OMB Combines Grants Management Circulars into One

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently issued final guidance on the consolidation of eight OMB grants management circulars into one overall policy guide entitled, “Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.”

Located in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (Chapter I, and Chapter II, Parts 200, 215, 220, 225, and 230), the combined circular incorporates cost principles, audit and administrative requirements that currently exist in A-110, A-133 and A-21, and seeks to make administration of Federal awards more effective and transparent by ensuring grants and cooperative agreements are awarded based on merit; that management increases focus on performance outcomes; and that rules governing the allocation of Federal funds are streamlined (i) to ease administrative burden and (ii) strengthen oversight of Federal funds.

The implementation date of the combined circulars is December 26, 2014. OSP will provide additional information when available.

To view the published OMB supporting documents related to this new guidance, please visit http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_docs/.

And, to learn more, view the Council on Financial Assistance Reform’s (COFAR) brief webcast entitled, “Improving Outcomes by Reducing Red Tape for Financial Assistance” or visit COFAR’s website.
Updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Section

The Office of Sponsored Programs recently updated the FAQ section on the OSP website to include extensive and up-to-date information on the most frequently asked questions related to sponsored program proposals and the management of sponsored awards.

The purpose of the FAQ section is to aid in finding answers to most common questions quickly and easily. To date, the newly updated FAQ section includes information on the following:

FAQ-
- Searching for Funding
- PI Eligibility
- Proposal Development
- Budget Development
- Proposal Approval & Submission
- Award & Acceptance
- Award Management
- Declined Proposals
- Special Issues for International Sponsored Programs
- Subcontractors vs. Consultants
- Foreign Currency Rates
- Public vs. Private Funding

The FAQ section is updated regularly. Be sure to check the FAQ pages for additional information.

Fulbright Scholar Program: Campus Representative Workshops

As mentioned in last month’s issue, the Fulbright Scholar Program, administered by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (Division of the Institute of International Education), will be hosting a workshop for faculty and campus representatives in Washington, D.C. on February 13-14, 2014.

Campus Representative Workshops provide the most comprehensive training available on the Fulbright Scholar Program. Those who plan to attend will discuss the full suite of opportunities available for faculty and administrators within the Fulbright Program, learn strategies in promoting the Fulbright Scholar Program with their faculty, as well as network with other Campus Representatives across the country.

Registration is free and open to anyone wishing to learn and share best practices for promoting and understanding the full breadth of the Fulbright Scholar Program.

Fulbright Scholar Campus Representative Workshop
Location: Washington, D.C.
Dates: February 13-14, 2014

For more information, or to register please click here or contact afulay@iie.org directly.
Serving on Scientific/Proposal Review Committees

Serving on scientific and proposal review committees is one of the best ways to learn first-hand how to develop and craft strong proposals. It also provides insight on the award decision-making process from the sponsor’s prospective, and helps to understand the most common mistakes found in proposals. One of the essential benefits of serving on scientific and proposal review committees is that it affords an opportunity to build relationships with other colleagues and program officers.

Fortunately, federal agencies require thousands of reviewers each year, and are always seeking reviewers with applicable expertise. While some agencies collect the names of potential reviewers year round, others may put out calls for specific programs.

The following is a listing of opportunities to serve on review committees from various federal agency sites:

**NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH)**

The NIH peer review system is the foundation of the NIH extramural research enterprise, and its continued excellence depends on the ability to recruit and retain the most accomplished, broad-thinking and creative scientists and experts to serve as peer reviewers. Such qualified individuals are needed to serve on scientific review groups in the initial peer review of applications.

**How to become a reviewer:** Individuals who possess expertise in areas supported by the NIH and who wish to volunteer to serve in the NIH peer review process should send an e-mail to the Enhancing Peer Review Mailbox (ReviewerVolunteer@mail.nih.gov) along with a brief description of their areas of expertise in the body of the e-mail (1-2 sentences) and a copy of their biosketch as an attachment.

- NIH Guide Notice NOT-OD-10-089—Enhancing Peer Review: Expectation for Service on NIH Peer Review and Advisory Groups

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)**

The success of the peer review process, which enables NSF to make wise investments in all fields of science and engineering research and education, depends on the willingness of qualified reviewers to share their time and expertise. Their experience and up-to-date knowledge provides helpful advice to NSF program officers on the merits of proposals and constructive comments to proposers that strengthen their projects. In making its decisions on proposals, the counsel of these merit reviewers has proven invaluable to the Foundation in the identification of meritorious projects.

**How to become a reviewer:** Send an e-mail to the NSF program officer(s) of the program(s) that fits your expertise letting them know that you are interested in becoming a peer reviewer. Include an up-to-date CV and current contact information. Click here to find the NSF Program Officer that best fits your expertise/field.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, is interested in individuals to serve as peer reviewers for future Investing in Innovation (i3) grant competitions.

**How to become a reviewer:** Reviewers must have expertise in at least one of the program’s priority areas or in educational evaluation. For details in those priority areas, click here. In addition to the expertise requirements, peer reviewers must generally be available for a 4-week time period and will work remotely and via teleconference. If interested, follow the directions in this link to register yourself in the DOE online peer reviewer database.

Generally, private foundations do not call for external reviewers as they typically use reviewers that are in-house. Additional information on how to serve on peer review committees for other sponsor agencies can be on the OSP webpage here.
Each month, OSP Monthly highlights a specific American University faculty/staff member for their contributions in providing cutting-edge research or a research related program that serves to create and advance knowledge, and enrich the resources of our educational community while answering and accelerating challenging issues we face today. This month, we are featuring Seth Gershenson, Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Policy.

Q&A with Seth Gershenson

Q: Please tell us about what your research interests are:
Seth: I study the economics of education and education policy, with a special emphasis on primary school. Specifically, I am interested in the functioning of teacher labor markets, the impact of accountability policies such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on teacher and school behavior, and identifying the determinants of achievement gaps between students of different demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Q: In your own words, what is the main purpose/importance of your research?
Seth: Understanding how teacher labor markets function, and how individual actors have reacted to past education policies is crucial for improving future iterations of education policy. Similarly, understanding the source(s) of achievement gaps is crucial for developing appropriate policy responses.

Q: Currently, what type of research are you primarily focused on?
Seth: Two current projects, which are funded by the American Educational Research Association and the Spencer Foundation, investigate the causal effect of student absences on achievement and the extent to which teachers affect student attendance rates. Student attendance is a potentially important, yet understudied, input in the education process, as absences disrupt learning, weaken schools’ and classrooms’ sense of community, and reduce students’ exposure to classroom instruction. Student absences also reduce students’ exposure to, and thus undermine, investments in school and teacher quality. Student absences could contribute to the achievement gap in two ways: Firstly, if disadvantaged students are absent more often, and second, if absences are more harmful to disadvantaged students.

Q: What are some of the ways to learn and find out about your research?
Seth: I will be presenting my research at several conferences in 2014, including the annual meetings of the Association for Education Finance and Policy, and the American Educational Research Association. I will also be presenting some of my research on AU’s campus in the Economics department’s weekly research seminar (February 12, 2014). Copies of all of my published and working papers are available on my personal website, which can be accessed through my faculty web page.

Q: What inspired you to enter your field of research initially?
Seth: I was trained as a labor economist and came across a unique dataset on substitute teachers’ job histories while thinking about what to write my dissertation on. I was initially interested in using this data to estimate the wage elasticity of labor supply, but quickly became more interested in the substitute teachers’ preferences for different student and school characteristics. The more I reviewed the existing literature on teacher labor markets, the more interested I became, and before I knew it— it led to becoming an education economist.

Q: How long have you been at American University?
Seth: I am currently in my third year at American University.
UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSIONS & TRAINING SCHEDULE

Research Administration Certification (RAC) Program
RAC is a comprehensive training and certification program designed to assist AU departmental and school/college level staff with research administration and management responsibilities. This 8-session program provides vital information to enable participants to effectively manage sponsored awards.

The next instructor-led sessions are:

- **Session 5: Financial Management I (Post-Award Policies)**
  - February 13, 2014, 10:00-12:00 PM, Butler Board Room
- **Session 6: Financial Management II (Post-Award Procedures)**
  - February 27, 2014, 10:00-12:00 PM, Butler Board Room
- **Session 7: Systems Overview**
  - March 20, 2014, 10:00-12:00 PM, Butler Board Room
- **Session 8: Research Compliance Overview**
  - April 24, 2014, 10:00-12:00 PM, Abramson Family Founders Room, SIS

Information on the online sessions can be obtained from the following link.
View more information about RAC and how to register for the instructor-led and online formats here >>

Funding Search Information Sessions
OSP offers a series of informational sessions for those interested in independently searching for funding opportunities. The following sessions will provide training on how to use our current funding search databases, and will assist faculty and staff in developing user profiles to receive direct funding opportunity announcements related to their research/program interests:

- **General Overview**: Feb 6, 2014, 10:30-12:00 PM, Butler Board Room—Open to all AU faculty & staff
- **Unit/School Oriented**:
  - (CLALS/SIS): Feb 18, 2014, 10:00-12:00 PM, Abramson Family Founders Room—Open to CLALS & SIS staff
  - (SPA): March 27, 2014, 10:00—12:00 PM, Butler Board Room—Open to SPA faculty & staff
  - (WCL): April 23, 2014, 10:00—12:00 PM, TBD—Open to WCL faculty & staff

View more information about the Funding Search Information sessions and how to register here >>

Grant Administration Roundtable (GAR) Sessions
OSP and Grants and Contracts Accounting (GCA) would like to invite you to the next scheduled GAR sessions where they will be discussing the following topics:

- **February 19, 2014, 10:00—11:30am, MGC 4&5**
  Topics: NCURA Peer Review Site Visit, Subrecipient Monitoring Policy, Risk Account Request/Approval Form, and Fiscal Year End award set-up cutoff date
- **April 8, 2014, 10:00—11:30am, Butler Board Room**
  Topic: Proposal Budget Template

View more information about GAR and how to register here >>

Cayuse Training
Cayuse is an easy-to-use web application created specifically to simplify the creation, review, approval, and electronic submission of grant proposals. By placing all of the necessary proposal forms in a central location, it allows PIs, OSP, and college level research administrators to collaborate in real-time, fill in forms with reusable, centrally stored data, and route proposals electronically from anywhere in the world. This training session is especially beneficial to those who are new to submitting a proposal to a funding agency.

- **February 12, 2014, 2:00—4:00pm**, Anderson Hall Computer Lab (B11)

View more information about Cayuse and how to register here >>
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

National Dance Project—Production Grants (Contemporary Dance Choreographers, Artists and Companies)
The National Dance Project accepts applications for Production Grants, which fund the development of new dance work that will tour nationally, generally in the following season. Grants support costs incurred through the artistic creation of the work. These grants are highly competitive and are awarded to approximately 20 artist/companies annually. Grants generally range from $25,000 to $40,000.
Deadline: March 3, 2014

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)—Summer Seminars and Institutes
These grants support faculty development programs in the humanities for school teachers, and for college and university teachers. NEH Summer Seminars and Institutes may be as short as two weeks or as long as five weeks. Summer Seminars and Institutes extend and deepen knowledge and understanding of the humanities by focusing on significant topics and texts; contribute to the intellectual vitality and professional development of participants; build communities of inquiry and provide models of civility and excellent scholarship and teaching; and link teaching and research in the humanities.
Deadline: March 4, 2014

National Film Preservation Foundation—Avant-Garde Masters Grants
These cash preservation grants, made possible through the generosity of The Film Foundation, support laboratory work to preserve significant examples of America's avant-garde film heritage. The grants are available to non-profit and public archives. This grant supports the preservation of a film or films by a single filmmaker or from a cinematic group significant to the development of avant-garde film in America. Works made within the last twenty years are not eligible. Applications should show how the proposed titles have made a significant contribution to American experimental film or, if the works are lesser known today, demonstrate how the films will contribute to a better understanding of avant-garde film history.
Deadline: March 7, 2014

Prix Ars Electronica—Digital Communities
The “Digital Communities” category focuses on the wide-ranging social and artistic impact of the internet technology as well as on the latest developments in social software, user generated content, mobile communications, mash-ups and location based services. Digital Communities focuses on innovation in relation to human coexistence. Its main goals lie in 1) bridging the geographical as well as the gender-based digital divide; 2) bridging across cultural conflicts and 3) supporting cultural diversity and freedom of artistic expression. Digital Communities sheds light on the political and artistic potential of digital and networked systems. As such, Digital Communities selects a broad range of projects, applications, artworks, initiatives and phenomena around which social and artistic innovation is taking place, as it were, in real-time. Consideration is given to projects dealing with the concept of “Smart City” and especially of “Smart Citizen”, going beyond the purely technological view of a Smart City and focusing on the societal and participatory processes.
Deadline: March 7, 2014 (For Nominations)

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)—Creative Writing Fellowships
The NEA Literature Fellowships program offers $25,000 grants in prose (fiction and creative nonfiction) and poetry to published creative writers that enable the recipients to set aside time for writing, research, travel, and general career advancement.
Deadline: March 12, 2014

Society of Professional Journalists—Distinguished Teaching in Journalism
This Distinguished Teaching in Journalism Award, made annually, honors a collegiate journalism educator and recognizes outstanding teaching ability, contributions to journalism, journalism education and contributions toward maintaining the highest standards of the profession.
Deadline: March 20, 2014 (For Nominations)

Manuel Rivera-Ortiz Foundation—Photography Competition
We invite documentary photographers around the globe to submit their documentary photo project proposals alongside their supporting 15-image portfolios highlighting human unrest, forgotten communities, over-exploited people and environments impacted by war, poverty, famine, disease, exploitation and global distress.
Deadline: March 31, 2014
Goodrich Foundation—Community Programs
For decades, the Goodrich Foundation has enhanced local communities with financial support, making a difference in the communities where our employees live and work. Key areas of funding include: Advancing STEM Education: K-12 and higher education Science, technology, engineering and math programs focused on the next generation of engineers and scientists; supporting vibrant communities: Emphasis on programs involving community revitalization, health & social services, and arts & culture; Building Sustainable Cities: Focused on environmentally sustainable practices, projects and urban green space.
Deadline: March 1, 2014

Tinker Foundation—Institutional Grants for Proposals on Latin American, Iberia or Antarctica
The Foundation’s Institutional Grants program has as its goal, the creation of effective policy changes to improve the lives of Latin Americans. Taking into account developments that have taken place in Latin America over the last ten years, the Foundation recently embarked on an evaluation of its grant-making efforts. As a result of this strategic planning process, the Board of Directors has identified five program areas in which focused, expert research and innovation has the potential to make significant positive impact. While they are similar in theme to the previous funding for environmental policy, economic policy and governance issues, each thematic program has been redefined and reoriented with respect to specific priorities.
Deadline: March 1, 2014

In this element of its work, the Foundation focuses on preventing nuclear terrorism by denying terrorist access to the fissile materials (highly enriched uranium and plutonium) that are the key ingredients for nuclear weapons. As nuclear power becomes an important means of diversifying energy portfolios and reducing carbon emissions, fissile material stockpiles are set to grow, raising the risk of theft or diversion. In addition, the Foundation supports a limited number of innovative projects that: 1) seek to effectively address, in a stabilizing manner, the strategic implications of deeper reductions in nuclear arsenals; and, 2) provide new insights and approaches to security challenges arising from national efforts to acquire nuclear weapons (e.g. Iran and North Korea).
Deadline: March 1, 2014

Office of Violence Against Women (OVW)—Technical Assistance Program
The primary purpose of the OVW Technical Assistance Program is to provide direct technical assistance to existing and potential grantees and sub grantees to enhance and support their efforts to successfully implement projects supported by OVW grant funds. In addition, OVW is focused on building the capacity of criminal justice and victim services organizations to respond effectively to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking and fostering partnerships among organizations that have not traditionally worked together to address violence against women.
Deadline: March 6, 2014

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice & Human Rights—Human Rights Award
Robert F. Kennedy believed that each individual holds the power to invoke change, that a single voice has the ability to declare an iniquity, and that each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope. In the spirit of Robert Kennedy's ideals, The Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award was established in 1984 to honor these courageous and innovative individuals striving for social justice throughout the world.
Deadline: March 7, 2014 (Anticipated)

Institute of Turkish Studies (ITS)—Grants Program
The Institute of Turkish Studies is pleased to announce its 2014-2015 grant competition in the field of Turkish Studies. The following grant opportunities are available only for United States citizens (or those who have acquired permanent resident status in the U.S.) who are currently affiliated with a university in the U.S. Research awards include: Dissertation Writing Grants for Graduate Students, Library Grants, Post-Doctoral Summer Travel Research Grants, Sabbatical Research Grants, Subventions for Publications, Summer Language Study Grants in Turkey for Graduate Students, Teaching Aids Grants, and Turkish Studies Academic Conference Grant.
Deadline: March 7, 2014
Office of Sponsored Programs Monthly  
FEBRUARY 2014

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Department of Energy—SunShot Incubator Program
The Department of Energy is supporting the development of tools and approaches that will significantly reduce the costs for solar energy systems across all technology areas (i.e. photovoltaics, concentrating solar power, power electronics, balance of system and non-hardware cost such as customer acquisition permitting, financing, interconnection, and inspection.) As part of the SunShot Incubator program, this funding opportunity is designed to help startup businesses and entrepreneurs develop technologies, innovative programs, and streamlined processes that will make solar more accessible for consumers in the U.S.

**Deadline: March 13, 2014**

Department of Commerce—Economic Development Assistance Programs (EDA)
Under this FFO, EDA solicits applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA’s Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides strategic investments on a competitive merit-basis to support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States.

**Deadline: March 14, 2014**

National Science Foundation (NSF)—Long-Term Ecological Research
To address ecological questions that cannot be resolved with short-term observations or experiments, NSF established the Long-Term Ecological Research Program (LTER) in 1980. Three components differentiate LTER research from projects supported by other NSF programs: 1) the research is located at specific sites chosen to represent major ecosystem types or natural biomes; 2) it emphasizes the study of ecological phenomena over long periods of time based on data collected in five core areas; and 3) projects include integrative, cross-site, network-wide research.

**Deadline: March 14, 2014**

Norway-American Association—The Norwegian Marshall Fund Awards (for research in Norway)
The Norwegian Marshall Fund was established in 1977 as a gesture of appreciation of the fundamental importance of the Marshall Plan for Norway during the reconstruction of Europe after World War II. The Fund was made possible through contributions from Norwegian individuals and corporations as an expression of gratitude to the people of the United States. The purpose of the Fund is to provide financial support for Americans invited to come to Norway to conduct post-graduate study or research in areas of mutual importance to Norway and the United States, thereby increasing knowledge and understanding, as well as strengthening the ties of friendship between the two countries.

**Deadline: March 15, 2014**

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) - Biotechnology Risk Assessment Grants
The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture is seeking research grant funding applications in its 'Biotechnology Risk Assessment Grants (BRAG) Program' to support the generation of new information that will assist Federal regulatory agencies in making science-based decisions about the effects of introducing into the environment genetically engineered organisms (GE), including plants, microorganisms (including fungi, bacteria, and viruses), arthropods, fish, birds, mammals and other animals excluding humans. Investigations of effects on both managed and natural environments are relevant. The BRAG program accomplishes its purpose by providing Federal regulatory agencies with scientific information relevant to regulatory issues.

**Deadline: March 19, 2014**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—Research to Prevent Prescription Drug Overdoses
The purpose of this FOA is to conduct research to assess the impact of policies and administrative practices on the inappropriate prescribing or abuse of prescription opioid analgesics. This funding will support projects that: 1) evaluate the impact of current legislation that requires state oversight of pain management clinics or sets out registration, licensure, or ownership requirements for such clinics, or 2) evaluate the impact of formulary management and benefit design strategies used by public or private insurers and pharmacy benefit managers (e.g., quantity limits, step therapies, preferred drug lists, prior authorization, tiered formularies, and drug utilization review programs) that are applicable to all beneficiaries, not just those identified as abusing drugs or engaged in fraudulent activity.

**Deadline: March 19, 2014**
Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA) Program—The AREA program supports small-scale research projects in the biomedical and behavioral sciences conducted by faculty and students at education institutions that have not been major recipients of NIH research grant funds. These grants are intended to create a research opportunity for scientists and institutions otherwise unlikely to participate extensively in NIH programs. It is anticipated that investigators supported under AREA will:

- benefit from the opportunity to conduct independent research;
- that the grantee institution will benefit from a research environment strengthened through AREA grants and furthered by participation in the diverse extramural programs of the NIH;
- and that students at recipient institutions will benefit from exposure to and participation in scientific research in the biomedical and behavioral sciences.

The application should include plans to involve undergraduate or graduate students in the proposed research, however the AREA program is a research grant, not a training or fellowship program. The application should include plans to expose students to hands-on research and should not include training plans.

**Deadline: September 8, 2016**

You can view more information about the AREA program on the NIH website here.

Spencer Foundation—Areas of Inquiry
The Spencer Foundation invests in research to improve the nation’s education system. The Areas of Inquiry program has five focus areas: (1) Education & Social Responsibility; (2) Organizational Learning; (3) Purposes & Values of Education; (4) Teaching, Learning & Instructional Sources; and (5) Field-Initiated Proposals.

**Deadline: March 14, 2014**
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What to expect in next month's OSP Monthly:
- OSP Spotlight with Anastasia Snelling, Associate Dean in the School of Education, Teaching and Health
- Hot Topics in Research Administration

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