
CPI Newsletter – November 2024

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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

Update from Dr. Robin Page, 2024-2025 CPI Chair

November CPI News – The Council of Principal Investigators Executive Committee (CPI-EC) met with administrators on Wednesday, November 6, 2024. Discussions during the CPI-EC meeting with the administrative leadership began with an update from the Division of Research regarding the recent discoveries of the additional ancillary requirements when submitting an IRB within Huron. The discussions also included the Texas A&M Information Technology Team for compliance. The CPI Executive Committee has appointed a CPI Representative to the newly formed Ancillary Reviews Associated with Human Subjects Research Working Group, so if PIs experience issues, they are encouraged to email their CPI Representative, and/or cpi@tamu.edu directly so CPI-EC have specific concerns/issues that can be brought to the committee for resolutions. Sponsored Research Services provided a NRSA Post-doctoral Fellows Update. This information can be found further down in this November CPI Newsletter. Texas A&M Facilities came back to provide an update from when they spoke last time at the September CPI Meeting. They will be discussing items that have been rolled out within their website for assisting PIs/researchers on their concerns with their labs when an emergency or a repair is needed. The Facilities Team will be providing an update at the November CPI General Meeting. Regarding a **potential** FLSA Salary Threshold change, the Texas A&M University Human Resources Department are developing a **“potential scenario”** ***IF*** there is another increase. The Human Resources Team will be sending out information to the PI/research community as well as providing these proposed plans at the November CPI General Meeting. The Division of Research provided a brief status update that meetings were scheduled with administrative leadership on the proposed Research Development Fund (RDF) 4.0 and it was indicated that there is no new update to report from when the CPI-EC submitted in a formal memo to the Research Development Fund Management on October 9, 2024, to extend the agreements and continue the RDF program. Within that October memo, the CPI-EC submitted recommendations from the PI Community for continuing the RDF program. With that the November 6th, CPI-EC meeting was ended.

All PIs are encouraged to communicate with their CPI representatives, 2024-2025 Council Membership – Council of Principal Investigators (tamu.edu), to bring forward items of concern or interest for the research community. The CPI Executive Committee continues to meet with President Welsh, Provost Sams, Vice President for Research Baldauf, and other Texas A&M and System administrative leadership. I welcome thoughts, concerns, issues and agenda topics that impedes research efforts to all principal investigators within the research infrastructure within the Texas A&M University System. You are welcome to bring research-related issues (and solutions) to my attention at CPI@tamu.edu, or to any of the CPI Representatives.

Reminder: The CPI General meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at 11:30AM, Rudder 601. There are Zoom options for guests if interested in listening to any of the CPI General Meetings. The monthly CPI General meeting details can be found [here](#).

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, December 11, 2024.

NIH Webinar, November 13-14: Grants Process Primer: Application to Award

- Are you new to or have limited experience working with the NIH extramural grants application process?
- Are you looking to enhance your knowledge of NIH and the grants application process, as well as of the associated application tools and systems through demos and some interactive opportunities, and learn more about the process to train others?

If you answered “yes” to both of these questions, then it’s time to register for the NIH Grants Process Primer: Application to Award, a two-part live virtual event on November 13 and 14, 2024. Registration link: [Here](#)

Part One - An Overview of NIH and the Pre-Award Process

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- Wednesday, November 13, 2024
 - 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time Zone · Free Webinar – [Single Registration Required](#) (Includes access to Part One and Part Two)

Part Two – An Interactive Experience Focused on NIH Systems, Tools, and Resources

- Thursday, November 14, 2024
- 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time Zone · Free Webinar – [Single Registration Required](#) (Includes access to Part One and Part Two)

Event Resources

The following will be available on this webinar's event page: [NIH Grants Primer: Application to Award](#)

- Presentation slide deck: posted 24 hours in advance of the webinar.
- Video recording, transcript, and final presentation slide deck will be available approximately 7–10 business days after the event concludes.

The Office of Responsible Conduct of Research - Virtual Workshops Available

As outlined in [University SAP 15.99.99.M0.04](#), RCR training is required for students and postdocs participating in research. ALL students and postdocs participating in research are required to complete online [CITI RCR Training](#).

Additionally, externally funded graduate students and all postdoctoral fellows must complete four (4) hours of face-to-face (F2F) training.

The RCR office has two upcoming 1-hour Virtual (zoom) workshops in the Fall semester:

- [November 14, 2024 – RCR – Human Subjects](#)
- [December 4, 2024 – RCR – Collaborative Research: Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Commitment](#)

Additionally, registration is open for the [4-hour In-person RCR Workshop](#) on Thursday January 9, 2025 (10am – 2:30pm).

Finally, registration is open for the following 1-hour Virtual (zoom) workshops scheduled for the Spring semester (registration for additional workshops will open soon):

- [February 6, 2025 – RCR – Animal Welfare](#)
- [March 26, 2025 – RCR – Human Subjects](#)
- [April 16, 2025 – RCR - Biosafety](#)

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

Contact RCR@tamu.edu for more information.

Upcoming AnSRS4U presentation: Contracting with Industry on Sponsored Projects

TAMU Sponsored Research Services (SRS) will host an AnSRS4U presentation Contracting with Industry on Sponsored Projects – Thursday November 21 from 10:00 to 11:00am via Zoom. Working with industry on sponsored projects can provide opportunities and challenges. This session will describe practices to help smooth the process when contracting with industry on sponsored research. We will discuss when a non-disclosure agreement is needed and touch on budget preparation. The focus of the presentation will be on negotiating industry contracts and some of the challenges that may be unique to

working with industry. Presenters will be Travis Young, Lesli Kerth and Bryn Jarvis from Sponsored Research Services.

This presentation will be recorded and available on demand a few days after the presentation on the SRS website at AnSRS4U – Sponsored Research Services (tamu.edu)

When: Nov 21, 2024 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting: [here](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Human Research Protection Program Updates

REMINDER: Closure of Legacy Studies December 11, 2024 marks the one-year anniversary of Texas A&M's conversion to Huron's IRB module. Consistent with previous communications and postings on the HRPP website, the IRB office will begin administratively closing legacy studies on December 12, 2024 if there has been no communication or updates from the study team since the Huron conversion.

Once a study is closed, all research activities involving human subjects must stop, and investigators will need to submit a new IRB application in Huron to conduct research involving human participants. See, Huron Knowledge Center – Division of Research (tamu.edu) or <https://vpr.tamu.edu/human-research-protection-program/huron-knowledge-center/>

A legacy study is an IRB protocol that was initially approved in iRIS and migrated to Huron during the conversion. All IRB studies, including legacy studies, are required to undergo an annual continuing review or administrative check-in.

To avoid the unintended administrative closure of a legacy study, investigators must submit both an annual continuing review or administrative check-in and a modification to finish populating the IRB application on or before December 11, 2024. Click here (https://vpr.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/REV_Legacy-Studies.pdf) for step-by-step instructions on how to submit your first modification to a legacy study in Huron. This instructional material will also guide you on how to submit your first annual review for a legacy study.

No action is required for investigators who already submitted a continuing review or an administrative check-in for their legacy study in Huron. These studies will not be administratively closed.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Denise Puga at denisepuga@tamu.edu or 979 458-5590.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Town Hall Meetings

With the goal of establishing clear transparent lines of direct communication with investigators the IRB will begin in January 2025, holding monthly Town Hall style meetings as another avenue for sharing information and updates as well as addressing any questions or concerns investigators may have about the IRB process.

The IRB Town Hall sessions will be a first-hand method for all faculty, staff and student investigators to hear the latest news from the IRB and to seek solutions on matters important to them.

The IRB Town Hall sessions will be held in person (with a Zoom option) on the last Wednesday of each month from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Blocker building, Room 220. The sessions will be announced to investigators through the CPI newsletter, HRPP website and above signature lines in IRB email correspondence.

General questions or concerns that may benefit all can be discussed in open session. As an option, individual break out rooms will be available for investigators that may need help with their specific protocols. Investigators will be encouraged to send in their questions, concerns or other items to the IRB prior to the meetings to help the IRB prepare the agendas and provide more complete responses.

If you have any questions, please contact Aliese Seawright, HRPD Director, at a.seawright@tamu.edu or Heather Cline, IRB Manger, at hcline@tamu.edu.

NIH Guidelines Training

The NIH Guidelines for Recombinant and Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules were recently updated and took effect on September 30, 2024. All Principal Investigators performing research that is subject to the NIH Guidelines will be required to complete the updated training, which reflects the latest revisions to the Guidelines, in TrainTraq. No action is required from PIs currently. Biosafety staff will begin assigning the training to Principal Investigators upon submission of a new application for an IBC permit, or submission of an annual or three-year renewal for an existing IBC permit. Please contact the Office of Biosafety at biosafety@tamu.edu if you have questions or concerns.

Genetic Elements of Viral Vectors

The Office of Biosafety reminds investigators that the scope of Export Control regulations applies not only to agents listed on the [Commerce Control List](#), [United States Munitions List](#) (and the [Select Agents and Toxins List](#), but also to genetic elements, including genetically modified and attenuated strains, of these agents. While there are some exclusions for bacterial and fungal genes, federal regulations do not exempt genetic material from controlled viruses. Therefore, plasmids, vectors, and similar materials containing any genetic element from a listed virus will require an export license to be shipped outside the United States. Please note that many commercially available viral vector systems, especially 3rd generation and higher lentiviral vectors, use expression/packaging plasmids containing the Vesicular Stomatitis Virus envelope gene (VSV-G). Failure to obtain the necessary export license before shipping such materials could result in violations of Export Control regulations and significant fines from the Bureau of Industry and Security. Please familiarize yourselves with the agents listed on the aforementioned lists and review the [Export Controls Guidance on Biological Agents and Toxins](#) guidance document. Ensure all compliance considerations are met before exporting biohazardous materials. Please refer to the [International Shipping Guidance](#) and submit an International [Shipping Review Form](#). The Offices of Biosafety and Export Controls have recently enhanced internal processes to identify viral vectors containing genetic elements that may be subject to Export Control regulations. They will also be increasing outreach efforts to the research community. Minor revisions to the IBC application are forthcoming to reflect these enhancements. Please contact the Office of Biosafety at biosafety@tamu.edu if you have questions or concerns pertaining to your IBC permit. Please contact the Office of Export Controls at exportcontrols@tamu.edu if you have questions or concerns regarding Export Control regulations.

AnSRS4u Presentation Available on Demand: Visiting Scholars and the J-1 Exchange Program at Texas A&M University

Learn the ins and outs of bringing visiting scholars to Texas A&M University. If you were not able to watch the live SRS AnSRS4U presentation on Visiting Scholars and the J-1 Exchange Program at Texas A&M University, you have the opportunity to watch it on demand via the SRS website at AnSRS4U – Sponsored Research Services (tamu.edu)

NIH's Adoption of Common Forms for Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support by May 25, 2025

NIH Notice NOT-OD-24-163

May 25, 2025 may seem a long way off but NIH wants to give researchers an early notice of this coming change so that they will have time to prepare.

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- NIH will require the use of Science Experts Network Curriculum Vitae (SciENcv) to complete Common Forms (i.e., Biographical Sketch, Current and Pending (Other) Support) and the NIH Biographical Sketch Supplement to produce digitally certified PDF(s) for use in application submission.
 - NIH will require all Senior/Key Personnel to enter their ORCID ID into SciENcv in the Persistent Identifier (PID) section of the Common Forms.
 - NIH will require all Senior/Key Personnel to link their ORCID ID to their eRA Commons Personal Profile.

NIH currently plans to continue collecting three required agency specific data elements (i.e., Personal Statement, Contributions to Science, and Honors) to assess qualifications. These data elements will be collected separately from the Common Forms on a new NIH Biographical Sketch Supplement.

If the application due date is on or before May 24, 2025, you must continue using the current NIH Biosketch and Other Support format pages for applications, Just-in-Time (JIT) and RPPRs.

NIH - Coming Soon: FORMS-I

Effective for applications submitted for due dates **on or after January 25, 2025**.

FORMS-I will incorporate updates related to multiple NIH initiatives:

- Improvements to the NIH Fellowship Application and Review Process.
- Updates to NRSA Training Grant Applications.
- Adoption of the Common Forms for Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support for submission of applications and RPPRs by May 2025.

FORMS-I application guide and forms packages will be available in Fall 2024.

NIH Updated Process for Reporting and the Submission of Revised Data Management and Sharing (DMS) Plans

On October 1, NIH is adding several new [Data Management and Sharing \(DMS\)](#) questions to Research Performance Progress Reports (RPPRs) and updating the process for submitting revised DMS Plans to NIH for review. In brief:

- NIH is including several new questions about DMS activities in RPPRs submitted on or after October 1, 2024. Recipients will now be asked:
 - Whether data has been generated or shared to date
 - What repositories any data was shared to and under what unique digital identifier
 - If data has not been generated and/or shared per the award's DMS Plan, why and what corrective actions have or will be taken to comply with the plan
 - If significant changes to the DMS Plan are anticipated in the coming year, recipients will be asked to explain them and provide a revised DMS Plan for approval.
- NIH is updating the processes for submitting requests to revise a DMS Plan through the [Just in Time \(JIT\) Module](#), the [Prior Approval Module](#), and the [RPPR Module](#) in eRA Commons (See Guide Notice [NOT-OD-24-176](#)).

NSF requiring multi-factor authentication for Research.gov log-ins as of Oct. 27

NSF issued a [Dear Colleague Letter \(DCL\)](#) on October 11 about a new requirement for use of multi-factor authentication (MFA) to log in to Research.gov effective October 27. A notice about this new requirement has also been added atop the Research.gov homepage. Effective on **October 27**, all external users must first complete a one-time MFA enrollment process and use the selected MFA method to sign into Research.gov. Users will be required to use MFA each time they sign into Research.gov.

National Laboratories Office – Travel Grant Opportunities

The National Laboratories Office (NLO) offers three new Request for Proposals aimed at fostering research collaborations between researchers in The Texas A&M University System and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).

[Texas A&M University System NLO Travel Grant](#): This grant provides up to \$1,500 for travel expenses, including airfare, lodging and meals, to help researchers from Texas A&M System institutions initiate collaborations with LANL.

Building A Resilient Texas Conference – Feb. 23-25, 2025

Mark your calendars to join Building A Resilient Texas. Symposium on the Food, Energy, Water and Health (FEWH) nexus as a catalyst for sustainability in Texas and Beyond. The conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center in College Station, Texas.

Animal Welfare Updates

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 Tuesdays from 2:00-3:00 pm and Fridays from 10:00-11:00 am. Please contact the AWO at animalcompliance@tamu.edu for Zoom connection information or to schedule a one-on-one session with a staff member.

Focus on IACUC Guidelines - Pilot Studies

IACUC Guidance on procedural standards for animal activities is available on a wide variety of topics. Investigators are invited to view current IACUC Guidance related to the performance of pilot studies (TAMU-G-030) on the Animal Program web page: <https://vpr.tamu.edu/animals-in-research-and-teaching/texas-am-iacuc-guidance/>. Please contact the Animal Welfare Office at animalcompliance@tamu.edu or 979.845.1828 if you have questions or need assistance with implementing IACUC procedural standards.

Focus on IACUC Guidelines - Updated Guidance for October-November 2024

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 the IACUC Guidance on environmental enrichment of agricultural species (TAMU-G-012) and selection of appropriate endpoints (TAMU-G-001). IACUC Guidance may be found on the Animal Program web page: <https://vpr.tamu.edu/animals-in-research-and-teaching/texas-am-iacuc-guidance/>.

Please contact the Animal Welfare Office at animalcompliance@tamu.edu or 979.845.1828 if you have questions or need assistance with implementing IACUC procedural standards.

Export Control Task in HROE Laserfiche System

Starting in December, HROE will implement an enhancement to the [Onboarding Process in Laserfiche](#) to include an export control review of new non-U.S. Person employee hires. This is in response to a finding from the A&M System's audit of the university's export controls program. Incorporating this enhancement in Laserfiche will ensure all new employees that are not U.S. Persons receive an export control review prior to their start date. With this enhancement,

Laserfiche will trigger an email to the Research Security and Export Controls Office (RESEC) along with the hiring manager and HR Hub Professional notifying them of the need for an export control review, if one has not already been completed. The email will include much of the information needed for the export control review, making the process more efficient, in order to expedite the export control review.

Please contact the Office of Research Security and Export Controls at exportcontrols@tamu.edu or 979-862-6419 with any questions.

Limited Submission Proposal Opportunities

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 [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact limitedsubmissions@tamu.edu.

Proposal Assistance for Large Multidisciplinary Funding Opportunities

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](#)

Research 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. To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Research Bulletin, email: research-communications@tamu.edu.

Innovation and Commercialization at Texas A&M University

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.

Graduate and Professional School Launch My Grad Journey

The Graduate and Professional School is excited to share the launch of phase one of My Grad Journey, an interactive online tool to assist our graduate and professional students in obtaining feedback from their committee members. Students and faculty can log into the system at <https://mygradjourney.tamu.edu>.

Students can see their academic milestones completed, as well as update their goals, publications, and professional development activities. Committee members can see these updates in the system. Phase two will launch in spring 2025 and will include a feedback mechanism for committee members to draft and provide feedback directly to the student within the system.

For questions or feedback, please contact mygradjourney@tamu.edu.

Texas A&M High Performance Research Computing (HPRC)

HPRC offers an ongoing series of short training courses for beginning, intermediate and advanced researchers. These short courses are free of charge and available to any employee or student at Texas A&M.

Registration is required [here](#). (Prerequisites: current ACES account or HPRC account)

University Libraries

The University Libraries presents a series of online workshops in research-related subjects (such as managing citations, managing research data, searching databases, and publishing and copyright) for the Texas A&M community. Register [here](#).