

ORSS News



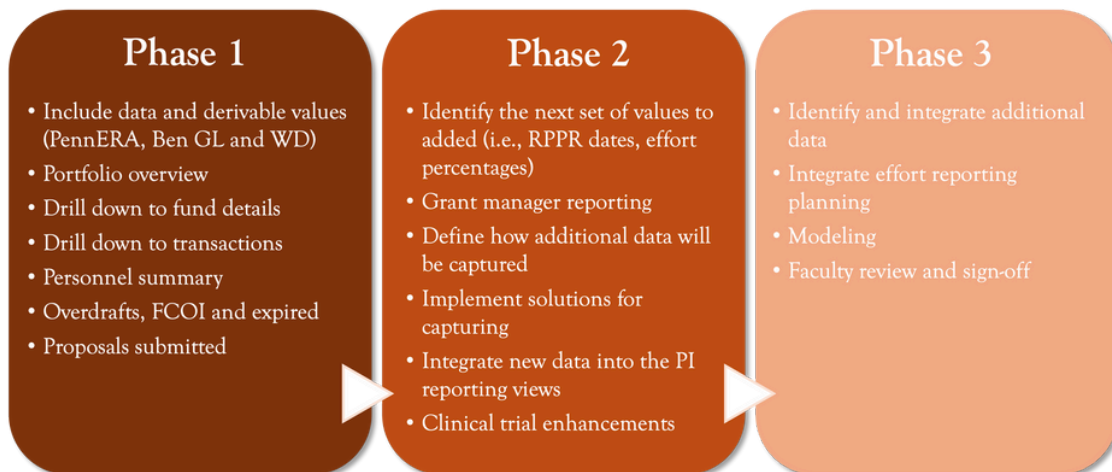
IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN THIS ISSUE

- Deadlines
- Post Award Potpourri
- Pre Award Hodgepodge
- Announcements
- New Staff
- Floater Services

It appears there is never really a “down” time as everyone is as busy, if not more so, than ever! We too have been busy. For first quarter FY2025, we approved 915 records, held 15 learning sessions totaling 159 registrations, and provided pre-award floater services to several departments.

We’ve also hired two new post-award grant specialists, one full time and one part time. You can find out more about each of them on the Staff Update page, along with information on requesting floater services.

In addition, we have been working with a group of administrators and PMACS to develop a grant reporting tool. The chart below represents the initial phases.



We are currently on track with Phase 1 and are currently meeting with a set of faculty and their BAs to review data accuracy for a soft launch pilot. As the pilot progresses with successful results, we will be reaching out to other departments about piloting. Please [email me](#) if you are interested in having your department participate.

Sincerely,

Marianne Achenbach

Deadlines

NIH DEADLINES:

- November 5 – R01, U01
(renewal, resubmission, revision)
- November 12 – K Series
(renewal, resubmission, revision)
- November 16 – R21
(renewal, resubmission, revision)
- December 8 – F Series
(new, renewal, resubmission, revision)
- January 25 – P Series and T Series
(new, renewal, resubmission, revision)

Click [here](#) to search NIH opportunities by activity code (located on the left of the page).

Click [here](#) to see all NIH dues dates.

STAY INFORMED!

Stay up-to-date with the latest news and information from Penn, NIH, and NSF. Click on the links below to sign-up for mailing lists.

- [ORS](#)
- [NIH](#)
- [NSF](#)

FOUNDATION DEADLINES:

- [American Heart Association](#): Various dates
- [Howard Hughes Medical Institute](#): Various dates
- [Burroughs Wellcome Fund](#): Various dates

Post Award Potpourri

Progress of Old Fund Clean-up

Before the start of this joint venture between ORS and ORSS, there was a total of 561 funds enabled (147 were corporate clinical trials) that were over two years old, and 201 funds (23 clinical trials) that were between one and two years old. Upon our review of recent reports in October 2024, the data shows that the number of enabled funds greater than 1 year old has dropped by 70%, and the number of clinical trial funds has been reduced by almost 97%.

As we move into the fourth quarter, we will progress into Phase 2 of the program, with more departments being added to the project. We ask that all departments continue to clean up funds, even if they are not chosen for Phase 2.

Please pay close attention to your expired overdrafts and residual balances, as these will be a priority in the future. We will recommend that all projects that ended in 2022 and earlier (with an overdraft or cash balance) be closed, and unilateral action taken by the Central Offices to move them off the 5-funds and onto a default department account.

As always, we thank you for your support of this important endeavor.

No Child Record Needed When...

We are often asked if a PennERA Child record is required for an Interim or Final RPPR. The answer is "No" as these reports are considered closeout documents and are not required to secure the next year budget amount.

Unobligated Balances on RPPRs

When considering estimated unobligated balances, you must also consider any previous year balances even though you don't have approval to use those funds.

For example, let's say we have a project where we have a current year award of \$500K and it clearly appears we should have a balance of \$50K. One would think we should be well below 25% of the current year approved budget and don't need to report a balance. However, on the previous budget year FFR, we reported a \$200K unobligated balance. This means we should estimate our balance to be \$250K, resulting in a cumulative balance greater than 25% which then requires an explanation as to how we plan on spending the balance.

It may be that you don't have need for the \$200K this year, but you still need to explain why you will need those funds in future years and when you expect to request carryover. It is very important to convey this. We have seen instances (particularly with NCI) where they interpreted that we don't need the funds and they then use the prior balance as an offset to fund the next year.....in short that means we lose access to those unobligated prior funds for any future carryover requests.



Pre Award Hodgepodge



**What salary
do I use for
K Grants?!?!?!?**

Did you know there are 19 variations of the K grant? Yep. Because K grant salary requirements vary greatly by NIH Institute Center (IC), you may have received various, and sometimes seemingly contradictory, instructions on what to enter for a PI's salary. To account for these differences and to (hopefully) eliminate further confusion, we ask that you follow these steps when developing K grants:

- 1) Click on the link titled "IC-Specific Information" in the FOA to find and verify the IC's salary limit and required effort.
- 2) Calculate a salary amount that will get the PI to the IC's salary limit. For example, if the IC's salary limit is \$100,000 and the minimum effort required is 75%, you would use a salary of \$133,334. This allows for 75% effort at \$100k plus the applicable fringe added on top. *Note: If the IC does not have a salary limit, enter their full salary or the salary cap if applicable.*
- 3) Enter the calculated salary in the PennERA budget form.
- 4) Verify the PI's Institutional Base Salary (IBS) via Workday or your BA.
- 5) Update and add the following statement to the end of the personnel section on the budget justification:

"Please note: As per the guidance in NIH Grants Policy Statement 12.8.1, Salaries and Fringe benefits, listed in this budget justification are consistent with the current established Institutional Base Salary (IBS) for (Faculty/Postdoc/Instructor) in the Department of XXXXX. It is understood that each institute has different funding policies, and the exact level of salary support will be determined at award by the funding IC, therefore the amount listed in the R & R budget form adheres to this specific funding IC."

Inform your Pls

NIH not only expects that sex as a biological variable will be factored into research designs, analyses, and reporting in vertebrate animal and human studies but also that a justification is included when any "Single Sex" research content is listed. As such, investigators are strongly encouraged to discuss these issues with NIH program staff prior to submission of applications.

[Click here to learn more](#)

Just say no

If no one in your department has Institutional Signing Authority please be sure to Select "No" to the following question found under the "Routing, Review and Approval" section on the Proposal Transmittal Form:

*This proposal record meets the criteria for streamlined routing, review and submission authorized for this ORG and I certify that this sponsored research submission is of a specific type which I have been authorized to submit to the sponsor on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania through Delegated Signature Authority.

Announcements

ORSS Launches Online Learning Center

ORSS is proud to announce our new online learning center! Click the links to access:

- A complete [course catalog](#) of instructor-led, online, and self-guided modules that are specific to research administration and have been recommended by PSOM grants staff.
- Recommended [learning plans](#) that are tailored to these specific areas: research administration fundamentals, pre-award, post-award, RPPRs, and Excel skills.
- [OnDemand](#) Training Videos - we've only just begun building this library but we have one for you to start with!
- A schedule of [upcoming classes](#) with direct links to registration. Spots fill up fast so register now for these upcoming sessions:

How to Get Your K Grant Approved:
Monday, November 4th

Fund Summaries-How to make RPPRs Easier:
Thursday, November 13th

Debunking the Mystery of F&A:
Wednesday, November 20th

Post Award Floater Services

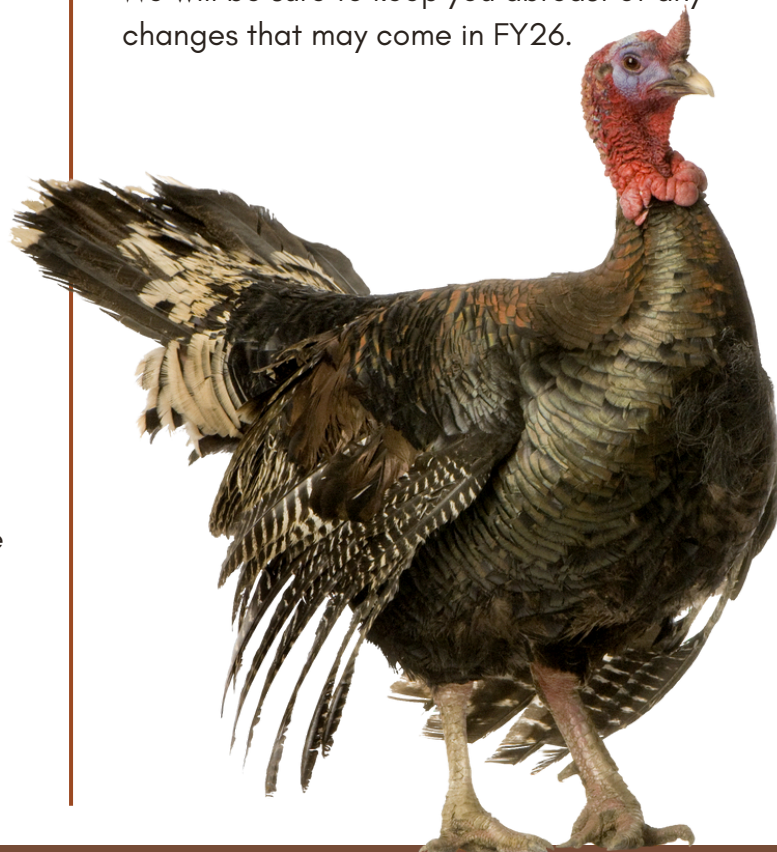
Do you currently have a staff vacancy? Is one of your staff members out on leave? ORSS may now be able to provide post-award floater services as well as pre-award floater services. If you are in need of floater services, click [here](#) to fill out our short requisition form.

Uniform Guidance Correction: Fringe Benefits

Please be informed that as of October 2024, NIH recognizes the cost of leave in the period that the leave is taken and paid for. Payments for unused leave when an employee retires or terminates employment are allowable in the year of payment and should be allocated as a general administrative expense to all activities or included in the fringe benefit rate.

This means Penn will make no changes now so you should continue to charge VCT directly to projects for the remainder of FY25. Please note that when VCT is paid, units must pay careful attention to the final distribution so that it is equitably charged over the projects from which it was earned.

We will be sure to keep you abreast of any changes that may come in FY26.



Meet Our New Staff!



Meena Swaminathan
Grants Management Specialist

For those of you who recognize her, Meena just couldn't stay away! That's right, Meena has joined the ORSS team part-time as a Grants Management Specialist after many years of dedicated service in Radiation Oncology as a BA. She will be playing a pivotal role in the fund cleanup project.



Nick Previti
Grants Management Specialist

Join us in welcoming Nick! Nick will be a Grants Management Specialist who will be responsible for reviewing RPPRs and other post-award tasks. Nick comes to us with eight years of accounting experience and is a graduate of Penn State.

