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CPI Newsletter – January 2024

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**2023-24 CPI roster:** Chair — Jessica Bernard, CAS • Vice-Chair — Robin Page, Nursing • Past Chair Debjyoti Banerjee, ENG • AgriLife Extension — Tim Hartmann, Jamie Rae Walker • AgriLife Research — Katie Lewis, Anil Somenahally, Qingwu Xue • Architecture — Michelle Meyer • BUSH — Laura Dague • CAS — Lane Baker, Heath Blackmon, Rebecca Brooker, Ryan Ewing, Jessica Fitzsimmons, Jean-Luc Guermond, Wenshe Liu, Daniel Thornton • COALS — Giri Athrey, Rodolfo Cardoso, Paul Straight, Aaron Tarone, Sarah White-Springer, Guoyao Wu • Dentistry — Hua Zhang • Education — Paul Hernandez, Rafael Lara-Alecio • Engineering — Daniel Alge, Jorge Alvarado, Raymundo Arroyave, Suman Chakravorty, Theodora Chaspari, Tracy Hammond, Daniel Jiménez, Samuel Ma • Geosciences — Ryan Ewing, Jessica Fitzsimmons, Daniel Thornton • Law — Felix Mormann • Mays — Katy Lane • Medicine — Helene Andrews-Polymenis, Shannon Glaser, Carl Gregory • Nursing — Robin Page • Pharmacy — Jayshree Mishra • Public Health — Gang Han • TAMU at Galveston — Irfan Khan • TAMU at Qatar — Nimir Elbashir • TEES — Keith Biggers, Nathan Tichenor • TTI — Edith Arámbula Mercado • University Libraries — Laura Sare • Veterinary Medicine — Joe Arosh, Candice Brinkmeyer-Langford, Dana Gaddy

The CPI is sponsored annually through funding from Texas A&M University, Texas A&M AgriLife, Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station, and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute

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## Update from Dr. Jessica Bernard, 2023-2024 CPI Chair

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**January CPI Chair News** – The Council of Principal Investigators Executive Committee (CPI-EC) met with administrators on Wednesday, January 10, 2024. Discussions during the CPI-EC meeting with the administrative leadership began Dr. Henry Fadamiro, Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives providing an update on the strategic initiatives workshops outcomes and discussions on upcoming workshops being scheduled. Brief discussions on the upcoming 2024 CPI Survey will be discussed more at the next CPI meeting with anticipated roll-out times and deadlines. More communication will be pushed out via the CPI distribution to PIs. The CPI-EC membership was provided an update on the status of hiring a Division of Research, Associate Vice President for Health. Held additional conversations with Dr. Jack Baldauf, Vice President for Research, on SB17 and the Division of Research Memo dated December 13, 2023. Dr. Baldauf communicated that if there are concerns, he has not received anything new from what CPI had previously provided, so he wants to hear about issues/concerns to have conversations with The Texas A&M University System Office of General Council. If there are concerns, you can email CPI at [cpi@tamu.edu](mailto:cpi@tamu.edu) with the concerns/issues on SB17, as it impacts PIs research, and CPI will collectively submit these to the Vice President for Research.

The January 17, 2024 CPI General Meeting is an open meeting, so it will be recorded. Following the January 17<sup>th</sup> CPI General Meeting, the YouTube video link will be posted on the [cpi.tamu.edu](http://cpi.tamu.edu) meetings page website for all PIs to have access to view.

As CPI continues to meet with President Welsh and Texas A&M and System administrative leadership this new year, I welcome thoughts, concerns, issues and agenda topics that impedes research efforts to all principal investigators within the research infrastructure with the Texas A&M University System. Please contact your CPI Representatives <https://cpi.tamu.edu/council-membership/council-membership/2023-2024-council-membership/>, or email the CPI Officers at [cpi@tamu.edu](mailto:cpi@tamu.edu) or Rebecca Luckey, [rluckey@tamu.edu](mailto:rluckey@tamu.edu), our CPI Coordinator.

## Microscopy and Imaging Center and Texas A&M Institute for Preclinical Studies Joint Open House – February 1, 2024

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The Microscopy and Imaging Center and Texas A&M Institute for Preclinical Studies are hosting a joint Open House on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. There will be lectures at the TIPS auditorium with overview of both facilities, presentations on some of the research currently using these facilities, and an opportunity for tours.

If you would like to attend please fill out the [RSVP form](#) to ensure you have lunch provided. Additionally you are welcome to forward this to any relevant colleagues or students. Please see the flyer on the back of this page for a save the date.

## Seminar for Researchers – Starting a Company as a Pathway to Translating Academic Research – February 6, 2024

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Join Texas A&M Innovation for an educational seminar on **Tuesday, February 6 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM CT** as we explore the topic of starting a company. Our panel of experts, including an experienced entrepreneur, investor, and a business attorney, will share their perspectives for launching a company with a focus on companies based on academic research. The discussion will include topics such as mechanics of company formation, developing market strategy and well-rounded teams, and attracting investors.

This seminar is tailored toward researchers, faculty, staff, and students throughout The Texas A&M University System. We're offering two attendance options: in person at the TAMU Memorial Student Center in College Station, or virtual. Learn more and [register on our website](#).

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## Ask the Expert: Q&A Panel – February 9, 2024

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The Division of Research is putting on an event on February 9, 2024 and we are looking to locate the correct person(s) in your department to come and represent. We are looking for the person(s) who would best have questions for experts from groups such as the Property office, Surplus, SSC, Keyless, Aggieworks, Emergency Management, EHS, Facility Management and others. This representative is someone who best knows the lab groups in your department and can come on behalf of those doing research while benefitting from networking with peers in equivalent positions.

If you know of someone who should be included in this event, please send an email to Ashlyn Montgomery, [amontgomery@tamu.edu](mailto:amontgomery@tamu.edu) to get them on the list. The Save the Date flyer is included on the back of this newsletter.

## Export Controls & Research in Restricted Countries

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Texas A&M acknowledges the importance and benefit of global collaborations; however, some countries require multi-layered levels of review and approval prior to initiating research activities.

Currently, the following countries are heavily sanctioned by the [US Government](#) and/or are defined as “Countries of Concern” by Texas A&M System (pursuant to System regulation [15.05.04, High Risk Global Engagement and High Risk International Collaborations](#)):

- Cuba
- Iran
- North Korea
- People’s Republic of China (PRC, mainland)
- Syria
- Russia/Belarus
- Ukraine: Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions

Shipping items to these countries and/or engaging in collaborations or other activities with parties located in these countries (or residents of these countries) requires higher levels of scrutiny at multiple levels including: Texas A&M University, Texas A&M System, and/or the federal government. Review times for activities in or with these countries can be lengthy and may potentially result in denial (not approved).

Please note that approval of an activity is based on a particular set of facts and regulations at the time of the review, and prior approval does not preclude subsequent review of future activities. For more information visit the Export Control website: [International Research Collaboration / Foreign Influence – Division of Research \(tamu.edu\)](#) or contact [exportcontrols@tamu.edu](mailto:exportcontrols@tamu.edu) with any questions.

## Responsible Conduct of Research

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The RCR office is hosting a [4-hour in-person workshop](#) on **January 11, 2024**, that meets the RCR Face-to-Face (F2F) training requirement for graduate students and postdocs as outlined in [University SAP 15.99.99.M0.04](#). The following topics will be covered:

- RCR – Research Data Management
- RCR – Research Security/IT Awareness
- RCR – Safe & Inclusive Research Environments
- RCR – Research Misconduct, Authorship & Peer Review

Please visit our [website](#) for more detailed RCR training requirements for students and postdocs. Information on the 1-hour workshops offered through other departments and those hosted by the RCR office can be found there as well.

Upcoming Virtual (Zoom) 1-hour RCR Workshops:

- [January 31, 2024 – RCR – Human Subjects](#)

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- [February 21, 2024 – RCR – Animal Welfare](#)
  - [March 20, 2024 – RCR Scientific Ethics](#)
  - [April 10, 2024 – RCR Biosafety](#)

Contact [RCR@tamu.edu](mailto:RCR@tamu.edu) for more information.

## Animal Program: Resources and Reminders

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**AAALAC Site Revisit February 19-23, 2024.** Representatives of AAALAC International will be revisiting the Bryan/College Station and School of Pharmacy in Kingsville portions of Texas A&M University's animal program **February 19-23, 2024**. For more information, please visit the **2024 AAALAC Site Revisit** page: <https://vpr.tamu.edu/aaalac-international-main-campus-kingsville-accrreditation-revisit-2024-late-january-march/> The revisit schedule will be shared with impacted stakeholders as the visit date approaches. Please contact the Animal Welfare Office staff at [animalcompliance@tamu.edu](mailto:animalcompliance@tamu.edu) or 979.845.1828 with any questions you may have about the revisit process.

**Updates to IACUC Required Training.** The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) has updated personnel training requirements for protocols submitted on or after January 1, 2024 to address concerns raised by the AAALAC International accreditation visit. 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 on the Animal Program Guidance web page (requires TAMU authentication): <https://vpr.tamu.edu/animals-in-research-and-teaching/texas-am-iacuc-guidance/>. Please contact the Animal Welfare Office at [animalcompliance@tamu.edu](mailto:animalcompliance@tamu.edu) or 979.845.1828 if you have questions or need assistance in determining training requirements and required timeline for completion.

**Focus on IACUC Guidelines - Choosing Appropriate Endpoints.** Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Guidance on procedural standards for animal activities is available on a wide variety of topics. Investigators are invited to view current IACUC Guidance on the selection of appropriate humane endpoints to minimize pain and distress without compromising the quality of scientific data collected (TAMU-G-001). IACUC Guidance may be found on the Animal Program web page (requires TAMU authentication): <https://vpr.tamu.edu/animals-in-research-and-teaching/texas-am-iacuc-guidance/>. Please contact the Animal Welfare Office at [animalcompliance@tamu.edu](mailto:animalcompliance@tamu.edu) or 979.845.1828 if you have questions or need assistance with implementing IACUC procedural standards.

**Animal Welfare Office - Zoom Office Hours.** The Animal Welfare Office (AWO) invites investigators that need help with their Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) submission or who have other IACUC-related questions to join the AWO Zoom Office Hours on Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00 pm and Fridays from 10:00-11:00 am. Please contact the AWO at [animalcompliance@tamu.edu](mailto:animalcompliance@tamu.edu) for Zoom connection information or to schedule a one-on-one session with a staff member.

## Biosafety Program

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### Guidance for Researchers on Nucleic Acid Synthesis

Over the past 6 months, benchtop nucleic acid printers (DNA printers) have become more affordable and accessible, which has allowed researchers to purchase them for use in their own laboratories. Although the increased accessibility of benchtop nucleic acid printers enhances discovery and innovation and reduces the need for commercial nucleic acid synthesis, it also poses unique challenges.

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Until recently, nearly all synthetic DNA was produced by centralized providers who screen their customers and orders to ensure that sequences of concern (e.g., sequences associated with select agents or agents on the commerce control list) are not sold to customers who do not have a legitimate use for them. Without sufficient oversight, widespread distribution of benchtop DNA printers could have significant biosafety and biosecurity implications. While these advances in synthetic biology have made it easier than ever for scientists across disciplines to generate organisms using only genetic sequence data, broader availability to such material via benchtop DNA printers further removes the need for direct access to naturally occurring pathogens, which could result in potential misuse and pathogen engineering.

Recognizing this increased risk, the Department of Health and Human Services issued an updated [Screening Framework Guidance for Providers and Users of Synthetic Nucleic Acids](https://aspr.hhs.gov/legal/synna/Pages/default.aspx) (<https://aspr.hhs.gov/legal/synna/Pages/default.aspx>) in October 2023. This guidance serves to assist all entities involved in the provision, use, and transfer of synthetic nucleic acids with developing best practices for screening for sequences of concern and mitigating the risks associated with those sequences. The updated guidance recommends that the definition of a sequence of concern be expanded to include any sequence that contributes to pathogenicity or toxicity, whether that sequence is from a regulated or unregulated agent. It also recommends that all customers, providers, and vendors of synthetic nucleic acids verify legitimacy of recipients of sequences of concern and that all parties maintain records of transfers of such sequences. Included in the updated materials is a [Companion Guide](https://aspr.hhs.gov/legal/synna/Documents/SynNA-Companion-Guide-508.pdf) (<https://aspr.hhs.gov/legal/synna/Documents/SynNA-Companion-Guide-508.pdf>) to the HHS Guidance which describes several potential scenarios for implementing these recommendations.

Please review this material if your work involves synthetic nucleic acids. Additional updates and guidance pertaining to institutional oversight of benchtop nucleic acid printers, and any measures needed to prevent their misuse, will be provided to researchers as they become available.

Please contact Dr. Jessica Bourquin, Director of Biosafety, at [jrbourquin@tamu.edu](mailto:jrbourquin@tamu.edu) or at 979-845-7189 for questions or concerns.

## **GWSW - Write Winning NIH Grant Proposals**

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Rudder Tower 601  
Register: <https://u.tamu.edu/GWSW2024>

The seminar provides a broad overview of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), identifying NIH funding opportunities, the NIH proposal submission and review process, and strategies to build a competitive NIH proposal.

*Presenter: Dr. John Robertson, Consultant from [GWSW](#).*

**Contact Information:**  
**[Shannon Eyre](#), RDS, Sr. Administrative Coordinator**

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## Detailed Travel Itinerary Required on State Funds *Second Reminder from Dec 2023*

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The itinerary form has been approved by the state. The form is posted on the [Travel](#) website in the Forms section along with the [Concur Training Website](#) under the Forms tab. This form should be populated, saved, and attached to every expense report that is wholly or partially funded by a state account. This requirement applies to any expense report submissions starting 10/16/23 regardless of the travel dates.

Please contact [travel@tamu.edu](mailto:travel@tamu.edu) if you have any questions.

## Continuous Service Improvement Governance Group (CSIGG) *Second Reminder from Dec 2023*

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The Continuous Service Improvement Governance Group (CSIGG) was established as a result of the Finance process improvement initiatives over the past year. During spring and summer of this year the initial membership was seated, processes defined, and tools created. The CSIGG is now operational and is already evaluating the first six process improvement proposals.

If you would like to submit a request or proposal to improve a Division of Finance & Business Services process, please click on the link below and complete the intake form. We look forward to working with you!

[CSIGG Website](#)

[CSIGG Intake Form](#)

## Texas Land Grants Day – February 2, 2024

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Prairie View A&M University and Texas A&M University are hosting their annual research collaboration event, **Texas Land Grants Day (TXLGD)**. The conference is a collaboration between PVAMU and TAMU and serves as a launchpad for new opportunities, projects, and grants between institutions.

The event is on **Friday, February 2, 2024 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm** at Texas A&M University. You can find more information at <https://ieei.tamu.edu/txlgd/> about previous Texas Land Grants Day conferences.

**We invite you to join us at the Texas Land Grants Day. Free registration is available at this [link](#) or the link on the attached flyer (<https://na.eventscloud.com/ereg/newreg.php?eventid=779066>).**

Also, if you have been or are currently engaged in collaborative PVAMU and TAMU research or education projects funded internally or externally, we invite your **students to showcase their efforts in your collaborative project at our student poster session.**

Please urge your student(s) or post docs who are interested in participating in the poster session to contact Dr. Karen Butler-Purry ([klbutler@tamu.edu](mailto:klbutler@tamu.edu)) or Dr. Surupa Shaw ([surupashaw@tamu.edu](mailto:surupashaw@tamu.edu)) by **January 17, 2024 to register for the poster session.** Please see flyer at the back for additional information.

## Responsible Conduct of Research training is required by NSF

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Per NSF's recently updated Responsible Conduct of Research training requirements, RCR Training is required for all undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, faculty and other senior personnel who will be supported by the NSF.

[Learn More](#)

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## Limited Submission Proposal Opportunities

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The Division of Research has a limited 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>. If you have any questions, please contact [limitedsubmissions@tamu.edu](mailto:limitedsubmissions@tamu.edu).

## 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, [click here](#).

## Bulletin for Principal Investigators

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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. To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Research Bulletin, email: [research-communications@tamu.edu](mailto:research-communications@tamu.edu).

## Innovation and Commercialization at Texas A&M University

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Follow us on social media @TAMInnovation and [subscribe to our mailing list](#) to stay up to date on news and timely information related to innovation and commercialization at The Texas A&M University System.



# TIPS & MIC OPEN HOUSE

SAVE THE DATE

February 1st 2024

Lectures, Lunch, and tours!!

More information coming soon



RSVP HERE



# TEXAS LAND GRANTS DAY

**FEBRUARY 2, 2024**

**9 AM - 4 PM**

**ZACHRY ENGINEERING EDUCATION COMPLEX  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**



Institute for Engineering  
Education and Innovation

**IEEI.TAMU.EDU**



**RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES** Brings You:

# 2024 EDUCATION & OUTREACH EXPO

This interactive event will start with on-line introductions to 20+ campus representatives in programs that faculty can collaborate on the education and outreach aspects of their NSF proposals, to be followed by an in-person expo for attendees to network with these campus program representatives.

**All faculty are encouraged to attend.**

**REGISTER HERE!**



[https://tamu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cTlpZYAVQhgd4Ym](https://tamu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTlpZYAVQhgd4Ym)



**WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 7, 2024**

**1:30 PM - 3:00 PM  
RUDDER TOWER 601**

**Contact: Dr. Laurie Garton  
RDS Associate Director  
lsgarton@tamu.edu**



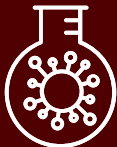
**DIVISION OF RESEARCH**  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



Texas A&M University Division of Research

**invites all LAB  
COORDINATORS/MANAGERS  
to the 1st Annual**

# **ASK THE EXPERT: Q&A PANEL**



**February 9, 2024**

**Rudder Forum and Exhibit Hall**

**Panel experts from the following:**

Property, Surplus, SSC, Keyless,  
Aggieworks, Emergency Management,  
EHS, Facility Management and more!



More information to follow

# Save the Date!

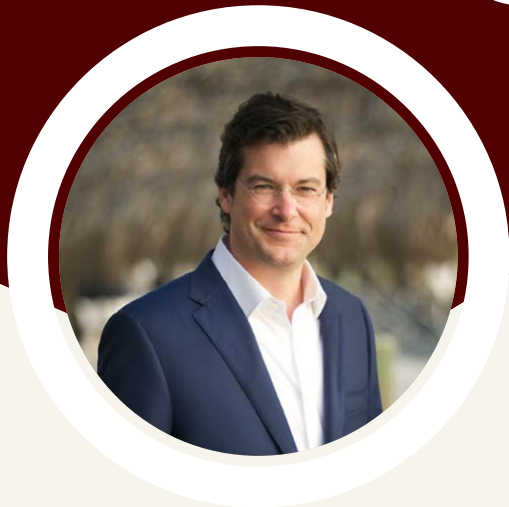
Research Development Services Presents

## WRITE WINNING NIH

## GRANT PROPOSALS

## SEMINAR

[REGISTER!](#)



**DR. JOHN D.  
ROBERTSON**

SPEAKER



**FEBRUARY 22, 2024**

**8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

**RUDDER TOWER 601**

This seminar provides a broad overview of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), identifying NIH funding opportunities, the NIH proposal submission and review process, and strategies to build a competitive NIH proposal.