Revised Grants Policies: NIH/NSF


The new policy applies to NIH Grants and Cooperative Agreements and is summarized as follows:

Competing and Noncompeting NIH R13 and U13 conference program awards issued on/after January 27, 2012 include a new term and condition which prohibits food/meal costs from being supported or charged to NIH-supported conference grants. Specifically, the following term will apply:

“Direct charges for meals/food and beverages are unallowable charges to this project.”

Conference grants awarded before January 27, 2012 with FY2012 funds will not be revised to include the modified terms and conditions, however grantees are strongly encouraged to apply the new policy broadly to all active R13 and U13 awards.

Please visit the following websites for more info.

NIH Salary Limitation Guidance

NIH has published guidance on implementation of the revised Salary Cap for FY2012 reducing the cap to executive level II, $179,700 for FY12.

The implementation of the lower salary cap is effective with FY12 awards where the initial date of the award is on or after 12/23/11. For FY12 awards issued before 12/23/11 the effective salary limitation remains at executive level I ($199,700).

*Note:* The Executive Level II Salary Cap now applies to ALL U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agencies. The governments exception are the FDA and Indian Health Service awards.

For more information please log on the Salary Cap websites below:

- **Salary Cap Summary:** [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm)

NSF Two Month Rule

In anticipation of appointments for the Summer 2012 term this is a reminder about the salary limitation rules imposed by the National Science Foundation.

NSF policy states that only two months of salary for key personnel can be charged to all NSF awards and subawards in a given year. Tufts University has defined its year as the fiscal year, July 1 – June 30. An exception applies when compensation for key personnel in excess of two months was disclosed in the proposal budget, justified in the budget justification, and specifically approved by NSF.

SPA is currently reviewing FY2011 salary expenses to NSF-funded awards to ensure compliance with this policy. If any key personnel exceed the salary limitation, SPA will work with the department to move the portion of salary over the 2-month limitation to a DeptID.

*Please see our ‘Helpful Hints’ in the margin for additional information.*

Fly America Act: Update on Foreign Travel

Under the **Fly America Act** travelers are required to use United States air carrier service for all travel funded by the US. One exception to this requirement is the **Open Skies Agreement**.

There are now four open Skies Agreements with the US in effect:

- **European Union, Australia, Switzerland, and Japan.**

Excluding the EU, you must check to ensure there is no city-pair contract fare in effect in order to use a foreign carrier.

If there is a city-pair contract in effect a US carrier must be used.

In addition, the Open Skies Agreement exception **does not apply** to travel funded by the Department of Defense.

Please contact your grant accountant with any questions, or visit: [http://apps.fas.gsa.gov/citypairs/search/](http://apps.fas.gsa.gov/citypairs/search/)
Creating New Internal Accounts for Awards

SPA is currently evaluating our existing procedure of creating a new internal grant number for subsequent years of certain types of awards, specifically those with annual reporting requirements.

The staff in SPA collectively supports the idea of updating the procedure by keeping the same internal number for all years of an award or segment.

We have reached out to many of you and are interested in hearing more about the impact this proposed change would have on those managing the awards. Please call or email Melissa Holmes with questions or feedback.

Training and Outreach

Sponsored Programs Accounting offers the following instructor-led training sessions to the Tufts Research Administration community.

- Grants Management
- The Fundamentals of Post Award Research Administration

Visit The Learning Center at http://learncenter.uit.tufts.edu to self-enroll in any of the web-based training courses (see list below) or register to attend an instructor-led class.

- A Grant Compliance Overview
- Effort Reporting at Tufts
- Expense Transfers on Grants
- The Grant Closeout Process

The Grant Management course is designed for the faculty member/Principal Investigator or department administrator who is responsible for the management of grants. Some of the topics covered include A-21 administrative costs, effort reporting, cost transfers, A-110 regulations and grant closeout.

The Fundamentals of Sponsored Research Administration course is designed for the new faculty members or department administrators just entering the grant field. It focuses on post-award administration. Topics include award lifecycle, types of agreements, types of award actions, award management and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Please contact Carol Liedes at carol.liedes@tufts.edu if you are interested in one of our training opportunities.

T-32 Roundtable

Do you manage an NIH Training Grant? Training grants are complex and can be challenging. Sponsored Programs Accounting is hosting a NIH Training Grant Round Table discussion.

Please contact Joyce Ferland, Manager of Sponsored Programs Accounting, if interested.

UPCOMING NCURA CONFERENCE

NCURA Region 1 Spring Meeting ~ Save the Date!
May 6 – 9, 2012 Newport, RI ~ for more information please visit: www.ncuraregion1.org

NCURA “YouTube” TUESDAYS

Check out NCURA’s YouTube Tuesdays at http://www.youtube.com/user/ncura1959 where each week your colleagues will be sharing tips and information on topics of interest to research administrators.

A REMINDER TO THE COMMUNITY

Please be sure that all QERs are dated when they are signed / certified. Effective 6/1/2012 any QERs that aren’t dated will be returned.

TRAINING DATES + TIMES

Grants Management
April 25th @ 9:30am (Medford)

The Fundamentals of Post Award Research Administration
April 30th @ 1:30pm (Boston)
Sackler Building Room 851

Puzzle of the Day, Enjoy!
Tips & Tools for Managing Awards

The Basics...

✔ Plan and monitor costs regularly, preferably monthly.
✔ Be mindful of where charges for unallowable A-21 items post (general office supplies, postage, printing, telephones, etc.). These items are normally unallowable on federal grants and should be allocated elsewhere (DeptID).
✔ 90 days prior to a grant ending notify the service centers (i.e. DNA, animal care) and redirect those expenses from posting to the account after the end date.
✔ When costs are shared by more than one award use an appropriate allocation methodology.
✔ Set up non-sponsored DeptID’s to hold costs to be allocated.
✔ Obtain no cost extensions prior to the end date of the original project in order to complete work after the original award period ends.

Managing P-Card Expenses – Exercising appropriate management when using p-cards for expenses can alleviate the frequency of submitting cost transfers to correct errors.

✔ Make sure your active grants are on the p-card profile. Doing so enables the p-card user to select the appropriate grant when allocating expenses.
✔ Avoid using a grant as the default account.
✔ Take advantage of the 3-week window provided to allocate expenses accordingly.

Cost Transfers

✔ Charge costs to the correct award initially and ensure they are allowable and allocable to the award.
✔ Process cost transfers in a timely manner.
✔ DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT. Provide appropriate back-up documentation needed to support the cost transfer and make the situation clear to an outside person, including:

- A description of the error and how it occurred
- A description of how the expense directly benefits the receiving award
- Certification of the correctness of the new charge by someone with direct knowledge of the sponsored activities.

✔ Review the documentation for a late cost transfer to ensure it includes an explanation for the lateness of the request.

Submitting PAFs (Personnel Action Forms)

✔ Submitting PAFs 90 days prior to a grant ending to reallocate labor posting to the grant will eliminate the need to submit recertifications.
✔ PAFs should always be used to manage the reallocation of labor. Departments should not wait for the Quarterly Effort Reports to make adjustments.

Request advance accounts whenever possible- Exercising the option of an ACWD eliminates the need to submit recertifications and/or cost transfers once a project has begun.

✔ Advance accounts, also known as “Account Creates Without Documentation (ACWD)”, provide Principal Investigators with the opportunity to initiate sponsored research projects and begin incurring associated expenses prior to institutional acceptance of an award. Advance accounts allow PIs and departments to record and track expenditures and eliminate the need to charge other unrelated funding sources in the interim.

✔ An ACWD can be requested when there is sufficient evidence from the sponsor that the agreement/award will in fact be executed, a budget is provided by the sponsor, and a DeptID is provided by the Tufts department with enough available funds to support the commitment (should the agreement/award fall through). ACWDs are requested through ORA and require BFO and ORA approval before being routed to SPA for review/approval/setup.

*As always, please call 617-636-6560 or your Grant Accountant with any questions or concerns.*
The Huron Consulting Group

The Office of Sponsored Programs Accounting and the Tufts Medical School recently engaged the services of Huron Consulting Group to evaluate our post-award processes. We look forward to their assessment and the opportunity to improve Tufts’ post-award policies and procedures, practices, and current working environment. Please stay tuned for more updates.

Staffing Announcements

Susanne Alexander

Susanne joined Sponsored Programs Accounting as a Grant Accountant on the Boston Campus on March 26, 2012. Susanne has worked as an auditor since 2007 at Stanton & Co. Inc as well as Powers & Sullivan CPA firm. Susanne has conducted single audit and program-specific audits under guidelines established by OMB Circular A-133 and OMB Circular A-21. She has assisted clients to comply with federal requirements in the most effective and efficient manner possible. She also understands the importance of partnering with our faculty, our research administrators and our sponsors. This expertise will be invaluable as we pursue our upcoming initiatives.

Sophia Kelly-Mamousette

The SPA team on the Boston Campus has a new Staff Assistant! Sophia’s first day was March 5, 2012 and comes to Tufts University with almost 8 years of experience. She previously held positions including working as the Night Accountant Auditor at the Hilton Hotel, an Office Manager at Energy Fitness & Gymnastics. Sophia also worked as an Accounts Payable / Accounts Receivable Coordinator at the Charles Hotel.

Cindy Matheson

We are pleased to announce that Cindy Matheson has joined Sponsored Programs Accounting as Assistant Manager on the Boston Campus. Cindy is a Certified Research Administrator with over 8 years of experience. She has extensive knowledge in post award administration and is a member of both the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) and the Society of Research Administrators (SRA). We are particularly excited about Cindy’s professional, customer service-based attitude with an aptitude for engaging faculty and staff in collaborative compliant solutions to complicated grant management issues. Cindy joined SPA on Tuesday, April 17th!

Do you have any information that you’d like to share? Please direct any questions or comments about the newsletter to our SPA Manager: Joyce Ferland (joyce.ferland@tufts.edu)