Electronic Proposal Development Coming Soon

The PennERA (Electronic Research Administration) team is gearing up for a fall 2006 pilot release of the Proposal Development application for use by investigators and other research personnel.

Anticipated benefits of the Proposal Development module include:

- Reduction in time/cost to prepare and submit proposals to sponsors
- Streamlining internal review and approval of proposals
- Integration of funding opportunities and investigator profiles with proposals
- Standardization of templates
- Electronic submission of proposal data

To ensure that the application meets the needs of Penn’s research community, a core team that includes members from School/Centers across Penn has been meeting regularly, and a faculty advisory group with representatives from the Schools has been identified. In addition, the PennERA team has been meeting with Schools/Centers individually to provide demos of the application and to discuss routing and approval as well as training options. The Research Reps will function as an advisory group to assist in implementation. After evaluation of the pilot, subsequent releases of Proposal Development are anticipated.

More information about PennERA

Additional updates about PennERA will be provided throughout the project. For the most current information,
Elvina Woodard Joins ORS

We are pleased to announce the addition of a new Assistant Director for Financial Reporting and Invoicing to the Post Award area of ORS. Elvina Woodard brings 20 years of sponsored projects administration experience to her new position. Effective August 1, the desks managed by Flossie Graziola and Kristina Rytsar will be overseen by Elvina. As of October 1, she will also assume oversight responsibilities for the desks managed by Grace Beattie and Latasha Towles. Impacted departments should still work with their accountant as they have in the past. In situations where they would have contacted Kim Garrison or Jim Clavin, they will begin to contact Elvina (as of the effective dates). We are making every effort to make the transition as smooth as possible. The addition of Elvina will better enable ORS to respond to departmental inquiries in as timely a manner as possible.

We hope that you will all join us in welcoming Elvina to Penn.

Change to the Accounting Procedures of Non-Federal Sponsors

Since many of the University’s non-federal sponsors, (commercial entities, foundations and associations) do not reimburse Penn for Facility & Administrative (F&A) costs at the negotiated federal rate, and some do not reimburse for any F&A costs, in 2004, the University changed its accounting practices in order to recover more of these costs. Based upon a recent review of these procedures, we have determined that School and Departmental Administrative Costs (Object Code 5298) are eligible for F&A (overhead) costs. As a result, a new object code has been established for these charges.

Effective immediately, School and Departmental Administrative Costs for non-federal sponsors should be charged to Object Code 5299 instead of 5298 as in the past. These charges will incur Facilities and Administrative charges at the appropriate rate for the project. **Object Code 5298 should not be used in the future for any purpose.**

As always, the terms and conditions of each award will be reviewed by ORS at set up. Any required adjustment to these procedures for specific awards will be addressed at that point.
Simplified Non-Monetary Agreement Review Form (NMARF)

It is widely known that the processing of research proposals for external funding requires the preparation and submission of a completed Proposal Transmittal and Approval Form (PTAF). The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that such proposals seeking external funding comply with Penn financial and research compliance policies.

However, there are a variety of agreements related to Penn research, which do not directly result in external research funding. In the case of agreements which did not result in direct research funding, it is possible that a research proposal transmittal form was not prepared and submitted, since no financial approvals were necessary. The primary reason for excusing the use of the PTAF for these agreements was the administrative burden involved in preparing a PTAF. Such agreements include collaboration agreements without external sponsor funding, research supply agreements of materials, with no financial component, and data licenses. More recently, data use agreements and human tissue transfer agreements are being used with increasing frequency; these agreements usually do not involve any external funding. ORS has characterized these as Non-monetary Agreements.

With the increasing need to ensure compliance in research activities and to track more carefully Non-monetary Agreements, ORS has developed a simplified Non-monetary Agreement Review Form (NMARF) to use with such Agreements. The reasons for this are as follows:

1. Non-monetary Agreements may involve issues requiring departmental and school approval, such as use of space, equipment, security plans, availability of funding, and faculty commitment.
2. Certain agreements may involve the use of funds from other sources to support the activities under Non-monetary agreement and may involve third party rights. The use of such funds still requires approval from departments and schools to ensure that no inappropriate use of funds dedicated to other projects is ensuing.
3. Compliance and monitoring for regulatory affairs, conflict of interest and other policies are advanced by use of the NMARF.
4. The NMARF will ensure proper notice and tracking of agreements so that all necessary parties are aware of the activities and any needed approvals.

The NMARF is posted on the ORS website at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/docs/Non-monetaryreview.doc. Any questions should be directed to Don Deyo, Director of Corporate Contracts at deyo@pobox.upenn.edu.
We are pleased to announce that Penn has once again ended the fiscal year with the achieved goal of no delinquent FSR’s. This resulted from the significant and coordinated efforts of Penn departments and ORS.

Many thanks to all who are involved in sponsored projects administration at Penn.

For More Information on Grants.gov and Electronic Submissions Click Here

Congratulations to ORS Desk Accountant JACK KETTERLINUS CPA who was issued his CPA license in July!
UPCOMING TRAINING

Using PureEdge Viewer and Preparation of NIH Electronic Grant Applications

The Office of Research Services is pleased to announce that hands-on training using the PureEdge Viewer and SF424(R&R) forms to prepare NIH electronic grant applications will be offered on the following dates:

Monday, August 7   2:00-4:00 PM
Monday, August 21  2:00-4:00 PM

The classes will be held in the Franklin Building, Room 409.

Because of the hands-on nature of this training, attendance is limited to fourteen participants per class. The goal of this first round of hands-on training is to prepare faculty and business administrators to submit applications through Grants.gov for NIH programs with deadline dates on or before October 1, 2006. These include the R18/U18 and R25 grant mechanisms, as well as the mechanisms that have already transitioned including the STTR/SBIR applications, R03, R21, R33 and R34 grant mechanisms. Therefore, faculty and business administrators meeting this criterion will be given priority should the number of registrants exceed the number of available places. Additional hands-on training will be conducted to accommodate faculty and business administrators who will be using Grants.gov to submit NIH applications due after October 1, 2006.

To register for one of these classes, please call (215) 898-5624.
ORS Monthly Quick Quiz

Answers can be found within Andy Rudczynski’s memorandum “Authorization and Approval of Sponsored Projects Transactions”
Click here to view.

1) Cost Transfers must be made within:
   a. 120 days from the date the charge was originally incurred.
   b. 90 days from the month-end in which the expense was charged to the fund.
   c. 90 days from the end date of the award.

2) Monthly financial statements must be reviewed for accuracy and completeness no later than:
   a. 90 days from each month end (but monthly is recommended).
   b. The end date of the award.
   c. 60 days after the end of the award.

3) All expenditures of project funds must be authorized by the PI.
   a. True
   b. False

4) All cost transfers must be certified by the PI.
   a. True
   b. False

5) All cost transfers must supported with a full explanation which answers which of the following?
   a. Why was the expense originally charged to the fund from which it is being transferred?
   b. If the receiving fund is a sponsored project: Why should the expense be transferred to the receiving fund?
   c. Both of the above.
Frequently Asked Questions
What should I look for in a Notice of Award?

Most notices of award address these points:

- **Period of Performance.** These dates may not coincide with the dates of the total project period.

- **Name of the Principal Investigator.** This individual is responsible for conducting the project in accordance with University policies and sponsor requirements.

- **Dollars Committed and/or Obligated.** Not all project funds may be released at the beginning of the project but may be obligated incrementally. The sponsor is under no legal obligation to pay dollars not yet obligated.

- **Future Year Commitments.** These funds are contingent on their availability and on satisfactory progress on the project. Use these amounts for planning purposes.

- **Cost Sharing.** If the sponsor requires the University to contribute its own resources to the project, it usually specifies those requirements in the award notice. Accounting and reporting on these costs is a formal requirement for the University.

- **Accounting and Reporting Obligations.** Virtually all awards require technical and financial reports. Most awards require patent and property reports.

- **Deliverables.** Under some contracts, the University must deliver specified work products to the sponsor.

- **Payment to University.** Awards specify how the University will be funded or reimbursed by the sponsor.

- **Special Terms and Conditions.** The award may have additional terms and conditions which may specify such things as key personnel, limitations on availability or use of funds, need for prior approvals and similar additional oversight by the awarding agency. It is critical to understand these restrictions before incurring costs. Both the PI and the responsible BA must take note of these requirements in addition to reading all referenced documents within the award notice.
Did You Know.......??

...On July 10, 2006, Andy Rudczynski issued a memorandum titled “Authorization and Approval of Sponsored Projects Transactions; Cost Transfers to Correct Clerical or Bookkeeping Errors” which should be reviewed by everyone involved in Sponsored Projects Administration at Penn.  Click here to view.

...The new END DATE VALIDATION for sponsored projects will be implemented August 1, 2006. It is very important that anyone responsible for payroll on sponsored projects carefully review the details of this change.  See June 2006 Newsletter for more information.

...All ORS Newsletters are available on the ORS website and can be accessed at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/newsletter.html.

...NIH recently revised their newly issued “Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Usage of Person Months”. This can be viewed at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/person_months_faq.htm. A “Percent of Time and Effort to Person Months Calculator” can be accessed at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/person_months_conversion_chart.xls.

Training Opportunities:

Sponsored Programs at Penn:  Next Session - Fall 2006
This is a workshop which covers the fundamentals of Sponsored Projects Administration at Penn. Topics include Proposal Preparation & Processing, Contract Negotiation, Award Acceptance and Account Set-up, Financial Compliance & Allowability, Post Award Management, Reporting Tools and Data Sources, Closeouts, and Audits. Please visit http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/training.html in mid August for more information.

ORS Quizzes and FAQ’s:
Take a moment to look at our quizzes or FAQ section for more guidance on administering 5-funds here at Penn. Both can be accessed by clicking Training on our home page (http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/).

Research Compliance Tutorials and Other Education:
For further guidance on administering 5-funds here at Penn, please visit the Research Compliance Training and Education page at http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rc/pages/training.htm.
Getting to Know......
Elvina Woodard
Assistant Director, Financial Reporting and Invoicing

Time at Penn: 3 weeks
Time in Research Services: 3 weeks

ORS Responsibilities: Post Award Administration including management of Financial Reporting and Invoicing Group.

Hobbies/Interests: Playing Scrabble, Pinochle and the Stock Market

Favorite Restaurant: Maggiano’s

Favorite ways to spend a vacation: On a cruise ship.

What Co-workers say:
...She is professional, courteous, and easy to talk to. She enjoys Broadway performances, shopping and spending time with her mother and two daughters.

...She is very bright, knowledgeable and pleasant to work with. She is a great addition to ORS!

...Elvina has a positive attitude and brings great energy to ORS.

July’s Contributing Authors, ORS Newsletter:

Donald Deyo, Director, Corporate Contracts, Office of Research Services
Teresa Leo, PennERA/PennERS Communications Specialist, Information Systems and Computing
Kerry Peluso, Director of Post Award Financial Administration, Office of Research Services
Andrew B. Rudczynski, Associate Vice President for Finance and Executive Director, Office of Research Services
Todd Swevely, Associate Director –Penn ERA, Project Manager, Office of Research Services
Pre-Award Administration Staff

The Pre-award staff is responsible for processing proposals, reviewing, negotiating, and accepting awards (except for corporate contracts), as well as, providing post-award non-financial administration for these accounts. Questions concerning issues such as no-cost extensions, carryover requests and other administrative matters should be directed to the appropriate pre-award contact. Questions concerning industrial clinical trial agreements and sponsored research agreements should be addressed to the Corporate Contracts Group.

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---continued---

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Post-Award Administration Staff

The main functions handled by these ORS staff members are the preparation of financial invoices and reports, coordination of audits, collection of receivables, cash management functions, and close outs of funds. The Federal Compliance Group handles facilities and administrative costs, employee benefit rates, effort reporting, and compliance issues. Contact Information for all areas is provided below.

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  • Chemical Engineering
  • Mechanical Engineering
  • Materials Science & Engineering
• Minority Programs
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About Our Organization...

Our Mission

The Office of Research Services (ORS) oversees the administrative support of the University’s externally funded research and is responsible for implementation of University policies established for this purpose. An important part of the ORS mission is service to the research faculty, through the provision of information and advice for the development of applications, and assistance in the administration of awarded grants and contracts.

In this role, ORS

- Supports the schools and centers in the development of proposals for grants and contracts;
- Reviews and approves all proposals before submission to the potential sponsor;
- Coordinates negotiations of awards;
- Accepts awards for the University, including the signing of contracts;
- Provides oversight and guidance to faculty and staff concerning the proper management of sponsored projects;
- Prepares all financial reports to sponsors.

In addition to these functions, ORS is responsible for billing of contracts, management of letters of credit for payment of grants, preparation of the facilities & administrative and employee benefit rate proposals and rate negotiations, management of the effort reporting system, and oversight of service center rate development. ORS reports jointly to the Vice President for Finance & Treasurer and Vice Provost for Research.

Office of Research Services
Quick Contact List:

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http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/ (see bottom right corner)