UTIA INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
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University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Sponsored Programs Office

Summer 2020

Office of Sponsored Programs Newsletter

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Message from the Interim Director

Looking back on the last 5 months, I am amazed at the volume of quality work that can be done *remotely* by motivated faculty and staff, with the support of sponsored program professionals. Thank you, OSP employees, for your hard work, and best of luck UTIA colleagues who have submitted proposals or are starting new sponsored projects.

As UT's on-campus presence increases, I encourage you to continue contacting your coordinator in methods that are not only safest, but we have found to be very effective – Zoom, phone calls, and e-mail. If you would like to meet face-to-face with an OSP employee, please let us know, and we will arrange a meeting, to includes masks and other safety measures. As most of you know, UTIA OSP is accessible and always here to help.
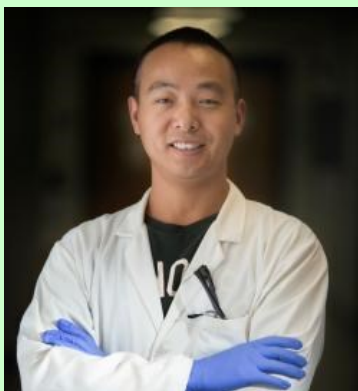
In this newsletter, please check out the Faculty Spotlights, featuring **Mi Li**, **Andrea Lear**, and **Michael Ross**. Cathy Creswell sheds light on a confusing proposal topic – **Participant Support Costs**. Read about compliance topics, and make sure you have completed the **Intellectual Property Statement** (link provided on page 6).

Finally, and very importantly, USDA will be providing **additional funding** for next year's AFRI grants. This includes, but is not limited to, additional Standard and Seed funding opportunities for **New investigators**. Contact aggrant@utk.edu with questions and to start planning today!

All the best to you-

Jane

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Dr. Mi Li is a Assistant Professor at the Center for Renewable Carbon and the Department of Forestry, Wildlife & Fisheries. Dr. Li earned his doctorate in Wood Science from Auburn University in 2014 and his B.S. and M.S. in Chemical Engineering of Forestry Bioproducts and Biomaterials from Northeast Forestry University in China. He has been worked in biomass & pretreatment chemistry, biomass & biproducts characterization, lignin chemistry & biomass modification & functionalization in the past. Dr. Li has contributed to more than 60 peer reviewed journal publications. He is the recipient of Distinguished Achievement Award 2017 at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and his research has been highlighted at the US DOE Office of Sciences webpage in 2017. His current research programs include TCPB sponsored catalytic conversion of corn into valuable chemicals, 4D printing of biomass-based intelligent materials, bio-derived up-cyclable polymers and plastics, and environment-friendly fractionation using green chemistry. Dr. Li is the father of two— 7-years-old Mia and 4-years-old Skyler and he loves biking, tubing, and fishing with his family.

Dr. Andrea Sketch Lear is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences. Her areas of expertise include large animal internal medicine, infectious disease, virology, immunology, reproductive physiology, & neonatology. Dr. Lear's professional interests include participation in farm animal veterinary practice, advancement of animal agriculture, leadership in organized veterinary medicine and training of future veterinarians & animal scientists. She earned her Ph.D. here at the University of Tennessee. She also received her B.S. at Murray State University, M.S. at Colorado State University, DVM at Auburn University & Diplomate at American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. In the future, we look forward to seeing Dr. Lear's work in assessment of fetal viability, in-utero diagnostics, maternal-fetal communication & epigenetics of neonatal immunology. Dr. Lear and her family live on a farmstead which raises meat and dairy goats, chickens, along with vegetable gardens. In her personal time she enjoys playing in the beautiful rivers of Tennessee with her husband and dogs.

UTCVM
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Take a moment to stop & smell the flowers! The UT Gardens in Knoxville, Crossville and Jackson are open 7 days a week from sunrise to sunset.

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Michael Ross joined UT about a year ago as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Plant Sciences, Sustainable Landscape Design concentration in the Herbert College of Agriculture in intercollegiate partnership with the School of Landscape Architecture in the College of Architecture and Design. His areas of expertise include landscape architecture, sustainability, resilience & design; culture building; mentoring & recruitment; and restoration ecology & invasive species mitigation. Ross' professional interests include landscape architecture, ecological design, green infrastructure, sustainability metrics, urban design, restoration ecology, management and biodiversity & design. He received his B.S. at the University of Texas at El Paso & earned his MLA at Texas Tech University. In the future, Professor Ross would like to focus his work in floating wetlands & pollution mitigation; professional attitudes toward sustainability metrics; repurposing   post-industrial & infrastructural landscapes as biodiversity corridors; service learning and outreach, recruitment & retention. Ross explains that teaching during Covid has been a challenge as we tend to work closely with students in design studio and the impact on that studio culture has required adjustments. That being said, the freedom to extend mentoring and advising opportunities to zoom has meant that while the spring semester never felt like it had a solid ending I have had very meaningful interactions with students throughout the summer. I have also been able to have informal interactions with graduate Masters of Landscape Architecture students and undergraduate Plant Sciences students, creating peer mentoring opportunities. It comes down to taking a constraint and finding an opportunity. In his free time Ross enjoys bonsai, hiking, music, reading, film, tying flies and fishing.

Congratulations!

Dr. Dave Anderson—Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies
Dr. Anderson has effectively led the department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences and has advanced basic, translational, and clinically-relevant scientific research within the Institute of Agriculture, UTK, and the Graduate School of Medicine. He is excited about the opportunity to lead the research and graduate studies program and to assist all faculty, staff, and students in their efforts to advance biomedical science knowledge.

Dr. Stephen Kania—Professor and Assistant Dean of Research and Graduate Studies
Dr. Kania has played an important role as director of the graduate degree programs. He has brought expertise and stability to the program, has been greatly respected by graduate degree seeking students and their mentoring faculty, and has served as an effective leader on the UTIA and UTK campuses.

Dr. Scott Stewart—Director of the West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center
An entomologist well known to row crop producers throughout the South, Dr. Stewart has been named by UT AgResearch as the next, and seventh, director of the West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center in Jackson. Stewart succeeds Bob Hayes, who retires as director on September 30, concluding a distinguished forty-two-year career with UTIA.

Navigating Participant Support Costs >>>

By: Cathy Creswell

Participant support costs (PSC) is funding provided to enable and encourage people to attend conferences or training programs without undo financial burden. A participant is a non-UT employee who is the recipient (not a provider) of a workshop, conference, seminar or other short-term instructional activity. They may be a student, scholar, scientist, teacher, or a private sector representative.

It pays for items such as stipends, subsistence, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees. Who is *not* a participant? A UT employee or intern, advisory board members, or anyone who has a deliverable or is providing a service to the project is not considered a participant.

PSC are budgeted in a separate category in the federal application budget, and must be accounted for separately by the University, because these costs are excluded when calculating F&A costs. Therefore, a separate R account is required for PSC.

Funds provided for PSC that are not spent cannot be re-budgeted for use in other categories unless prior written approval has been obtained from the sponsor. Additionally, allowances may not be paid to trainees who are receiving compensation from other Federal government sources while participating in the project.

PSC are typically incurred for projects that include an education or outreach component. These types of costs are most commonly included in National Science Foundation (NSF) grants, such as the Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) or Research Experiences for Teachers (RET) program. Federal agencies vary in their requirements for managing PSC, and PSC need to be part of the funding opportunity or agency rules.

PSC are defined by the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR 200.75. The Uniform Guidance requires prior approval by the sponsor to incur participant support costs under federally sponsored awards, and must be incurred within the period of performance of the project.

Office of Sponsored Programs New Website>>>

We will have a new face to our Website coming soon. Great big thanks to Mark Young for all his hard work!

Don't forget to visit the UTIA Office of Sponsored Programs website for forms and information such as:

- **MTA questionnaires**
- **Indirect Cost Rate Agreements**
- **Uniform Guidance Tools**
- **Standard Contracts and Agreements**
- **Compliance Resources and Documents**
- **Timeline to Meet 3-Business –Day Deadline**

LINK: http://utiasponsoredprograms.tennessee.edu/

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What is the VAS? The VAS is the portion of the grant application in which the investigator ensures the animal activity is appropriate for the proposed research & adheres to standards of humane care & use of laboratory animals.

The following guidance is provided to assist applicants and offerors in preparing the Vertebrate Animals Section (VAS) for submission to the NIH, and to assist reviewers in evaluating the VAS of applications and proposals.

If live vertebrate animals are to be used, applicants must address the following criteria:

1. Description of Procedures (Vertebrate Animals Section)

Provide a concise description of the proposed procedures to be used that involve live vertebrate animals. Identify the species, strains, ages, sex, and total number of animals by species to be used. If dogs or cats are proposed, provide the source of the animals.

2. Justifications (Vertebrate Animals Section)

Provide justification that the species are appropriate for the proposed research. Explain why the research goals cannot be accomplished using an alternative model (e.g., computational, human, invertebrate, in vitro).

3. Minimization of Pain and Distress (Vertebrate Animals Section)

Describe the interventions to minimize discomfort, distress, pain, and injury. These include analgesia, anesthesia, sedation, palliative care, and humane endpoints.

4. Method of Euthanasia (Cover Page Supplement / PHS Fellowship Supplemental Form)
Provide a justification for methods of euthanasia that are not consistent with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals. If answer is "No" to the question "Is method consistent with AVMA guidelines?", describe the method and provide scientific justification in the text field provided.

Please see NIH's new <u>online training module</u> on the Vertebrate Animals Section (VAS) in grant applications.

Here you will find an overview of the requirements, a checklist for applicants & reviewers , detailed instructions, & responsibilities of applicants, reviewers & NIH staff. [see: **https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/VASchecklist.pdf**]

NIH—Turning Discovery in Health

Also, please consider applying to the **Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program**. Here you will find more details, including qualifications for becoming an ECR: **https://public.csr.nih.gov/ForReviewers/ BecomeAReviewer/ECR**
CSR website: **https://public.csr.nih.gov/**

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Case Study in Review Integrity: Embellished Credentials in a Grant Application

Have you ever been tempted to embellish your credentials in a grant application? What about fabricating credentials? Would this be a case of research misconduct or a violation of review integrity? These can be costly errors, as shown by the case described below (inspired by a true story; we've changed details and fictionalized names).

An NIH program official received a formal letter from the Chancellor of a prestigious health sciences center. Specifically, the letter stated that the university found that Dr. Edison, a Department Chair, had made the following false claims in his Curriculum Vitae for his job application and his bio sketch in NIH grant applications:

- authorship of numerous publications,
- membership in a prestigious scientific professional society, and
- having earned the Ph.D. degree from a prestigious foreign institution.

The NIH program official notified an NIH Research Integrity Officer, who in turn contacted the DHHS Office of Research Integrity (ORI). ORI also knew about the allegations but was unable to pursue them because falsified credentials are not defined as research misconduct. As per 42 C.F.R. Part 93.103, research misconduct means fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. However, ORI found evidence of ~ 30 fake publications – publications that did not exist – in Dr. Edison's resume.

But the story doesn't end here. News media reported that Dr. Edison had resigned his position at the university for a position at another. And shortly thereafter, Dr. Edison left the second university after news reporters alerted that university to his background.

[Recent studies suggest](#) that "embellishing" credentials in job applications is widespread, and we have [reason to believe](#) this extends to biosketches in NIH grant applications as well. Although ORI may not pursue allegations of falsified credentials as possible research misconduct, the NIH may pursue such allegations in NIH grant applications as possible, deliberate attempts to [violate peer review integrity](#).

If the NIH determines that credentials in an NIH grant application are false, the NIH may take any number of actions, including removing the scientist from NIH peer review service, contacting the scientist's institution, withdrawing the scientist's NIH grant applications or discontinuing his/her funding, and/or referring the matter to the NIH Office of Management Assessment for possible referral to the Office of the Inspector General for consideration for suspension and debarment.

In the end, Dr. Edison's grants were discontinued, totaling over $400,000 a year, and his applications were withdrawn. Dr. Edison's current whereabouts are unknown.

Want to read other peer review case studies in the series? Check [all of them out here](#).
Dr. Michael Lauer is NIH's Deputy Director for Extramural Research, serving as the principal scientific leader and advisor to the NIH Director on the NIH extramural research program. Check out his article "Open Mike" at NIH Extramural Nexus
https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2020/05/21/case-study-in-review-integrity-embellished-credentials-in-a-grant-application/

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Compliance Corner >>>

The University of Tennessee encourages **international collaborations**, but it is important for our investigators to be transparent about their foreign relationships and activities. The University of Tennessee's Office of Research has compiled the following information to provide guidance and resources to assist University of Tennessee researchers in meeting their compliance obligations to federal sponsors. International Sponsored Program Activities

Through the end of September, Cornerstone on Demand has provided access to a newly developed learning module in K@TE titled: ***Recognizing and Mitigating Unconscious Bias***

http://taes.utk.edu/upload/AgRsch/SponsoredPrograms/RecognizingandMitigatingUnconsciousBias-June26-September302020.pdf

USDA Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

Intellectual Property Agreement

Changes in federal regulations require the University of Tennessee to have written agreements with all employees who work on federally funded projects. The intent of the change is to make sure employees disclose and assign ownership to inventions made using federal funding.

In order to comply with this new legal requirement, the university is requiring that all current faculty, staff, and student employees review and electronically sign an agreement to the Statement of Policy on Patents, Copyrights, and Other Intellectual Property, **UT Board Policy BT0024,** by August 31.

Anyone involved in a Sponsored Programs project should sign this system policy. If you have not completed the Intellectual Property Agreement, please take a minute to do so at this link:

Review & Sign the Policy Here

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UPCOMING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Plan now to take advantage of USDA NIFA opportunities in FY 2021!

AFRI Foundational Science RFA for Upcoming Years has been Released!

RFA FY 2021 and 2022 | **AFRI Deadlines FY 2021 and 2022**

Also, if you meet **eligibility criteria for New Investigators,** take advantage of these opportunities now offered:

New Investigator Standard Grant and New Investigator Seed Grant

Notify aggrant@utk.edu NOW with your plans to apply!!!

Watch your e-mail for UTIA Office of Sponsored Programs weekly funding opportunities digest!

> The **UTK Faculty Development Team** has also launched a weekly funding digest featuring information from the NIH Digest, round-ups from the Corporate and Private Foundations Office, limited submissions, and internal opportunities. **Sign up to receive the digest here.**

> Use Pivot to search and save funding opportunities, set up funding alerts, or manage your scholar profile using your UT NetID. Use the Foundation Directory Online to search a database of the 10,000 largest private, community, and corporate foundations in the U.S.

> UTK's Office of Research and Engagement's Management of **Limited Submission Funding Opportunities** has a listserv (link) that you can subscribe to.

- **USDA NIFA:** https://nifa.usda.gov/page/search-grant

- **NIH:** http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding_program.htm

- **Non-NIH Opportunities for Predoctoral & Graduate Researchers:** *link*

- **Postdoctoral Non-NIH Opportunities:** https://www.fic.nih.gov/Funding/NonNIH/Pages/postdoctoral.aspx

- **NSF:** http://www.nsf.gov/funding/index.jsp

- **Grants.gov:** http://www.grants.gov/

- **Tennessee State Government Rural Task Force:** https://www.tn.gov/ruraltaskforce/search-for-grants---resources.html

- **Rural Assistance Center:** Various TN Funding Opportunities at http://www.raconline.org/states/tennessee/funding

- **Philanthropy News Digest (Foundation Center):** http://philanthropynewsdigest.org/

- **Morris Animal Foundation:** http://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/researchers/

- **Grant Resources in Science, Math, and Integrated STEM:** http://stemgrants.com/stem-grants-for-universities-and-colleges/

UTIA Office of Sponsored Programs Facebook & Twitter pages are avenues we use to keep you up to date with the ever changing events in Research Administration.

Find us on **Facebook**

FOLLOW US ON **twitter**

An additional source of information is our web page. (link)
You may submit questions, ideas or suggestions for improvements of our
newsletter to aggrant@utk.edu.

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