) Faculty PIs and Co-PIs from Texas A&M University Colleges: Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture, Bush School of Government, Mays Business School, Education & Human Development, Engineering, Geosciences, Liberal Arts, Science, Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.
   b) Faculty PIs and Co-PIs with awards administered by: Texas A&M University, AgriLife, and TEES.
   Faculty from the Health Science Center colleges and Texas A&M University at Galveston should contact their respective dean's office.

Additional information for faculty and staff can be found on the tuition and fee mandate website. Requests must be routed through the College GOC Dean or designee. Completed forms should be emailed to Jackie Perez, Director of Business Services at jackieperez@tamu.edu

Initial Drone Registrations About to Expire *(resubmission from December 2020)*

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is reminding everyone whose drone registrations expire in December that the DroneZone is the FAA's official website for registration. All drones must be registered, except those that weigh .55 pounds or less (less than 250 grams) and are flown exclusively under the Exception for Recreational Flyers (PDF). If you completed your drone registration directly with the FAA before the DroneZone was established in January 2018, a DroneZone account was created for you using the information you provided. If you registered using a third-party service, contact that company to request your DroneZone login credentials. Please do your part to keep the skies safe and renew your registration today.

For more information,
see https://www.faa.gov/news/updates/?newsId=96100&omniRss=news_updatesAoc&cid=101_N_U.

Deadline Push Resource Offers NIH Proposal Tips and Strategies Leading Up to R01 Deadline *(resubmission from December 2020)*

The Division of Research purchased a membership for Texas A&M University researchers to on-demand NIH webinars by Meg Bouvier Medical Writing, LLC. Texas A&M's subscription includes Deadline Push, a 10-week email program leading up to R-series deadlines, which offers NIH expertise and up-to-the-minute proposal writing strategies. Signup available at https://vpr.tamu.edu/division-units/research-development-services/files/MBMW.pdf

Workflow updates to Aggiebuy to enhance compliance with the Prohibition on Certain Telecommunications and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment *(resubmission from December 2020)*

A new workflow has been added to Aggiebuy to enhance compliance with Public Law 115-232. Section 889. Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment.

This law prohibits Federal agencies from procuring "covered telecommunications equipment or services". This includes equipment and/or services produced or provided by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of those entities) and certain video surveillance products or telecommunications equipment and services produced or provided by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company or Dahua Technology (or any subsidiary or affiliate of those entities).

This requirement flows down to recipient of federal funds. Sponsored Research Services (SRS) is seeing this requirement in federal agreements well as some state sponsors and federal flow though agreements.

To help ensure compliance with the requirements a new workflow has been added to Aggiebuy. The workflow will identify the keywords underlined in the above paragraph. The new workflow inserts the member approval for the purchase of the referenced telecommunication equipment and services. If the member approves the purchase then the workflow will route to Sponsored Research Services (SRS) to perform the usual checks for allowability on the project.

Since the purchase process starts at the departmental level it is important for PIs and departments to be aware of this requirement and not initiate purchases from the prohibited entities. The TAMUS Research Security Office can be contacted for a list of these vendors and their subsidiary or affiliate entities.

Responsible Conduct of Research – Spring 2021 Workshops *(resubmission from December 2020)*

Texas A&M University SAP https://rulesadmin.tamu.edu/rules/download/15.99.99.M0.04 requires certain graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to complete four hours of face-to-face training regarding Responsible Conduct of Research training. Workshop information, including registration links, may be found at: https://vpr.tamu.edu/manage-research/responsible-conduct-of-research/workshop-information.

Extended Guidance for Applicants Preparing Applications during the COVID-19 Pandemic (NIH NOT-OD-21-026) *(resubmission from December 2020)*

This Notice provides guidance for investigators and institutions preparing NIH grant applications for the May 2021 Council round, beginning with applications that were submitted beginning with a September 25, 2020 due date.

NIH grant applications should NOT include contingency plans that would outline steps needed to recover from temporary, emergency situations, or institutional return-to-the-workplace plans, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contingency plans will not be considered in peer review but, if needed, COVID-19 contingency plans will be requested and carefully considered by NIH staff before funding.

The full text of this notice can be read at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-21-026.html

Updates to Existing Proposal & Award Policy-related Guidance

The Foundation has made updates to the following guidance on the NSF website based on inquiries that we are receiving from the community:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on NSF's Implementation of OMB Memorandum M-20-26;
- FAQs on Current & Pending Support; and
- NSF-approved Formats for the Biographical Sketch website.

Updated guidance includes clarifications on professional appointments, research endeavors, principal investigators working outside the U.S. for an extended period of time, and reporting on in-kind support and outside consulting activities. Please direct any questions to policy@nsf.gov.

COVID Report Form

Reminder, there is a new online COVID Report Form that should be utilized if you are reporting information on individuals with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. Utilize this link:
https://redcap.tamhsc.edu/surveys/?s=4HAMAHC98D

If you are reporting on another individual, please remember to keep all information strictly confidential.

Updates to Research.gov

National Science Foundation (NSF) enabled three new proposal types in the Research.gov Proposal Submission System. These are the Rapid Response Research (RAPID), EArly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER), and Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE) proposal types.
RAPID, EAGER, and RAISE Proposals
- Proposers can now select a RAPID, EAGER, or RAISE proposal in the Research.gov proposal creation wizard, in addition to the existing Research proposal option.
- New automated compliance checks for RAPID, EAGER, and RAISE proposals have been added to Research.gov

Prior to submission of a RAPID or Eager proposal, PI(s) must contact the NSF Program Officer(s) whose expertise is most germane to the proposal topic to ascertain that submission of a proposal is appropriate. For a RAISE proposal the PI(s) must receive approval to submit a proposal from at least two NSF Program Officers, in intellectually distinct programs, whose expertise is most germane to the proposal topics.

Limited Submission Proposal Opportunities

The Division of Research has implemented a brand new proposal submission and review portal. The system will be used for limited submissions and most internal grant programs. You will find available opportunities at: https://tamu.infoready4.com/#limitedsubmissions. The limited submission office will be phasing in the portal as new limited submission opportunities arise. If you have any questions, please contact limitedsubmissions@tamu.edu or Shelly Martin at 979-862-2233.

Proposal Assistance for Large Multidisciplinary Funding Opportunities
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The Division of Research, Research Development Services, offers free assistance to teams pursuing large multidisciplinary funding opportunities. To learn more about the types of assistance offered or to request assistance, see the one-pager included in this edition of the CPI newsletter, click here, or contact Dr. Candice Jongsma (cgjongsma@tamu.edu).

Bulletin for Principal Investigators

The Division of Research at Texas A&M University publishes a weekly bulletin about research. The Research Bulletin accepts news items about researchers and their teams from the colleges, schools, campuses and agencies within the Texas A&M research enterprise, including honors, funding, presentations, and appearances in news media. Click here to subscribe or unsubscribe to the bulletin.