



FEDERAL DEMONSTRATION PARTNERSHIP

Introduction to the FDP

By Jennifer Taylor and Michael Kusiak

This Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) update article stems from a recent series of conversations between members of the FDP and a number of NCURA members. Although a significant number of members of the FDP are also NCURA members, it has become clear from the conversations that a large number of NCURA members are either unaware of the FDP and/or know relatively little about it. As the work of the FDP has much to offer NCURA members, this brief update will provide an overview of some key elements of the FDP. We hope the update will encourage our readers to further explore the FDP webpage (www.thefdp.org), read previous articles in the *NCURA Magazine* regarding elements of the work of FDP, and consider becoming involved in FDP as participants.

What is the FDP?

The Federal Demonstration Partnership is a collaborative effort between recipients of federal research funding and the federal agencies that fund those recipients. Institutions of higher education – from multi-campus research universities to emerging research universities – along with independent research institutes, work with their federal colleagues to reduce the administrative burden associated with federally-funded research. FDP provides an organizational opportunity for universities and nonprofits to work collaboratively with federal agency officials to enhance research nationally. Convened by the Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable of the National Academies, FDP brings together ten federal agencies and 154 institutional recipients of federal funds and is supported by the Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable of the National Academies. This unique partnership started in 1986 by a collaboration of five federal agencies, the members of the Florida State University System and the University of Miami.

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Every few years, the membership of FDP considers whether this partnership should continue and in what form. Since its inception, FDP has evolved through multiple phases to its current form in Phase VI with strategic planning now taking place for Phase VII. Approximately 450 individuals from our

associated institutions work collaboratively during three annual meetings per year. Much of FDP's work takes place through committees and working groups that are convened to tackle specific areas of concern for the research enterprise. Many of these committees and working groups work between meetings on regular conference calls to advance projects of importance to FDP membership.

What is the focus of the FDP?

The primary goal of the FDP is to address and to reduce the administrative burdens that are experienced by investigators and institutions, as they seek and carry out research grants and contracts. This work may resonate with many NCURA members.

You are likely very familiar with FDP's sub-award templates. These templates were developed by FDP members to track federal requirements and build consensus around standard documents to reduce the time to negotiate and execute projects among FDP members.

A cornerstone effort of FDP is the Faculty

A unique aspect of FDP is the active participation of faculty representatives

Workload Survey, which tells the story of the impact of administrative burden that faculty at FDP member institutions face. This data-rich survey provides a snapshot of many of the issues that FDP seeks to address and has been cited by Congressional and Administration supporters of federally-funded research.

The FDP has also developed the FDP Expanded Clearinghouse, where FDP members input commonly requested information about their institutions and about their compliance with various federal requirements for administering federal awards.

FDP participants are currently developing a tool that will help investigators to determine if their IRB protocol is exempt from full IRB review. Also under development is a Compliance Unit Standard Procedure (CUSP), an online repository sharing standard procedures used in animal care protocols with the broader animal welfare compliance community. Details on

these and other products can be found on the FDP website.

How do I Become Involved?

FDP membership is open to recipients of federal funding prior to the launch of a new phase. This shouldn't stop you from participating if your institution is not a member. "Friends of FDP" are welcome to participate at FDP.

Active participation is encouraged of all FDP members. This means not just attending meetings, which feature valuable engagement with federal agency and fellow research administrators from across the country, but actively engaging in committee and working group efforts.

A unique aspect of FDP is the active participation of faculty representatives, who bring their perspectives as researchers (and often senior administrators, as well) to the mix.

To find out if your institution is a member, review the complete list available on the FDP

website and, if so, contact your Office for Research to find out who is currently representing your institution and how you can become a member of that team. The current strategic planning process will develop the guidelines for new institutional members, which should be available on the website when completed. We will also provide details in this column. ■



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