Updated Workflow for Award Negotiation

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Sponsored Research Newsletter

As part of a continuing effort to streamline procedures and optimize efficiency, award negotiations will now be handled by Research Services Coordinators (RSCs) on the team that originated the corresponding proposal. This change should streamline the award negotiation process and make award acceptance more timely.

Most awards do not require negotiation. Awards that do require negotiation are those with terms and conditions that may be inconsistent with the University’s mission, particularly in the areas of publications, data rights, intellectual property, and indemnification. Private, non-profit and for-profit organizations are the most likely sponsors to include these types of terms in their award agreements. Since these sponsors represent a growing segment of our research funding portfolio, Research Management Services (RMS) leaders are reviewing the award terms of our biggest funding partners and creating guidelines to allow RSCs to accept them if the terms and conditions associated with the awards have been negotiated and/or vetted by the University of California Office of the President. However, in the dynamic environment of grants administration, we will always have to carefully review award terms as our sponsors update them.

Over the last month, a group of RSCs and their Team Managers completed training in award negotiation. These “expanded-role RSCs” will review awards without prescribed guidelines terms submitted by themselves and their teammates. With guidance from RMS leadership, these RSCs will negotiate terms and conditions to protect the University’s interests. The increased number of staff engaged in award negotiations, their participation in the team that prepared the proposal, and their familiarity with the team’s portfolio, are all intended to facilitate award negotiations.

With this most recent change, your RMS team is now responsible for shepherding your proposal from start to finish — beginning with the proposal, through award negotiation and acceptance, and ending with closeout and final reports — in partnership with post-award administrators who handle the financial management of the award itself.

Contact Marge O’Halloran with any questions regarding this change in the RMS workflow.