Good News! We’ve just posted video from our Nov. 5 Meet the Experts in NIH Peer Review for University Research Administrators on our webinar Web page.

We realized that we gave the wrong answer to one question:

Do Notices of Award always list the personnel who are considered key by the funding institute? And if so, should RPPR’s include updated Other Support only for those personnel named in the NGA? Even if the institution proposed more of the project personnel as key?

As outlined in the RPPR instructions, Under D.2.c, changes in other support, the grantee should provide updated active support for the PD/PI and for those individuals considered by the grantee to be senior/key to the project. Senior/key personnel are defined as individuals who contribute in a substantive measurable way to the scientific development or execution of the project, whether or not a salary is requested.

We weren’t sure about the answer to another question

Can the Signing Official see review scores in eRA Commons?

No. Only PIs can see their scores.

Here Are Other Q&As We Didn’t Have Time to Answer

1. Occasionally a study section will become poisoned against a grant. How do we get around institutional memory? Can we request that a grant be assigned to a SEP?

Dr. Robert Elliott said he has never seen a study section become “poisoned against a grant”, but he has seen reviewers react negatively when concerns voiced in the prior review were superficially considered (or not considered at all) in the resubmission, leading to a worsening of score for the application. To prevent this, the PI should carefully consider all comments made in the summary statement and revise/respond accordingly. Even if you do not agree with the criticism(s), you should address them and put forth a level-headed, well-reasoned argument as to why you disagree. Consulting with the assigned Program representative while making these deliberations is highly recommended. As for requesting assignment to a SEP instead, this is generally not possible as SEPs are not created for the sake of one application. However, Dr. Nakamura said that you may request that your application be assigned to another study section if that study section has the appropriate expertise, and we will make the reassignment if possible.
2. We had a faculty member apply for an R01 and be funded for an R56. We had never seen the mechanism change on an application before and were concerned if this would affect resubmission of the R01 application.

An R56 award is called a “bridge award” because it allows some NIH ICs the flexibility to grant a small amount of money to someone who would not otherwise receive the full award, based on application score and other programmatic considerations. The easiest way to think of next steps is to image that the R56 award never happened: what would you have done in that case? If you submitted a new R01 then received an R56 award, your next step would be to submit an R01 resubmission (A1) application or, because of the new NIH policy on resubmission applications, you could submit a new application instead. Just don’t submit a renewal: R56 awards cannot be renewed!

3. I see that many institutions for whom we are a sub use signed Statements of Intent to Establish a Consortium or signed PHS face pages as the upload for Consortium Arrangement. Is this indeed a satisfactory method to handle this attachment instead of something more narrative?

The signature (AOR/SO) on the application signifies that the applicant organization and all proposed consortium agreement participants understand and agree with the following statement: “The appropriate programmatic and administrative personnel of each organization involved in this grant application are aware of the NIH consortium agreement policy and are prepared to establish the necessary inter-organizational agreement(s) consistent with that policy.” The signature recognizes the requirement and assures the agency that an agreement will be established and once in place, it will follow the requirements outlined in the aforementioned statement.

4. The panel said you only have to submit JIT documents if something is likely to be funded although we have had a score of 30 (not getting funded) yet we submitted JIT documents. Can you provide more details about how an organization would know when to submit these and the timeframe for when they are due?

Applicants are notified primarily my email outlining when they need to submit the JIT information. The notification isn’t an award notice nor should applicants think -- because they are receiving the alert to submit JIT documents -- that this is any indication that the applicant has been selected for funding. The applicants should only submit the information when requested. The information should be submitted to the NIH via eRA Commons Just-In-Time module.

We wish you well in your work at your University and wish you Happy Holidays!

Don Luckett