**Research Notes**

**Vol. 3, No. 1 November 2011**

**New NSF Program**

**Science Across Virtual Frontiers (SAVI)**

The primary objective of SAVI is to facilitate collaboration among scientists and engineers from the U.S. and other countries by building on mutually beneficial partnerships that are initiated by NSF-supported teams of researchers, research institutes, and universities. Such virtual institutes are to serve as the creative hubs for innovative research and education activities across borders.

SAVI is not a stand-alone program. SAVI proposals can be submitted as a supplemental funding request to an existing award, or as part of a full proposal to the existing NSF program that best fits the proposed subject matter.

Teams of NSF-funded investigators are eligible to apply. A team can be an existing center/institute awardee or a virtual center/institute consisting of multiple individual investigators with common research/education interests. A single individual representing the team must be designated as the SAVI coordinator and his/her institution must serve as the U.S. lead institution responsible for management of a SAVI award. At the time of proposal submission, the U.S. team’s international partners should be identified and applying for funding to an appropriate funding organization in their country. SAVI awards may be bilateral or multilateral.

**BUDGET**

Requests are expected to vary from $50,000 to $400,000 per year for up to five years, including both direct and indirect costs. Recommended funding will depend upon the nature of the proposed virtual institute and the level of existing funds for SAVI-relevant activities that are already supported by active grants to U.S. SAVI team awardees. SAVI funding should be considered as the supplemental resources necessary to “glue,” realize, or catalyze a more suitable platform for the intended synergy.

**Due dates:** no specific due dates

*Sujata Jagota*

**Message from the Director**

**Two New Faces at ORSP**

I’d like to start by introducing you to the two newest members of ORSP. Please join us in welcoming them to Lehigh!

Joel Grabin came to us from Thomas Jefferson University where he was Director of Grant Management for the College of Health Professionals. Joel has an MBA from Ashford University and a BS from Penn State.

Heather Gazella joined the ORSP after working as a Grants Specialist for The Commonwealth Medical College. Heather holds a BA degree from Marywood University and also expects to complete her MPA there this year.

We’re delighted to have these two talented people join the ORSP team as Contract and Grant Specialists.

Also, this issue of *Research Notes* has a wealth of information for Lehigh researchers and their support teams. Of special interest to anyone who deals with contracts and agreements is a short article on page 2 about the new LUCA portal for contract review.

Finally, in the coming months our team will be developing and conducting training sessions for faculty and staff in all aspects of proposal preparation and grants management. We encourage everyone to provide feedback to an on-line survey that will be announced shortly. In addition to providing the basics, our goal is to also target areas that the faculty and staff identify as areas of special interest and attention. Please be sure to respond!

*Tom Meischeid, Director*

**Did You Know?**

The University is a non-profit, tax exempt institution of higher learning. Any time you use your own money for a University purchase you are incurring state sales tax. By using an approved University payment option for University expenditures, you can avoid this added expense, thereby increasing the “bang for the buck” of your research dollars.

Approved University payment options include the University Purchasing Card, limited purchase orders, and reimbursement through accounts payable. By using an approved method you can eliminate the unnecessary sales tax expense, but when using the Purchasing Card remember to inform the vendor of the tax-exempt status.
ASK ORSP

“He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.” – Chinese Proverb

Q: How do I avoid a material (negative) audit finding?

No one wants to have their grant spending scrutinized by external auditors, but inevitably that is what happens annually in order to let the government (and taxpayers) know that their dollars are being spent frugally and according to agency guidelines. Material audit findings are reported to the funding agency and could result in serious financial and programmatic penalties to the University. An audit does not have to be a stressful event, however, particularly if you take the following precautions.

Tip #1 – Avoid charging expenses that are not directly related to the research being conducted. In other words, only expenses that are attributable to a specific award should be allocated to that award. A list of expenses that generally should not be allocated direct to research funds includes:

- Administrative and secretarial salaries
- General purpose equipment
- Software
- Office Supplies
- Memberships
- Subscriptions/books
- Telephone charges
- Alcohol
- Entertainment including business meals

While there are exceptions to the rule they are rare, and you should always get pre-approval from the funding agency routed through ORSP.

Tip #2 – Avoid reallocation of expenses. While cost transfers cannot be completely eliminated, they should be avoided as much as possible. Moving funds between indexes is a sign of poor management. You can avoid reallocations by periodically reviewing your grants and assigning expenses to the appropriate index at the time the expense is incurred. When a reallocation cannot be avoided, it is important to document, document, document! Be sure to include documentation showing the original charge being incurred and a cost reallocation justification form explaining why the reallocation is necessary.

Tip #3 – Fulfill the commitment you made to the agency. This could involve providing the annual and final progress reports you committed to when you accepted the funding to perform the research. It is also important to submit the report in the time period required by the agency.

Tip #4 – Only sign effort report certifications that are an accurate reflection of the time dedicated to the project. Effort is not based on the number of hours you work. If you received 100% of your salary for the month on a research index, your effort will reflect 100% effort and you are certifying that you worked only on the research associated with that project and nothing else (i.e. you didn’t teach, write proposals, or serve on a committee). You should not reallocate payroll for effort that was previously certified – the purpose of the effort report is to pinpoint inaccuracies in payroll distributions prior to certification and corrected immediately.

Tip #5 – Monitor the expenditures of the sub-recipient. It is the PI’s responsibility to approve invoices, thereby certifying the performance and appropriateness of the charges relative to work performed.

Nicole Corali

The Faces of ORSP

Jane Lenner

as told to Nicole Corali

NMC: What is your role in the ORSP?
JLL: Office Manager; Pre-Award Coordinator; IRB & IACUC Coordinator

NMC: How long have you worked at Lehigh?
JLL: 45 Years

NMC: What departments have you worked in?
JLL: Civil Engineering; Chemical Engineering; Energy Research Center; Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

NMC: You have really been in a lot of different areas at Lehigh! What is your favorite thing about working in so many different capacities?
JLL: I’ve really enjoyed meeting so many different people, especially people from different cultures who teach you things you never would have learned otherwise. I also liked working with graduate and undergraduates in the academic departments.

NMC: So what do you do when you’re not working?
JLL: In the summer and nice weather I enjoy gardening and going to parks. I also enjoy playing cards and spending time with my family.

NMC: Do you have children?
JLL: Yes, two sons, John and Jared.

NMC: What is your favorite food?
JLL: Anything Italian!

NMC: Do you have a favorite quote?
JLL: “There is no friendship, no love, like that of the parent for the child.”

NMC: Favorite time of the year?
JLL: Fall

NMC: That’s because your birthday is in the fall, isn’t it?
JLL: Yes, a week before Halloween. But I also love the season and the leaves changing color.

NMC: What is your favorite song?
JLL: “This Time” by Troy Shondell. This is an oldie that they always played as the last song of the night at the Town Hall dances in Coopersburg. It is a ballad and you can listen to it on You-tube. It is such a beautiful tune.

NMC: I’ll have to check it out… Is there anything else you want to share?
JLL: I really enjoyed my time working here at Lehigh. Working in the different departments I have made quite a number of friends (you being one of them). I also met my husband here in Civil Engineering and we have enjoyed 42 years of marriage.
Post-9/11, Americans have had to deal with many changes in the way we live and work, adjusting to changes in security, tightening identity controls, and a measure of loss in the freedoms that we previously enjoyed. For university researchers who work on government contracts, particularly defense contracts, that tightening of security is magnified—and in the typically open environment of the college campus, it can be hard to comply.

Government contracts typically contain FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulations) and/or DFAR (Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations) clauses that are “flowed down” from the government agency. These contract clauses can deal with anything from major legal issues such as combating trafficking in persons to minor administrative requirements such as printing on double-sided paper. Once the university reviews, agrees to, and signs the contract, these clauses are binding.

One compliance issue that significantly impacts researchers is FAR 52.222-54, Employment Eligibility Verification, or E-Verify.

Since September 8, 2009, all existing or new Lehigh employees who will perform work on a federal contract subject to the E-Verify FAR clause are cleared by Lehigh’s Payroll Office through an online registration process. The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, administers the E-Verify system for the government.

The process begins once a research contract is signed by the authorized representatives of both institutions. ORSP notifies the Principal Investigator (PI) of the requirement and provides Payroll with the names of the existing employees assigned to the contract. The PI is then responsible for notifying the Payroll Office of any new hires on the contract in sufficient time to allow e-verification within three days after the date the employee begins work. I-9 information and photo ID is required.

If you are considering entering into a government contract, especially with the Department of Defense and its branch agencies, contact ORSP and Payroll as soon as possible to find out more about E-Verify. If international students are involved in a project, it is particularly important to start the process early.

**What is the Difference between a Grant, Contract, and Cooperative Agreement?**

The sponsor of a project is the entity that provides financial support to organizations for research and other necessary projects. The sponsor determines whether the funds are awarded in the form of a grant, a contract, or a cooperative agreement. In addition to other application requirements, the proposal guidelines usually identify what type of award will be made. It is important to understand the difference among these award types and what it means for your project before it begins, while it is active, and after it ends.

**Grants**

A grant is the most common way of giving funds for a specific purpose. Grants are financial assistance given to organizations for stated purposes or activities. Grants are normally awarded by sponsors whose purpose is to support scientific research or other philanthropic goals. Grants are used whenever the awarding office anticipates no substantial programmatic involvement with the recipient during the active project. When the notice of award is received by the principal investigator, it is an indication that the project is active and work may be started. Grants are generally awarded for 1-5 years, and the funds are distributed according to the sponsor guidelines. The sponsor generally only requires a complete evaluation and final report at the end of the funding period.

**Contracts**

Contracts are purchase arrangements where a sponsor “buys” time or services from an organization or an individual to accomplish the sponsor’s tasks. Typically, a research topic and the methods for conducting the research are specified in detail by the sponsor in the proposal guidelines. In general there are greater performance expectations associated with contracts, including project milestones and detailed deliverables. This type of award is usually designed to benefit the sponsor by achieving an expected outcome or product.

When a contract is awarded, it becomes a voluntary and legally binding agreement between two or more entities. All entities involved must sign a paper contract in order to approve the activities of the project and the terms and conditions. In addition, a contract may also be given to or received from another institution in the form of a subcontract.

At the time of proposal submission a contracting agency will often require an indication of what terms and conditions will be acceptable in the event of an award. Exceptions to a sponsor’s contract terms are addressed by ORSP. For many sponsors, ORSP may include a copy of the standard Lehigh University Intellectual Property Agreement. Investigators who are aware of special sponsor requirements should discuss them with their Lehigh Contract & Grant Specialist (CGS) well in advance of the proposal deadline.

**Cooperative Agreements**

A cooperative agreement provides financial assistance and establishes relationships between a sponsor and an organization. Most commonly, a cooperative agreement is used when both parties pursue stated purposes or activities, and when substantial sponsor involvement is expected. Unlike a grant, a cooperative agreement often involves the sponsor providing staff to assist, guide, coordinate or participate in the project. Cooperative agreements state the purpose of the project, the objectives and terms of the relationship. They also describe the responsibilities of each entity involved and how each will benefit from the outcome.

The Contract & Grant Specialists in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs are well versed in the differences between grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements. For help on your next grant application, or if you would like to enter into a contract or cooperative agreement, please contact your CGS.

Heather Gazella

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Opportunities for Research Funding

NOVEMBER
Deadline: November 8
Award Amount: $10,000-$30,000
NEA has announced the availability of grants for research on the value and impact of the U.S. arts sector, at either the individual or community level. The NEA is interested in novel and significant research questions that will lead to greater public understanding of the contribution of the arts. Grantees may use either existing or newly established datasets to conduct their research. The resulting projects will help determine the usefulness of various datasets to arts-related research — including those not previously used for that purpose.

Gates Foundation—
www.gatesfoundation.org/Pages/home.aspx
Grand Challenges Explorations
Deadline: November 17
Award Amount: $100,000
CFR contact: Kathy Zimmerman
Current topics: Protect Crop Plants from Biotic Stresses from Field to Market; Design New Approaches to Optimize Immunization Systems; Explore New Solutions for Global Health Priority Areas; Explore Nutrition for Healthy Growth of Infants and Children; Apply Synthetic Biology to Global Health Challenges.

American Association of University Women—www.aauw.org/learn/fellowships_grants/american.cfm
American Fellowship Program
Deadline: November 15
CFR Contact: Kathy Zimmerman
Award Amount: Research Leave Fellowship ($30,000); Summer Research Publication Grant ($6,000).

DECEMBER
Spencer Foundation—www.spencer.org/
Award Amount: small grants up to $40,000; large grants up to $500,000
CFR Contact: Suzanne Irvine
The Foundation is committed to investigating ways in which education, broadly conceived, can be improved around the world and is dedicated to the belief that research is necessary to the improvement in education.

JANUARY 2012
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)—http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/digitalhumanitiesimplementation.html
Deadline: January 24
The Digital Humanities Implementation Grants program is designed to fund the implementation of innovative digital-humanities projects that have successfully completed a start-up phase and demonstrated their value to the field. Such projects might enhance our understanding of central problems in the humanities, raise new questions in the humanities, or develop new digital applications and approaches for use in the humanities. The program can support innovative digital-humanities projects that address multiple audiences, including scholars, teachers, librarians, and the public. For a full list of opportunities, see http://www.neh.gov/grants/grants.html

Simons Foundation—simonsfoundation.org/Collaboration Grants
Deadline: January 31
Award Amount: $7,000/year for 5 years
CFR Contact: Kathy Zimmerman
The goal of the program is to support the "mathematical marketplace" by substantially increasing collaborative contacts in the community of U.S. mathematicians.

FEBRUARY
Google—research.google.com/university/research_awards.html
Google Research Awards
Deadline: February 1
Award Amount: $10,000-$150,000
CFR Contact: Kathy Zimmerman
The intent of the program is to support academic research aimed at improving information access (defined broadly).

Russell Sage Foundation—www.russellsage.org/
Deadlines: February for letters of intent
Award Amount: $35,000+

MARCH
Human Frontiers Science Program—www.hfsp.org
HFSP Young Investigators’ and Program Grants
Deadline: March
Award Amount: up to $450,000
The Human Frontiers Science Program (HFSP) supports international and preferably intercontinental collaborations aimed at innovative and interdisciplinary basic research focused on the complex mechanisms of living organisms.

American Chemical Society—www.acs.org
ACS Petroleum Research Fund, New Directions and Doctoral New Investigator Grants
Deadline: March
Award Amount: $100,000
The Petroleum Research Fund (PRF) supports fundamental research directly related to petroleum or fossil fuels in the United States and other countries.

Institute for New Economic Thinking—ineteconomics.org
Deadline: March
Award Amount: $25,000-$200,000
The Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET) was created to broaden and accelerate the development of new economic thinking that can lead to solutions for the great challenges of the 21st century.

Ellison Medical Foundation—www.ellisonfoundation.org
Senior Scholar Award in Aging
Deadline: March
Award Amount: up to $600,000
The Ellison Medical Foundation Senior Scholar program in Aging is designed to support established investigators to conduct research in the basic biological sciences relevant to understanding lifespan development processes and age-related diseases and disabilities.

Internal Funding – open calls
PA Global Alumni Travel Grants—ongoing; see http://www.lehigh.edu/~inesrch/infinfunding.html
Kathy Zimmerman and Pam Wheat