

Office of Research News Briefs

Kennesaw State University



Professors Army Lester and Premila Achar with LSAMP students in front of the Taj Mahal, July 2013.

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SmartGrant

Named so because it is not dumb. We promise.

The Office of Research has implemented a new grants management system, SmartGrant. New software always seems to have a certain amount of foreboding in tow and I understand we must seem especially cruel right now. You have enough to worry about what with teaching, writing, and you know, actually doing research. Skepticism is only natural in an environment that is constantly asking you to fill out forms and learn new systems. But SmartGrant is only here to help. Here’s how:

Routing. Are you tired of filling out a paper form and running it around campus to win your Chair and Dean’s signatures, not to mention co-PIs, leaving it with the assistant and monitoring its movement? Save the treasure hunt for your family reunion and fill out your pro-

posal information online, then send it on for approval with a click of a button. Not sure who still needs to sign? SmartGrant automatically populates the approval list and sends an email to you when it moves to the next person. Spare the soles of your shoes and spend the extra time working on your proposal.

Budget Development. Up-to-date salary information. Live data. Automatic Indirects calculation. No more emailing spreadsheets back and forth only to realize that a formula is corrupted. (Well, that last one is mainly for us.)

Reporting. Now you can keep track of all your proposals, what’s been submitted, awarded, and unfairly overlooked by the agency.

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FY 2014 SO FAR

Proposals Submitted 186

Proposals Awarded 96

(including submissions from FY13)

\$7,814,706
in Awards

Carolyn's Corner

By Carolyn Elliott-Farino

Why is the Office of Research so fussy about ensuring that costs are allowable? Aside from the fact that we like to follow the rules, carelessness in this area can cost the University a lot of money. I frequently read audit reports to get a sense of what auditors have determined to be unallowable costs. The latest report I have read is NSF's audit of Cornell's expenditures from April 2008-June 2011. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) from DHHS (Dept. of Health and Human Services, NIH's parent agency) conducted the audit for NSF and used statistical sampling methods to examine expenditures and then extrapolated unallowable costs to ALL of Cornell's NSF funding. (By the way, they have been conducting audits using these methods for a while now.) The OIG questioned 22 transactions totaling \$58,714 (direct and indirect costs) out of the sample of 100 expenditures for supplies. Questioned expenditures included those for laptops, monitors, toner cartridges, and unapproved food. This \$58,714 became \$660,669 in unallowable costs thanks to the sampling methods.

There are two lessons (at least!) here:

1) Depending on the transactions selected to be tested, a small amount of sampled unallowable costs can quickly escalate to a significant amount of money that the university must pay back to the federal government; and 2) we must closely follow the federal expenditure regulations because auditors see things in more black and white terms than do we (we tend to interpret regulations more broadly than do auditors). Link to full audit report: www.nsf.gov/oig/13-1-004-Cornell.pdf. Summary derived from Federal Grants News February 2014 (subscription only).

On another note, in case you weren't convinced of the importance of submitting program reports on time, the NSF OIG has recommended government-wide debarment of PIs who fail to submit timely reports for more than one year on multiple reports. In the case of eight PIs who were late submitting reports on multiple projects, however, NSF chose to require the submission of action plans within 30 days; failure to submit a plan would result in administrative action. Please make sure you get your reports in on time. Call or email if you need help.

*Federal Grants News December 2013/
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SmartGrant

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Award Management. Nightly updates let you see all your funds in one place. Deliverables can be set up that will send you email reminders for reports due, annual COI forms, etc. Not sure if you have enough left in your budget for that conference? SmartGrant allows you to see your most recent purchases and what's left in the pot.

So yes, it's a new interface to learn, but the Office of Research will be here to help you through the entire process. We're not abandoning you, just trying to make the external funding process a little easier. Plus, you don't have to remember a new password! You can find more information on SmartGrant by contacting the Office of Research or visiting our website.

Where
funding
connected
with
researcher
expertise
turns into
success.

Log on at
<http://pivot.cos.com>

 pivot™
funding connected

Finding Funding

Before Research and Service, there was Money

You're not alone in the neverending search for external funding for your project. The best way to get back to your project is to utilize the tools available to you and find what you need faster. The Office of Research has subscriptions to the following websites so you can find the money you need.

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Grants Resource Center

GRC has a wealth of resources from monthly emails to proposal development how-to. Just contact Kelly in the Office of Research for the username and password.

- Faculty Alert System – Identify what subjects and activities you're interested in and a bonafide human being will search for the best possible grants and email them to you monthly.
- GrantSearch – Search by Category, Academic Subjects, Activity, Sponsor, Deadline Month, and Text
- Publications
 - Bulletin – Bi-weekly listing of announcements from Grants.gov, the Federal Register, and FedBizOpps.gov
 - Deadlines – Notices of application deadlines 3 months in the future
 - GrantWeek – in-depth articles on everything you need to know about applying for grants
- Resources – Includes Agency Fact Sheets, Funded Proposals, Limited Submissions, and Annual Deadlines

Pivot (Community of Science)

- Search by keyword, location, deadlines, amounts, and much more
- Claim your profile in Pivot to tailor your search and find collaborators. Pivot will automatically find opportunities based on your information.
- Save searches and track specific opportunities - Pivot will email you updates automatically.
- You can contact Cheryl Stiles in the Library for training or ask the Office of Research for help.

Foundation Center

Specializing in Private Foundations, Foundation Directory has the scoop on grant makers that tend to be elusive. While we can't give out the login credentials, the Office of Research is happy to look up information on Foundations for you including:

Past grants funded
Types of grants funded
Board Members
Tax Filings
Fields of Interest
Eligibility Information
Geographic focus
Purpose and Activities

Upcoming Deadlines

Dreyfus Grants in the Chemical Sciences.....June 5 (LOI)
Spencer Foundation Research Grants.....June 24
NIH AREA (R15).....June 25
American Society for Microbiology.....July 1
NSF Archaeology.....July 1
NSF Linguistics Programs.....July 15
NSF Early Career Development.....July 21
NSF Catalyzing New International Collaborations.....July 22
AHA National and Affiliates Research Program.....July 23
NSF Developmental and Learning Sciences.....July 25