From the Director’s Office

Aloha Kākou,

I hope you all had a restful Spring Break.

The ORS Pre-Award and Contract staff has moved back to Sakamaki D-200. The ORS Postaward Accounting staff is scheduled to move back to Sakamaki C-200 on April 19, 2010. We would like to thank everyone for their kokua that allowed ORS to continue to function without disruption during these transition periods.

Despite ORS staff operating from a remote location and the limited resources available during the Spring Break administrative leave period, all proposals and reports were submitted in a timely manner, without delay. As the year end approaches, to facilitate ORS planning, please continue to notify the ORS Helpline if you are planning to submit proposals or anticipate an award in the near future. See ORS’ advance notice: http://www.ors.hawaii.edu/advance-notification.asp.

NIH and NSF updates are included in this month’s newsletter. In addition, the Department of Defense is proposing the implementation of safeguards on unclassified data, and comments are due on May 3, 2010. For more details, please see the article below.

Happy Discovery!

Yaa-Yin Fong
Director, ORS

eRA Commons Grant Software Changes

Two items of interest have surfaced recently with regard to the electronic management of certain federal grants.

1. Per Notice Number: NOT-OD-10-068, the NIH, AHRQ, and CDC are considering the elimination of the two-day error correction window for Grants.gov applications that pass through eRA Commons. Currently errors and warnings can be corrected with resubmissions of Grants.gov applications within two days, but the agencies have proposed the elimination of that two-day allowance to make the application deadlines firm and fair for all applicants. If the proposed change were to be implemented, it would become extremely crucial for investigators to submit proposals to ORS well in advance of the agency deadline.

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eRA Commons Grant Software Changes (continued)

The agencies are currently soliciting public comments. All are encouraged to provide opinions on this proposal to the federal government via: http://grants.nih.gov/cfdocs/era_process_changes_rfi/add.htm. The deadline for comments is April 19, 2010.

2. Per Notice Number: NOT-OD-10-072, the NIH will require the electronic submission of particular forms via the xTrain module of eRA Commons. Effective January 1, 2011, the PHS 2271 Statement of Appointment form and PHS 416-7 Termination Notice must be submitted via xTrain for the following types of awards:

- Kirschstein-NRSA undergraduate institutional training grants (T34 – appointment forms only)
- Kirschstein-NRSA predoctoral and postdoctoral institutional training grants (T32, T35, T90, TL1, and TU2)
- Kirschstein-NRSA fellowships (F30, F31, F32, and F33 – termination notices only)*
- National Library of Medicine institutional training grants (T15)
- Research education awards (R25, R90)
- Institutional career development awards (K12, KL2, KM1)

Principal investigators and their delegated assistants are the only parties with system rights to submit these types of forms. Principal investigators are encouraged to make use of the online training available at: http://era.nih.gov/services_for_applicants/other/xTrain.cfm.

References:


If you have any questions, please contact your local ORS pre-award office.

NSF FastLane is Now Accepting Microsoft 2007 Files

The National Science Foundation’s FastLane system is now accepting Microsoft 2007 files. NSF has improved its PDF services and we can now upload Microsoft 2007 files with the extra “x” on the extension (e.g. docx, xlsx, etc.). This new functionality began on March 13, 2010. Before then, we had to convert the documents to PDF format prior to uploading them.

NSF reminds us that FastLane continues to accept files in various formats and can automatically convert them to PDF format for you. Please click on the link for a full list of “Acceptable File Formats for FastLane”. For questions or assistance, please call FastLane Support at 1-800-673-6188 or send an email to FastLane@nsf.gov.
Reminder – Board of Regents’ Approval of Contracts Containing Indemnity Provisions May Cause Delay in Acknowledging Research Awards

If, as a condition of a research award, a sponsor requires the University of Hawai`i (UH) to indemnify, hold harmless or assume liability for damages or injury relating to a project, the Office of Research Services (ORS) Contract Specialists will attempt to negotiate the indemnity clause out of the award terms and conditions. If the sponsor holds firm on their indemnity requirement, ORS must consult with the UH Office of General Counsel to seek approval from the UH Board of Regents (BOR) before the award may be accepted by UH.

As a reminder, the process to submit an item to the BOR meeting agenda for approval is time sensitive and could cause a delay in the acceptance of the research award. ORS appreciates your understanding and patience with this process.

Department of Defense Proposes Safeguards on Unclassified Data; Schedules Public Meeting for Input

The Department of Defense (DoD) is considering new regulations that would require contractors and subcontractors to “safeguard” unclassified information. Two levels of safeguards – basic and enhanced – are proposed in the March 3, 2010 Federal Register advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) to amend the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS). Under the basic level, data could not be posted on public web sites. Under the enhanced level, wide use of encryption would be required.

The ANPRM, if enacted, would create a whole new category of protections and restrictions for unclassified information that in many cases approach those required for classified information. Perhaps in recognition that this action could be viewed as a major policy change, the DoD will hold a day-long public meeting on April 22, 2010 in Washington, D.C. to gather feedback.

Two Levels of Safeguards – Basic, Enhanced – Proposed

Basic requirements apply to any unclassified DOD information that has not been cleared for public release in accordance with DoD Directive 5230.09. Enhanced safeguards would be required for information that is subject to the following:

- “Critical Program Information” protection
- Export control under ITAR and Export Administration Regulations
- Controlled access and dissemination designations (e.g., Sensitive but Unclassified, For Official Use Only, etc.)

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Department of Defense Proposes Safeguards on Unclassified Data; Schedules Public Meeting for Input (continued)

- Personally identifiable information protections, including but not limited to information protected under the Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

The notice is no doubt a surprise to many in the research community. ORS will be monitoring the progress of this proposal closely.

Comments on this ANPRM should be submitted in writing no later than May 3, 2010.

For details, see: http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/2010-4173.htm

ORS Helpline Frequently Asked Questions

How do I register with eRA Commons or NSF Fastlane?

New registrations for eRA Commons or NSF Fastlane can be done through our website:

http://www.ors.hawaii.edu/era-registration.asp

Alternatively you can send an email to the ORS Helpline (helpline@ors.hawaii.edu) in order to get started with the registration process for any electronic research administration system. Please allow up to 1 business day for your request to be processed.

I forgot my account information, how can I recover it?

For NSF you can click on the “NSF ID lookup” link that is located in the FastLane login area. Enter your information in the required fields exactly as it appears in your account. The system will email you your NSF ID.

For other systems, the easiest way to recover a lost password would be to email the ORS Helpline to do a password reset.

How do I register with Grants.gov?

Registering with Grants.gov is reserved for the authorized representatives of an organization. ORS has already registered with Grants.gov and so individuals do not need to register.