

# CLEAR Meeting

## November 13, 2024

Hosted by Sponsored Research

# Today's Agenda

- Announcements / Reminders:
  - Upcoming proposal deadlines
  - NU 5-day proposal deadline policy
  - Sponsored Research Handbook
- Staffing and structure updates
- Upcoming SciENCv & ORCiD Requirements
- NIH Research Performance and Progress Reports (RPPRs)

# Upcoming NIH Due Dates

NIH Due Date	SR (5-Day) Deadline	Description
December 8* (Sunday)	December 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>F Series Fellowships <i>Individual</i> National Research Service Awards (including F31 Diversity) <i>new, renewal, resubmission</i></li> </ul>
January 25* (Saturday)	January 20	All - new, renewal, resubmission, revision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Project Grants and Center Grants (P-series)</li> <li>Research Demonstration Edu. Projects (R18, U18, R25)</li> <li><i>Institutional</i> National Research Service Awards (T-Series)</li> <li>Multiple other activity codes (C, D, G, S, U)</li> </ul>
February 5	January 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New R01, U01</li> </ul>
February 12	February 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Career Development (new) K-series</li> </ul>

\* *Deadline moved to next business day*

# 5-Day Proposal Deadline Policy Overview

- In order to guarantee on-time sponsor submission, a complete proposal package needs to arrive in Sponsored Research, **ready for submission to the sponsor**, at least **5 business days or earlier** before the proposal deadline.
- Final proposal packages that arrive after the 5-day cutoff will be submitted on a first-in, first-out basis, as time allows.
  - Any remaining non-compliant proposals at the end of the business day on the deadline will not be guaranteed submission.

# Winter Recess: Office Closure & Deadlines

- **Friday, December 13, 2024: DUE to SR**
  - All transactions that have a sponsor deadline before Winter Recess are due
  - RPPRs (due Jan. 1) should be complete and routed to SR
- **Tues. December 24 – Wed. January 1: CLOSED**
  - Northwestern University administrative offices are closed
  - Regular Sponsored Research office operations are suspended
- **Thurs. January 2, 2025: OPEN**
  - Sponsored Research reopens with normal business hours

# Sponsored Research Handbook



A comprehensive guide to sponsored research processes, definitions, and activities.

An 'encyclopedia' of Sponsored Research at Northwestern University, organized by topic areas.

Tool to onboard new staff in the research administration field, or use as desk reference for existing staff.

<https://sponsoredresearch.northwestern.edu/resources/policies-guidance/>

# Sponsored Research Handbook

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. The Proposal
3. Award Acceptance
4. Award Management
5. Subawards
6. Non-funded Agreements
7. Clinical Trial Agreements

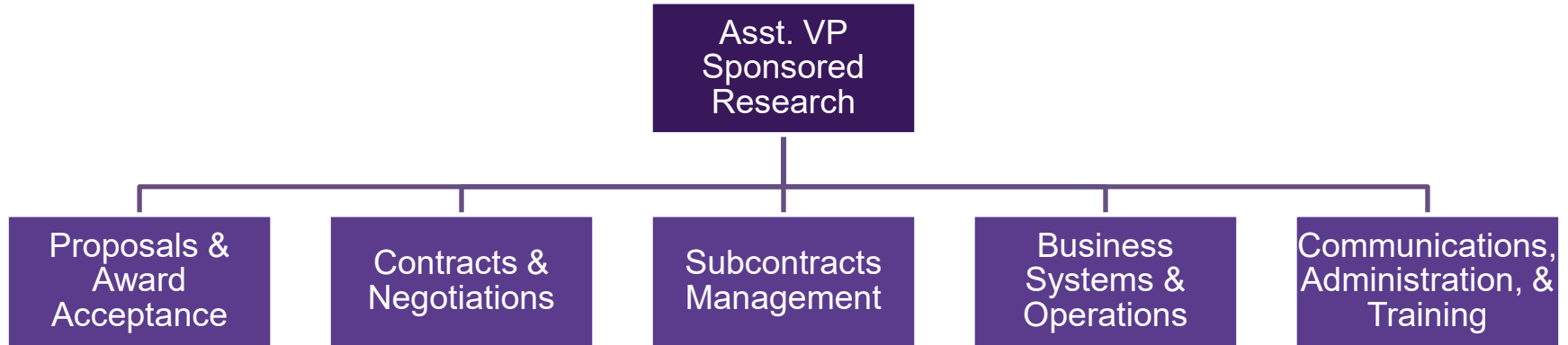
## Fun facts

- 58 pages of information at the click of a button
- Includes topics such as:
  - Gift vs. Grant
  - Key elements of a NOA
  - Federal contracting terms
  - And more!
- Includes links to other NU sites

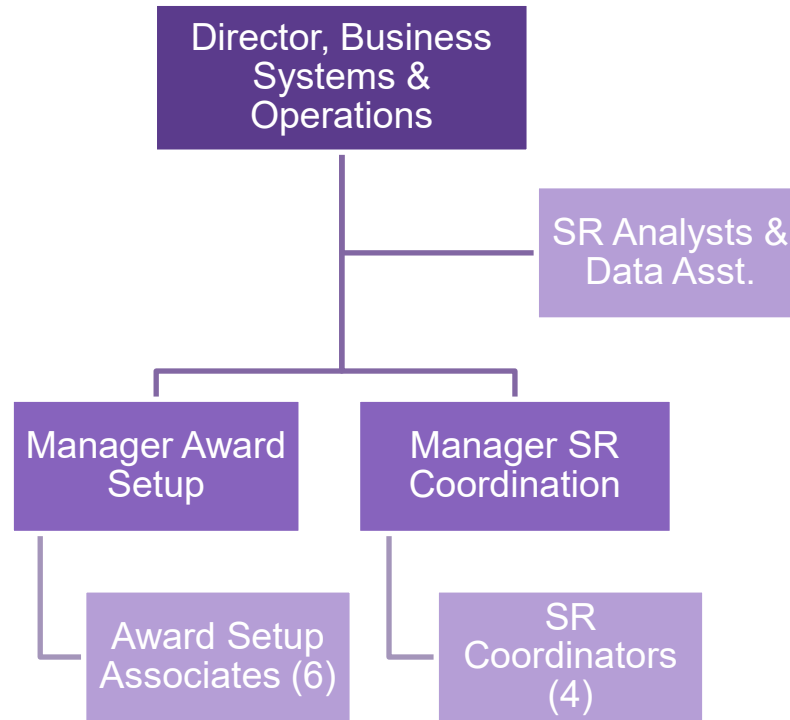
# Staffing & Structure Updates



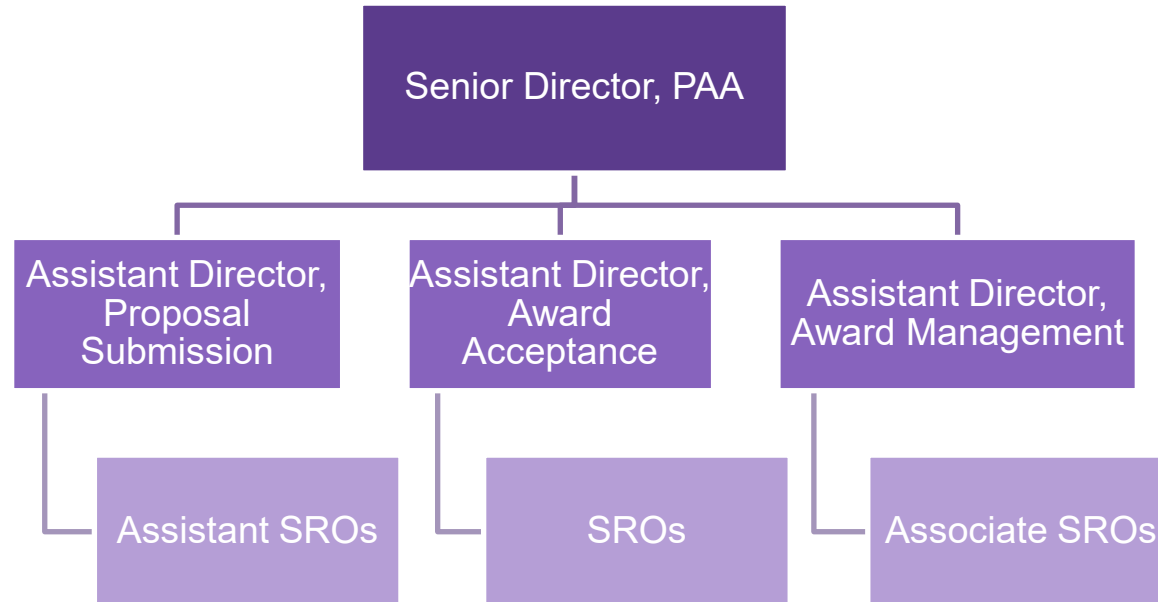
# SR Organization Chart



# Business Systems & Operations



# Proposals & Award Acceptance



# Upcoming SciENCv & ORCiD Requirements

Karen Guzman  
Galter Health Sciences Library & Learning Center

# Changes to the NIH biosketch

For applications due on or after **May 25, 2025**:



- All applicants must use NIH's SciENCv to generate:
  - **Common Form Biosketch**
  - **Common Form Current and Pending (Other) Support**
  - A new NIH Biographical Sketch Supplemental form will capture three required agency-specific data elements: **Personal Statement**, **Contributions to Science**, and **Honors**

[NIH-NOT-OD-24-163](#)

# ORCID Requirement



Senior/Key Personnel must:

- Have an ORCID iD
- Enter the ORCID iD in the Persistent Identifier (PID) section of the Common Forms
- Link the ORCID iD to the eRA Commons Personal Profiles

Get help with ORCID at  
<https://sites.northwestern.edu/orcid>

[NIH-NOT-OD-24-163](#)

# What can you do now?

## NIH-funded Investigators / Applicants

- **Get an ORCiD if you don't have one**, then:
  - Link ORCiD to your **NU NetID**
  - Link ORCiD to your **eRA Commons account**
  - Link ORCiD to your **NCBI account** (SciENcv and MyBibliography)
- **Delegate** RAs & grant support staff appropriate access to your ORCiD, eRA Commons and MyNCBI / SciENcv accounts
  - If the RA has delegated access to the PI's NCBI My Bibliography, they probably have access to SciENcv, too

# What can you do now?

## Research Administrators / Grant Support Staff

- Make sure you have an **eRA Commons account**
  - Contact your departmental RA to get one through Northwestern Sponsored Research, if you don't have one
- **Accept NCBI/SciENCv delegation** from all investigators you support
  - If you already have delegate access to their NCBI My Bibliography, you should have access to SciENCv, too
- **Start populating** investigators' Current and Pending (Other) Support forms now with existing awards
- **Get an ORCiD** if you don't have one



# How we're helping



A collaboration among Sponsored Research, Research Administration Managers, and Galter Health Sciences Library is preparing a webinar, presentation materials, and online guides to assist faculty and research administrators with these changes.

# Notices & Resources

- [NIH-NOT-OD-24-163](#)
- NIH Grants & Funding notice on 2025 adoption of [Common Forms for Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending \(Other\) Support](#)
- NIH Grants & Funding [Biosketch Format Page](#)
- NU Sponsored Research [Upcoming NIH Common Forms Changes and Resources](#)
- Galter Library [NIH Biosketch GalterGuide](#)

# Research Performance and Progress Reports (RPPRs)

# Presenters / Advisors

**Carrie Holbo**, Assistant Director, Proposals & Award Acceptance  
Sponsored Research

**Jonathan Okstad**, Manager, Research Administration  
Basic Science Administration, Feinberg School of Medicine

**Melanie Mkrdichian**, Associate Director, Research Administration  
Basic Science Administration, Feinberg School of Medicine

**TJ Hubbs**, Manager, Research Administration  
Preventative Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine

**Carol Schwermin Govern**, Senior Research Administrator  
Robert R. McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science

# Internal Resources

- Sponsored Research Website
- Sponsored Research Handbook
- CERES Community Grants Reference Guide

# External Resources

- NIH Grants Policy Statement
- NIH RPPR Instruction Guide (updated October 2024)



*NOTE: There are some **changes related to SR staff assignments and review processes** that will be highlighted today.*

# RPPRs: The Importance of Compliance

In accepting a grant, the **institution and PI agree to comply with sponsor policies**, including submitting final reports in a timely manner.

When reports are not submitted, NIH may unilaterally close an award, which can have **serious impact on the university's ability to receive future awards**.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

## One Scientist Neglected His Grant Reports. Now U.S. Agencies Are Withholding Grants for an Entire University.

By *Francie Diep*  
APRIL 10, 2024

The National Institutes of Health, the Office of Naval Research, and the U.S. Army are withholding all of their grants from the University of California at San Diego because one scientist failed to turn in required final reports for two of his grants, according to a message sent to the campus community on Tuesday.

We are concerned that your institution has been unable to comply with the terms and conditions of the award by submitting the required closeout documents. As previously noted, failure to submit timely and accurate closeout documents may affect future funding to the organization. Additionally, without NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY's cooperation in submitting acceptable final reports, NIH may take unilateral action to close the grant as a measure of last resort, and may also take additional actions, including, but not limited to, enforcement actions that may affect future funding. Unilateral closeout is a measure of last resort.

NIH Enforcement of Unilateral Closeout Reporting in the System for Award Management Responsibility/Qualification (formerly Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIS))

Notice Number:  
NOT-OD-24-055

[Key Dates](#)

Release Date:

January 23, 2024

### 8.5.2 Remedies for Noncompliance or Enforcement Actions: Suspension, Termination, and Withholding of Support

If a recipient has failed to comply with the terms and conditions of award, NIH may take one or more enforcement actions which include disallowing costs, withholding of further awards, or wholly or partly suspending the grant, pending corrective action. NIH may also terminate the grant in whole or in part as outlined in 2 CFR Part 200.340. The regulatory procedures that pertain to suspension and termination are specified in 2 CFR Parts 200.340 through 200.343.

# Sponsored Research RPPR Team



NIH RPPRs are now reviewed by the **Assistant Sponsored Research Officers**, aka the “proposal team.”



# RPPR Due Dates

## Annual RPPR Due Dates

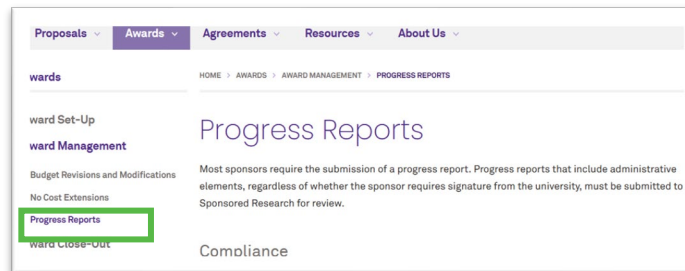
- SNAP (Streamlined Noncompeting Award Process): due 45 days before the next budget period start date (although none before the start of an NCE period)
- Non-SNAP: due 60 days before the next budget period start date (requires a budget)
- Multi-year funded (MYF): due annually on or before the anniversary date

## Interim and Final RPPR Dues Dates

- Due 120 days from the end date of the competitive segment



SR has added a Progress Reports page where you can find lists of upcoming NIH and NSF required reports.





# CERES Deliverables

**Deliverables** are created in CERES by SR as part of award setup but the **department can add or update them as needed** (for example, to add required interim reports, or those needed for multi-year awards).

CERES will send reminders prior to the due date to ensure on-time submission. NIH will also send reminders to the PI.

Modifications

Totals

Funding Allocations

Deliverables

Subawards

Child Awards

Related Projects

Reviewers

Correspondence

History

The deliverables associated with this award are listed below. If you want to modify the deliverables, use the Manage Deliverables activity.

Filter by ?

Owner First

Enter text to search

Q

+ Add Filter

✕ Clear All

	Deliverable	Owner First	Owner Last	Due Date	Status	Completion Date
Complete	RPPR	Bharath	Chandrasekaran	2/15/2024	Not Started	
Complete	RPPR 2	Bharath	Chandrasekaran	2/15/2025	Not Started	
Complete	Final RPPR	Bharath	Chandrasekaran	7/31/2026	Not Started	

3 items

<

page

1

of 1

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# Annual RPPRs: Routing in CERES

Annual RPPRs must be routed via a **Continuation** funding proposal record in CERES.

The record will automatically route to the **Assistant SRO** for your capsule, but it may be reassigned due to absences or high volume. Note: a copy of the RPPR or any of the documents it contains does NOT need to be uploaded; **SR can access it in Commons.**



Budgets	SF424 Summary	History	Reviewers	Attachments	Follow-on Submissions	...
Progress Report						
ID	Name	Date Modified	Owner	State	Submission Type	
FP-SP0077089- Con1	Importance and function of highly conserved substrates - Continuation	3/19/2024 12:35 PM	Sklar, Aaron	Draft	Continuation	

Continuation records are not used to capture **supplemental funding** and are not required for **final or interim reports**.



RPPRs follow the regular **first-in, first-out review order** and must be routed in accordance with the **five-day deadline policy** to guarantee on-time submission.

SR does not prioritize late RPPRs at the expense of other proposals in the queue.

# Sponsored Research Review

**SR does not review technical components**, but the PI and department should be sure to follow the **RPPR Instruction Guide** carefully to **ensure all required content is included**.

SR review focuses on:

- Ensuring all **publications are compliant**
- Identifying any **key personnel effort changes, changes in scope/aims** or other items that may require **prior approval**
- **Other Support compliance**
- Accurate reflection of and strong justifications for any **large unobligated balances**
- Standard review of **detailed budgets for non-SNAP awards**
- Verification of **current IRB/IACUC approvals**



While not a substitute for NIH guidance, the **Sponsored Research Handbook** also includes information about these requirements, as well as common issues identified after submission.

# Best Practices

- **Deadlines** are not specified in the Con- record; we recommend you add it to the short title, particularly for overdue reports.

Example: *Due 11/15 | RPPR | Smith*

ADD TO SHORT TITLE IF POSSIBLE

NO DUE DATE IN SR QUEUE

Nino	Campos	11/8/2024 9:37 AM	FP00009617	REACH-OB-23	Jain	Cystic Fibrosis Foundation	11/22/2024	Target Deadline
Vianey	Rodriguez	11/8/2024 10:11 AM	FP- SP0061923- Con2	A deubiquitination module controls Treg adaptation to tumor microenvironment - Continuation	Fang	National Cancer Institute		
Vianey	Rodriguez	11/8/2024 10:22 AM	FP00009635	Geraci - Brown Investigator Award	Geraci	Brown Science Foundation	11/11/2024	Firm Deadline

- Anytime you need to e-mail SR outside of CERES, please always include both the **NIH award number** and the **CERES reference number**.
- **Remind PIs to work through their Research Administration team** – they often reach out often directly to SR as they are not aware of internal processes.

# Other Support Review

*Why does SR review this if the PI has signed it?*  
**NIH pays very close attention to potential overcommitment.**  
*As the university's AOR, SR must review to ensure compliance.*

- SR will review against the **GA401 (Current Awards)** and **GA402 (Pending Proposals)**  
You should ensure that key personnel effort is reflected correctly in CERES, from the proposal through the life of the award. *We should not rely on “shadow systems”; the GA401 and GA402 should be the most accurate sources for review.*  
If there is a **mistake** in the CERES award, alert the Award Set Up Associate for your capsule. (No AMR is needed).  
If **changes** are needed post-award, review the sponsor guidelines to determine if prior approval is required, and route an AMR as needed. *Some prior approvals can be requested via the RPPR, but NU still needs to make the change internally, which is processed via an AMR.*
- At minimum, **all projects listed on the GA401/GA402 must be present \*\*\***, and no project should list **zero effort**. *\*\*\*There are allowable exceptions – e.g. a PI does not need to list fellowship awards for which they have no effort as the mentor, or equipment grants, etc.*

# Other Support Review (continued)

- **Some variance is allowable.** For example, a PI may list a project as Active even if it does not show that way on the GA401, because award set up is not yet finalized internally. Or an unfunded proposal may still be listed as Pending. (Use the Proposal Status Confirmation feature in CERES to let SR know to mark it as Not Funded.)
- **Proactively explain any major inconsistencies.** If SR sees multiple unexplained differences, we will stop review and return the record for clarification. To avoid this, upload a recent Cognos report with explanations to the Attachments tab.
- **SR is not reviewing the listed effort or grant amounts.** Be aware of the sponsor's policies on effort reductions, including minimum effort required by a specific institute.
- Make sure to **list sponsor award numbers** (or the mechanism for pending proposals.) You do not need to list NU's internal CERES numbers.
- Include all **required sections: Active, Pending, In-kind and Overlap.** SR cannot verify In-kind or Overlap, so these are only checked to confirm they are present.
- Use an **acceptable signature.** (DocuSign, no JPEGs).
- Include verification (spreadsheet, etc.) that **total effort does not exceed 12CM.**
- **OS for non-NU personnel is not reviewed.** Departments should confirm that those required are present, current, and contain valid signatures.

***REMINDER: NIH will require use of the Common Form for Other Support beginning May 2025.***

# Unobligated Balances

- NIH is also very attentive to **large unobligated balances**.
- They may require submission of a spending plan or address it through issuance of a mid-term No Cost Extension, or even potential award offsets.
- NIH is able to see the exact amount that has been invoiced to date and may require explanation of delays.
- Departments should provide supporting documentation on how they established the unobligated balance if it appears to be over (or potentially over) the threshold. SR will review against NU Financials to verify we are responding accurately.
- A clear justification must also be provided in the RPPR.



SR is working to revise/clarify the **Unobligated Balance Calculator template**.

# Interim/Final RPPRs

## No CERES record is needed.

Send an e-mail to the **Assistant SRO** for your capsule confirming that the IRPPR/FRPPR has been reviewed by the department and is ready for submission.



We recommend (but do not require) that you **send an e-mail off the CERES award record**. This helps us more easily identify the correct internal record and provides greater transparency to backups.

- [Request Award Modification](#)
- [Create Continuation](#)
- [Terms And Conditions](#)
- [Manage Ancillary Reviews](#)
- [Set Award Relationships](#)
- [Upload Award Documents](#)
- [Manage Tags](#)
- [Send Email](#)



# Routing in Commons

! When an RPPR (or FRPPR) is routed for SR review in CERES, it should be also routed to the **Assistant SRO** in Commons. All ASROs now have **Signing Official privileges in Commons and can submit individually**. An RPPR will be immediately submitted if there are no issues identified. If corrections are needed, it will be returned to the PI.

! **Beginning immediately**, please use the following contacts:

**Administrative Official**

Carrie Holbo

**Signing Official**

Assistant SRO for your Capsule

# Check for Errors



To avoid requests for the PI to re-route a record, **please ensure that all errors are corrected** before routing to SR in Commons.

<b>Award Number</b> SR01CA258833-04	<b>Program Director(PD)/Principal Investigator(PI)</b> Horiuchi, Dai
<b>Institution</b> NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY	<div><a href="#">Edit RPPR</a> <a href="#">Check for Errors</a> <a href="#">View RPPR as PDF</a> <a href="#">View Routing History</a> <a href="#">Route to Next Reviewer</a> <a href="#">Submit</a></div>

RPPR | **Grant List** | Rppr Menu | A Cover Page | B Accomplishments | C Products | D Participants | E Impact | F Changes | G Special Reporting Req | H Budget

RPPR Menu ?

Error(s)

**Admin Core-6264 - Section A. Cover Page** (ID: 201309)  
A.2. Personal Profile information for the Signing Official assigned to the RPPR has the following errors and must be corrected by the SO: Please complete Employments section in Commons Profile. (ID: 201295)  
A.2. Personal Profile information for the Signing Official assigned to the RPPR has the following errors and must be corrected by the SO: Please enter email address in Commons Profile. (ID: 201297)  
**Admin Core-6264 - Section B. Accomplishments** (ID: 201309)  
B.1. An answer is required. (ID: 201238)  
B.2. An answer is required. (ID: 201240)  
B.3. An answer is required. (ID: 201241)

# Warnings

If there are **warnings**, please address them in a comment in the CERES record or e-mail. Warnings will not prevent submission, but they will require additional follow up. Every attempt should be made to correct the issue before submission, to avoid additional work.

## Warning(s)

This progress report includes one or more publications that are out of compliance with the NIH Public Access Policy. Compliance with the NIH Public Access Policy is a legal requirement and a term and condition of all NIH awards. If you have questions about the Policy, please check the [NIH Public Access Website](#) or send an email to [PublicAccess@nih.gov](mailto:PublicAccess@nih.gov). (ID: 201299)



If there is a warning related to **Human Subjects Data**, simply initiate the update in ASSIST; members of the **BSO team** **will submit** upon receiving the ASSIST notification.



# Progress Report Follow Up

As noted, NIH frequently requests additional information, either via e-mail or a request to submit a **PRAM** (Progress Report Additional Materials) in Commons.

In addition to **Other Support** and **unobligated balances**, issues often include:

- Lack of mention of **IDPs** in B.4
- **Responses marked N/A** instead of Yes or No, or vice versa (e.g. a non-MPI award should mark N/A for questions related to any changes in the MPI leadership plan as it is not applicable.)
- Manuscripts are referred to in the Accomplishments section but not reported in the **Publications** section.
- Other **missing information** often required per the NOA but not stated on the RPPR form itself.
- **Public access** compliance



*SR does not review technical components of the RPPR; these should be checked by the PI and dept.*

# Other Progress Reports

Other progress reports may also need to be captured via a **Continuation** record:

- **Subk RPPRs** that require SR signature on a face page or LOI.
- Other **non-NIH progress reports** that require SR signature or submission via an external system (e.g. ProposalCentral).

Items that **do not need a Continuation** record:

- S10 usage reports: send via e-mail to your Assistant SRO.
- FFRs: these are submitted by ASRSP.
- Invention/patent reports: these are coordinated between SR and INVO.
- Requests for an **annual rebudget separate from a progress report**.



Note: if provided as part of a Continuation proposal, the department does not need to also submit an Award Modification Request for rebudgeting. However, any other time revised budget information is provided to a sponsor, you must route an AMR.

## Develop a Department / Division Process

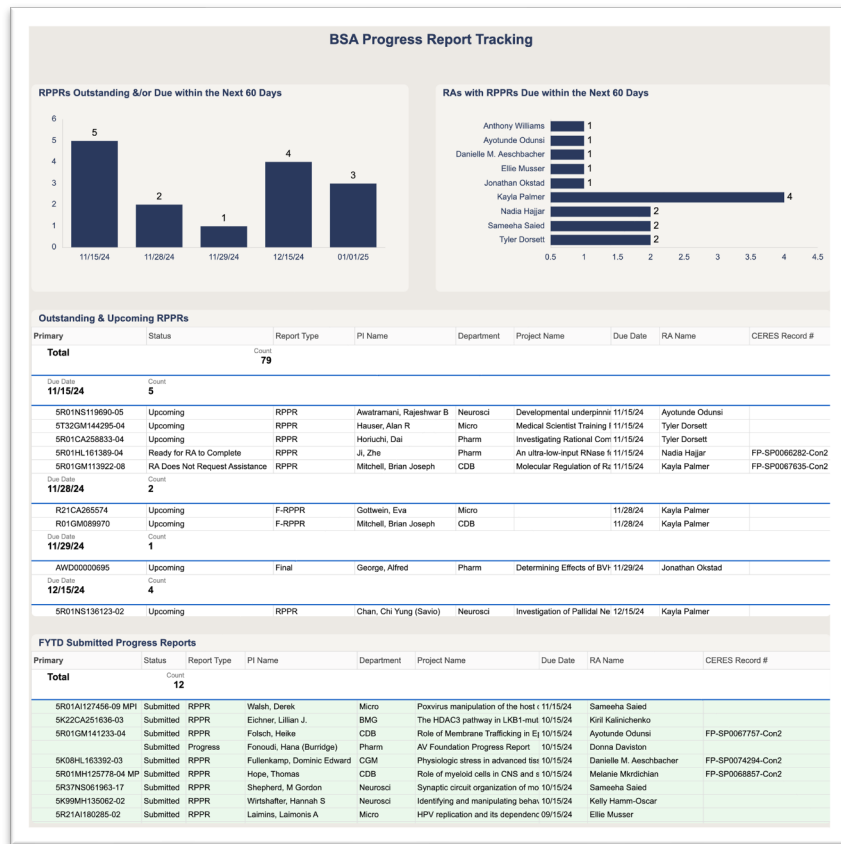
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- ```

graph TD
    A([Find All Components  
Pages 100-101]) --> B[Find All Nodes And  
Generate Graphs]
    B --> C[SQLSERVER Transfer  
Control]
    C --> D[/Find All Nodes, Graph  
Tables/]
    D --> E[Add All Nodes, Graph  
Tables To Database  
For Backup]
    E --> F[Add All Components  
(Server Tables, CD/DVD,  
Removable Storage, Other  
External Storage)]
    F --> G[Add All Nodes To The  
Complete Graph]
    G --> H[Add All Nodes, Graph  
Tables]
    H --> I{Data Backup?}
    I -- Yes --> J[Data Backup Done]
    I -- No --> K[Data Backup]
    J --> L[/Final Code Build  
In C++ Language/]
    K --> L
    L --> M([Execution])
  
```



# Automated Process

- RA 45-day Notice
- RA 30-day Notice with request for Asst. RA Support
- RA 5-day Notice
- RA Day of Final Reminder



# Managing RPPRs: Reminders

- Multi-year award reports and IRPPR/FRPPR dates **do not show up in the RPPR list** in Commons (it only displays the award end date).
- Ask PIs to grant **delegate access** to more than one RA in your department/division to ensure backup access and allow multiple people to check deadlines and status.
- Work with **grad students** to get their Commons usernames set up as part of orientation, to avoid last minute scrambles.
- Used **template language** to ease workload and process: PI instructions on how-to, Link to NIH instructions, Email signature, etc.
- Be sure to **click SAVE** when moving between sections or unsaved data may be lost. When done, click CANCEL to return to the RPPR Menu screen.
- Review new requirements in **updated RPPR guide** as of 10/01/2024.



# Questions?

| PROPOSAL<br>SUBMISSION         | AWARD<br>MANAGEMENT             | AWARD<br>ACCEPTANCE             |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Carrie Holbo<br>Asst. Director | Open Position<br>Asst. Director | Jason Hawkins<br>Asst. Director |
| Assistant SROs                 | Associate SROs                  | SROs                            |

Use the **Find My Capsule** tool to find your department's capsule.



Join us in early 2025 for the  
Winter CLEAR Meeting in Evanston  
(Date TBD)