UTIA INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
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Office of Sponsored Programs Newsletter

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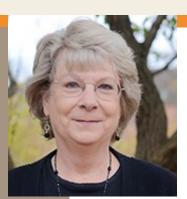
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Message from the Director

> Happy Fall and the last newsletter in 2016!
I'm sure you enjoyed Doug Hayes' Part I of Preparing "Big Grants": *How to Lead a Team Effort* in our July newsletter. In this issue you can read Part II: *"Battle Plan" for Writing the "Big Grant"* where Doug provides suggestions on developing a timeline for handling a big proposal.

Program evaluation can certainly add value to your proposal and NIMBios makes that case in the article they contributed to this issue.

We are pleased to have a contribution from another faculty member, Dr. Neal Stewart. Hopefully, you attended Drs. Stewart and Stephen Kania's workshop on Responsible Conduct of Research held September 29. Dr. Stewart's article discusses integrity as a best practice and enforcement as the opposite. A

big thanks goes to Jane Burns for arranging the workshop and other brown bag learning opportunities held throughout the year.

In her Compliance Corner, Jane Burns includes the Biosafety Annual Report for FY2016. In addition, you'll find a link to the University's new UT Policy on Misconduct in Research and Service and more information about RCR training requirements.

In an effort to get to know our staff, Traci Stanley has included a short bio.

Don't forget to look over the funding opportunities and contact Karin if you would like some help in identifying additional opportunities. She has included information on Pivot which is available to all UT employees and students.

We look forward to receiving feedback on our newsletter and are especially grateful to our contributors.

Thank You,

Debbie Hampstead

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> Part II: "Battle Plan" for writing the "Big Grant"

So, you have now decided that your team is ready, and that you will apply for the "big grant".
What should you do first? My suggestion would be to quickly:

1) Contact OSP, providing them as much information as you can: RFA, deadline, proposed beginning and end date for your project, title and short synopsis/abstract, team membership, subcontracts etc., and meet briefly with the Coordinator assigned to your proposal to discuss budgetary and matching fund-related issues, timelines, logistics, etc., in general terms;

2) Sketch a timeline for milestones relating to the proposal. For instance, I would identify 1 month before the due date, or earlier, as the deadline for finishing the first draft of the proposal narrative;

3) Prepare an initial email communication to your team.

As the PD, there are several items that need to be to be taken care of as soon as possible:

• The team membership needs to be finalized.

• A management structure for your team is needed. (e.g., Assistant PDs, leaders for each participating university or institute, leaders for given objectives of the research plan, etc.)

• If required, matching funds need to be raised and amounts and the nature of the contributions clarified. The RFA should be consulted for the proper documentation needed. (Prepare draft of the letters for your matching fund donors, that they can edit.) Schedule time for phone calls and/or visits to the potential donors.

• Particularly if businesses are involved, arrangements should be made through OSP to ensure that intellectual property-related issues are resolved between UTIA and subcontractors.

• As PD, you should prepare the budget (and justification narrative) for your portion of the project in a form that you and the OSP Coordinator can work with, in addition to your investigator-related documents: biosketch, conflict-of-interest, current-and-pending, etc.

• Start preparing an outline of the draft. Identify sections that need to be delegated to your co-PIs.

• Set up a meeting for your project team to discuss the proposal, lay out logistics and deadlines, etc. Make use of "doodle" for scheduling and UT's Zoom system to allow off-site investigators to participate remotely. The meeting should take place at least 2 months before the deadline. Keep the meeting short (about an hour) and be prepared!

• You and the OSP Coordinator should identify the ambiguities in the RFA, and collaborate on an email message to be sent to the agency's Program Manager to receive clarification.

• You should meet with your Assistant co-PD(s) and hold a frank discussion on their roles and duties relating to the proposal and project (if funded). Make plans to meet on a regular (e.g., weekly) basis.

• You will need several items from your co-PIs. It is best to identify the needed items and communicate them to your teammates as soon as possible (with deadlines), to give them the maximum amount of time to complete:

  ∗ Budget drafts and justification narrative. Send them yours as an example.

  ∗ For team members outside of UTIA, have them identify a Coordinator at their institute who will handle the paperwork for the subcontract (and pass this info on to your UTIA OSP Coordinator).

  ∗ Investigator documents, using yours to serve as an example. (You will need to work with the OSP coordinator to mechanize the receipt and storage of the documents. Dropbox and UTIA sharepoint sites are options.)

  ∗ Provide them the proposal draft outline, and have them write their respective sections.

  ∗ Find out their schedule during the time leading up to the submission deadline. (Are they leaving the country, or taking an extended vacation?)

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Once these things take place, the PD can catch their breath for a couple of days as they wait for deliverables to be returned from their co-PIs. **But, there are a few items that need to be addressed during the temporary lull.**

1) Prepare a plan for processing the budgetary information to come in. You should be able to keep track of "ballpark" estimates of the budgets and matching, making sure that cumulative budget ceilings are not surpassed and matching funds are sufficient.

2) Are there any key figures (e.g., conceptual diagrams of your project, graphical abstracts, etc.) that need to be drafted?

3) Draft the auxiliary documents, such as facilities and equipment, postdoc or student training plans, data management plans, etc.

4) Make plans and arrangements for the editing of your proposal draft. Will you need a technical writer to help with polishing the document? Identify reviewers ("other sets of eyes") inside and outside of the team that work in a related research area, are familiar with the funding agency and program, and/or have expertise with "big grants." Consider using the UTIA Orange Team Review. Reviewers should be given a mature proposal draft at least 2-3 weeks in advance.

A critical period occurs next: the writing of the first proposal draft. It is best that you as PD prepare the document, leveraging the writing provided by your co-PDs. Plan for at least 2 weeks of uninterrupted quiet time in your schedule. (Consider writing your proposal at an off-campus site.) Determine the role that you want your Assistant PDs to play in the writing process. **And to further emphasize, have the draft completed at least 1 month before the deadline.** I would give myself at least one day to step away from the proposal preparation process, to recharge your batteries, and to celebrate!

After the proposal first draft is completed, the work that remains is hardly finished. A lot of editorial changes will be needed. As you await for proposal edits and reviews to come in from your teammates (and perhaps outside reviewers, who are more likely to review a 2nd draft), it would be good to meet with the OSP Coordinator, to check on the progress of the budget, documentation from co-investigators and subcontractors, letters of support, etc. Final deadlines should be set for the team's deliverables to the OSP. Be in communication with outside reviewers and the technical writer, to make sure they know when the 2nd draft is coming to them, and to confirm deadlines and their specific tasks. **The 2nd draft of the proposal should be completed at least 2.5 weeks in advance.** Then, give yourself another short period of rest.

The final two weeks before the submission deadline can be hectic. As PD, your schedule should be blocked off. In addition to retooling the proposal to address reviewer comments, **expect to encounter the unexpected.** Often as the OSP Coordinators assemble the proposal documents near the deadline, they discover that a change will be needed in the budget or documentation format. You will need to make yourself available to assist. You will need to chase down that final letter of support or co-investigator biosketch. Even after you submit the 'final' version of the proposal documents to the OSP Coordinator (hopefully at least 2 days in advance), you should make sure that you are available to the Coordinator in case of an emergency. After the proposal is submitted, send the narrative draft and the identification number given to the proposal by the granting agency to your co-PIs as a courtesy. Send thank-you email(s) to the stakeholders involved with your proposal: the OSP Coordinator, reviewers, technical writers, matching fund donors, the colleague who taught your class to free you up for proposal writing, etc., and your family, who allowed you the time and freedom to pursue the "big grant."

In summary, leading the preparation of a "big grant" is a challenging journey that requires self-commitment, dedicated teammates, and compelling, transformative research to solve a grand challenge. I believe UTIA is fertile ground that will support such a venture, providing scientific collaborators, a highly efficient Office of Sponsored Program, and an opportunity for gathering the necessary resources. **It is now your turn; go for it!**

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COMPLIANCE CORNER >>>

by Jane Burns

Upcoming Learning Opportunity—Mark your calendar for the next compliance lunch:

  IT Security: Sandy Lindsey, UTIA Chief Information Security Officer

                  Tuesday, November 8, 2016, Noon - 1:00 pm, 156/157 Plant Biotechnology Building

Previous Learning Workshops – can be found at the OSP website at the Workshops and Learning Opportunities page.

BIOSAFETY: The Biosafety Program Annual Report for FY2016 illustrates the activities, accomplishments, and future goals of the Biosafety Program. The report can also be found at the Biosafety website (see 'IBC Announcements'). Please let Brian Ranger (branger@utk.edu or 865-974-1938) know if you have any questions.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT IN RESEARCH (RCR)

- **New Policy –** Dr. DiPietro shared the new University of Tennessee policy and procedures on responsible conduct in research and scholarly activities, which **took effect Sept. 15**. See UT Policy on Misconduct in Research and Service.
- **Training Requirements** – As noted in Dr. Stewart's article, USDA NIFA now requires RCR training of participants, even for Formula Funds projects.

> **USDA NIFA requires program directors, faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and any staff participating in the research project** receive appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research.

NSF and certain NIH projects also require RCR training. UTIA offers online training at CITI or through the for-credit UT course Research Ethics for the Life Sciences. For more information, see the UTIA RCR website or contact Jane Burns (janeburns@utk.edu or 865-974-7375).

NIMBioS >>>

> Power Pack your Grant Proposals

Want to make your grant proposals stand out from the rest and secure funding? Wish you had a solid tip that can get your proposal more attention from funding agents? Then consider using a program evaluator as an aid in your funding attempt. A strong program evaluation can be an essential piece of a successful proposal. Funding agencies are under ever increasing pressure to be certain that their investments are supporting the research and development as planned. Involving a program evaluator in the beginning stages of your proposal writing to assist in defining research goals, measurement tools, and assessments can give you a competitive advantage. Program evaluators design theory of change or logic models to create a visual that communicates activities and outcomes and road maps the return on investment (ROI) for funding agencies. Proposal reviewers often look for evaluation designs that are proactive and fluid allowing for formative assessments and modifications throughout the duration of funding. Plans to scale up and expand the scope of influence opens the door to sustainable programs and organizations. In our increasingly interdependent world, funding agencies are also interested in the broader impacts of your research looking to authenticate and support the fidelity of impact for continued success. Evaluation plans that clearly define these aspects in your grant proposal stand out as exceptional to funding agents and merit superior consideration. A strong program evaluation plan can give you a leg up on your competition. Power pack your next grant proposal with a program evaluator and increase your chance to secure funding.

> Office of Sponsored Programs spotlight is on Traci Stanley

My name is **Traci Stanley** and I am a coordinator in UTIA's Office of Sponsored Programs. I received my M.A. in history from Indiana University and my B.A. in history and American studies from Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. In 2013, my husband and I moved to Knoxville from the Washington, DC area. Prior to moving here I coordinated visiting scholar programs at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies and federal grant programs at the Institute of Museum and Library Services. I enjoy spending time with my family (including my son Wyatt), dabbling in photography, and taking in the beautiful outdoors of east Tennessee.

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> Two Sides of the Research Integrity Coin

Funders of research, institutions, and researchers themselves all have high expectations of pushing back the frontiers of science by creating knowledge, inventions and innovations. In an increasingly competitive environment, it seems researchers are being asked to do more and more with less and less. The expectations for high impact publications, indeed, the production of research with real impact appear to have no ceiling. Metrics to 'get ahead' in science are all geared towards tangible research products, including funding. In the best possible world, the best science is done by the best researchers using the best practices.

Best practices of research are enabled by integrity. We can think of a research enterprise as a Boeing 777—for either one to take flight, all systems must be operating together and in high performance. If a rivet or two are lost on the wing, maybe the plane will still fly, but as more and more components are compromised, the entire vessel will crash. Nobody wants to board an aircraft that is just 'good enough' to make it to the next airport. The FAA requires that an airplane have integrity or it's grounded.

We can see two sides of the integrity coin—heads is best practices and tails is enforcement. When we teach research integrity, as we did in a half-day workshop sponsored by UT AgResearch and hosted by Jane Burns, Stephen Kania and I defined research misconduct, but we reiterated that best practices yields the best science. Being a conscientious, compassionate and empathetic mentor goes a long way towards creating an excellent research team producing excellent papers. Understanding the ins and outs of data management, conflicts-of-interests, peer review, authorship, and collaboration sets the professionals apart from the amateurs. The pros think about and practice integrity. They produce the best science.

The other side of the coin is the bad cop—reporting, investigation, adjudication, and sanctions for research misconduct, which are generally grouped in categories of falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism (FFP). UT has recently rolled out a much anticipated research policy update that modernizes policies and procedures dealing with research integrity ([LINK](#)). Not surprisingly, the vast majority of the document deals with the tails side of the coin. The document appears to be a thorough treatise on how seriously UT takes research misconduct. Indeed, U.S. funding agencies increasingly require universities to have such plans in process, as well as training for grant-funded researchers. For a long time, the NIH mandated training in responsible conduct in research (RCR) for training and career development grants. In 2010 NSF mandated RCR training. And perhaps most important for UTIA, as of 2013, the USDA NIFA now requires RCR training for all people on extramural research. RCR is now even a requirement for USDA formula funding. There is no doubt that soon, all federal agencies will require all personnel at all institutions receiving research grants participate in RCR training, including undergraduates. I believe RCR mandates are a serendipitous development to trigger institutions to innovate on how to do better science—the best science by practicing integrity.

> *Research integrity is the commitment—sometimes in the face of adversity—to the trustworthiness of the research process by the greater scientific community. It is important—even critical—because the greater scientific community can only innovate and flourish when its members function together as a body to ensure a climate that promotes **confidence** and **trust** in our research findings, encourages free and **open exchange** of research materials and **new ideas**, upholds personal and corporate **accountability**, and **acknowledges** and respects the **intellectual contributions of others** in the greater community.*
>
> *- Webguru.neu.edu/professionalism/research-integrity*

#FundingOpp >>>

- **NIH:** http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding_program.htm
- **USDA AFRI:** https://nifa.usda.gov/page/search-grant
- **NSF:** http://www.nsf.gov/funding/index.jsp
- **Grants.gov:** http://www.grants.gov/
- **Rural Assistance Center:** Various TNFunding 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://www.cesa2.org/programs/stem/STEMgrants.cfm
- **Non-NIH Opportunities for Predoctoral & Graduate Researchers:** https://www.fic.nih.gov/FUNDING/NONNIH/Pages/predoctoral-graduate.aspx
- **Postdoctoral Non-NIH Opportunities:** https://www.fic.nih.gov/Funding/NonNIH/Pages/postdoctoral.aspx

Upcoming Deadlines:
- **Tennessee Soybean Promotion Board** - Due Date to OSP with intention to apply by **October 14th.**
- **NRA** Foundation — DUE to OSP by **November 30th**

> *Pivot Open to Campus Research Community*

The Office of Research and Engagement provides the UT research community with Pivot, a research resource that integrates funding and collaborator discovery in one online tool. Pivot's content includes $44 billion in funding opportunities and more than 3 million detailed scholar profiles with options for sharing, organizing, and collaborating around funding opportunities.

Researchers, staff, and students now can use this tool on any UT workstation or network by visiting the Pivot homepage. Access to Pivot's full functionality, including creating and managing your scholar profile, saving funding opportunities, and setting up funding alerts, requires a Pivot account. (Read more)

OSP Office Left to Right: *Rumira Xhaferaj, Jane Burns, Will Helmrath, Debbie Hampstead, Karin Langan, Cathy Creswell, Kathy Dalton, Shirley Phillips, Courtney Holbert, Traci Stanley*

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.

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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