



NIEHS

National Institute of
Environmental Health Sciences

The Basics – What Do You Need to Know to Be an Effective Principal Investigator

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WORKER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM



The Basics

- Being an Effective Principal Investigator
 - Terms & Conditions of Award
 - Consortia Management
 - Communications

Principal Investigator

- Experience in health & safety training/technical knowledge
- Day-to-day management of the project with clear lines of authority
- Strong administrative and leadership skills-internal policies and procedures, (i.e. hiring competent, & professional staff)
- Assessable to program manager and other staff
- Provide resources for staff to be effective
- Strong understanding of federal grants and funding process, i.e. contact with NIEHS Program Administrators
- Strong and clear relationship with Business Official

Terms & Conditions of Award

- RFA Criteria ***
 - Notice of Grant Award
 - Key Personnel
 - Consortium
 - Budget & Future Year Commitments
 - Restrictions and Limitations – carryover, prior approval, re-budgeting, and other administrative terms***
 - Acknowledgment of Federal Funding ***
- ****Responsibilities that flow down....

This RFA may be accessed at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html> or <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-ES-04-005.html>

Consortia Management & Communication

- Solid consortium agreements
- Strong Program Coordinators/Program Directors
- Use resources – NIH eRA Commons, NIH Grants Policy Statement
- Communication -
 - Regular consortium meetings, integrated evaluation & training development
 - Use of emails, mailing lists, telephone conferences, etc. to share information



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Roles and Responsibilities

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Grants Management Officer (GMO)

DEFINITION – An NIH official responsible for the business management aspects of grants and cooperative agreements, including review, negotiation, award, and administration, and for the interpretation of grants administration policies and provisions. Only GMOs are authorized to obligate NIH to the expenditure of funds and to make changes to approved projects on behalf of NIH.

RESPONSIBILITIES – The GMO is the NIH official responsible for the business management and other non-programmatic aspects of the award. These activities include interpretation of grants administration policies and provisions; administering, and closing out grants. Working closely with the Program Administrator, the GMO is the focal point for receiving and acting on requests for prior approval or for changes to an award that includes funding, duration, or terms and conditions of award.

Grants Management Specialist

DEFINITION – The Grants Management Specialist is an agent of the GMO and is assigned responsibility for the day-to-day management of a portfolio of grants.

RESPONSIBILITIES – The Grants Management Specialist is the day-to-day contact for grantees and applicants. This is the individual that will perform the review, negotiation, and preparation of the award for issuance. This individual will work with the business official at the grantee/applicant organization to ensure that all required information needed to make an award has been received.

Program Official

DEFINITION - Program Official: The NIH Institute or Center official responsible for the programmatic, scientific and/or technical aspects of a grant.

RESPONSIBILITIES - Program Official: The Program Official is the IC employee responsible for the programmatic, scientific, and/or technical aspects of assigned applications and grants. Program Officials' responsibilities include, but are not limited to, development of research and research training programs to meet the IC's mission; coordination with CSR/IC Scientific Review Administrators; and post award administration, including review of progress reports, participating in site visits, and other activities complementary to those of the IC GMO. The Program Official and the GMO work as a team in many of these activities.

Principal Investigator (PI)

DEFINITION – The Principal Investigator is an individual designated by the grantee to direct the project or activity being supported by the grant. The PI is responsible and accountable to the grantee for the proper conduct of the project or activity.

RESPONSIBILITIES – The PI is the individual, designated by the grantee, responsible for the scientific or technical aspects of the grant and day-to-day management of the project. The PI must have a formal written appointment with the applicant organization. The PI is a member of the grantee team responsible for ensuring compliance with the financial and administrative aspects of the award. The PI works closely with designated officials within the grantee organization to create and maintain necessary documentation, including both technical and administrative reports; prepare justifications; ensure that Federal support of research findings is appropriately acknowledged in publications, announcements, news programs, etc.; and comply with organizational and Federal requirements.

Authorized Institutional Official

DEFINITION – The authorized institutional official is the individual, named by the applicant organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant and to assume the obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or grant awards.

RESPONSIBILITIES – This official is the designated representative of the grantee organization in matters related to the award and administration of its NIH grants. In signing the application, this individual indicates the applicant organization's intent to comply with all applicable terms and conditions of award, including assurances and certifications referenced in the application, and attests to the fact that the administrative, fiscal, and scientific information in the application is true and complete and in conformance with governing Federal and organizational requirements.

Authorized Institutional Official

RESPONSIBILITIES Cont. –This individual's signature on the grant application further assures that the applicant organization will be accountable for both the appropriate use of funds awarded and the performance of the grant-supported project or activities resulting from the application. He or she is also responsible to NIH for ensuring that the organization complies with terms and conditions of individual awards and organization-wide requirements, such as financial management and property management requirements.

Other Participants

Collaborator: An individual involved with the PI in the scientific development or execution of the project. These individuals would typically devote a specific percent of effort to the project and would be identified as key personnel. The collaborator may be employed by, or affiliated with, either the grantee organization or an organization participating in the project under a consortium or contractual agreement.

Consortium or Contractual Agreement: An agreement whereby a research project is carried out by the grantee and one or more other organizations that are separate legal entities. In this arrangement, the grantee contracts for the performance of a substantial and/or a significant portion of the activities to be conducted under the grant. These agreements typically involve a specific percent of effort from the consortium organization's principal investigator and a categorical breakdown of costs, such as personnel, supplies, and other allowable expenses, including F&A costs.

Consultant: An individual or firms hired to give professional advice or services for a fee, normally not as an employee of the hiring party.

Post-Award Responsibilities

- **GMOs/Grants Management Specialists (GMSs).**
 - GMOs/GMSs are responsible for:
- Appropriately applying the variety of prior approval requirements that are potentially applicable to the program, types of recipients, and/or awards for which they have cognizance.
- Ensuring that NGAs clearly indicate (by reference or otherwise) current prior approval requirements, and the applicability of any special exceptions, e.g., expanded authorities.
- Clearly communicating to recipients the approval or disapproval of a prior approval request. If disapproved, the response should indicate the underlying basis. A request should not be denied solely on the basis that it is made after-the-fact and would require retroactive approval. If a retroactive request is denied, the GMO's letter should advise the grantee of its appeal right since the costs have already been incurred and the disapproval is equivalent to a disallowance. A grantee may not appeal disapproval of a prior approval request.

Post-Award Responsibilities cont.

- **Project Officers/Program Officials (POs).**
 - POs are responsible for:
- Referring any incoming written prior approval requests received by the PO to the GMO/GMS for correspondence control purposes.
- Providing requested input on the disposition of prior approval requests to the GMO/GMS within the specified time frame.

Post-Award Responsibilities cont.

- Grantee Organization

Terms of Award – Grantee organization is responsible for all terms of award and for communicating the terms of award to all participating organizations.

Restricted Funds – All restricted funds must be accounted for separately (flow down applies).

Audit – A-133 required for any organization that expends \$500,000 in federal funds in one year.

Acknowledgement of Federal Funding – Required for any publication, book, media, or presentation (both written and oral) made possible in total or part by grant funds (flow down applies)

Post-Award Responsibilities cont.

Carryover and Rebudgeting - All requests for NIH awarding office prior approval must be made in writing (which includes submission by e-mail) to the GMO no later than 30 days before the proposed change. The request must be signed by both the PI and the AOO. Failure to obtain required prior approval, from the appropriate NIH awarding office may result in the disallowance of costs, termination of the award, or other enforcement action within NIH's authority.

Post-Award Responsibilities cont.

E-mail requests must be clearly identified as prior-approval requests, must reflect the complete grant number in the subject line, and should be sent by the AOO to the GMO that signed the NGA. (E-mail addresses for NIH staff can be obtained from the NIH Directory and E-Mail Forwarding Services at <http://directory.nih.gov>.) E-mail requests must include the name of the grantee, the name of the initiating PI, the PI's telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address, and comparable identifying information for the AOO. If the entire message of the request cannot be included in the body of the e-mail, the request should be submitted to NIH in hard copy.

Post-Award Responsibilities cont.

When you contemplate rebudgeting or other post-award changes and are uncertain about the need for prior approval, you are strongly encouraged to consult, in advance, with the GMO.

Post-Award Responsibilities cont.

NOTE: Under a consortium agreement or contract, the prior-approval authority usually is the grantee. However, the grantee may not approve any action or cost that is inconsistent with the purpose or terms and conditions of the NIH grant. If an action by a consortium participant will result in a change in the overall grant project or budget requiring NIH approval, the grantee must obtain that approval from NIH before giving its approval to the consortium participant.



QUESTIONS