FDP September 2023 Meeting - Federal Agency Updates

National Science Foundation
For the purposes of NSF, please see the link to the presentation and direct questions to the NSF Policy Office at policy@nsf.gov.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Jennifer Robbins, Extramural Management Specialist, Office of Research and Development, presented the EPA update. Jennifer reported on (1) Open and upcoming research funding opportunities; (2) Updates to terms and conditions; (3) EPA Grants Community Library of FAQs; (4) EPA Grants webinars; and (5) EPA Grant and Research Grants Listservs. Jennifer highlighted an open research funding opportunity in nanosensor technology to detect, monitor and degrade pollutants; and anticipated research funding opportunities in treatment technology demonstration using practical and affordable manganese treatment for small drinking water systems, PFAS in agriculture, resilience of coastal ecosystems, sustainable green chemistry and air quality information to address community-identified concerns. She reported on updates to EPA's General Terms and Conditions including post-award disclosure of current and pending support on research grants with new foreign support; terms relating to waste, fraud and abuse; as well as EPA access to grants records. The Grants Office has compiled a library resource of FAQs for the community based on frequently received questions. Upcoming EPA Grants Award Process Webinar topics include non-competitive EPA grants, competition process, and EPA Grant Terms and Conditions. This url links to past webinars. For ongoing guidance, training, and updates to EPA grants policies and requirements, grantees are encouraged to subscribe to the EPA Grants Listserv.
Presenter email: robbins.jennifer@epa.gov

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
Christiane Diallo with the Grants Policy and Compliance team in the Office of Procurement Management and Policy Division began with an update on NASA's training opportunities, including a session currently available on NASA's YouTube channel and upcoming sessions in December 2023. There were two Requests for Information (RFI) posted by NASA; one seeking information on the impacts requesting applicants to mark sections of their applications as exempt from Freedom of Information Act requests, and another on increasing public access to the results of NASA-funded research. The Acquisition Forecast Tool for Grant NOFOs is now available; this tool will be updated twice per year, and is intended to help grantees to plan proactively and better manage resources for submitting proposals. NASA's Conflict of Interest Policy and related terms and conditions have been finalized. The final notice was published in the Federal Register on 08/31/2023, and it includes NASA's response to public comments. The revised policy and terms and conditions are effective 12/01/2023, and will be included in new awards and amendments thereafter. Effective 01/31/2024, all quarterly and final report will have to be submitted in FFR format in the Payment Management System (PMS); NASA award recipients who currently have access to PMS should login to their account (https://pms.psc.gov/grant-recipients/user-access.html) and update their permissions to request access to the FFR module.

NASA's program representative, Mary F. Sladek, provided updates from the Science Mission Directorate (SMD), beginning with an update on the new NASA website; feedback on the new site is welcome. There is a known issue when institutions partner with non-NASA federal entities on NASA awards Funding to a non-NASA agency is not synced to NASA assistance award timing. There are significant delays in getting federal partners their initial funding. The NASA Postdoctoral Program (NPP) For Early-Career and Senior Scientists is available to graduate student applicants, but successful graduate student applicants cannot enter the program until their degree has been conferred. The results of the NASA Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (UAP) Independent Study were released on 09/14/2023 and be accessed on the and the new NASA website. The Biological and Physical Science (BPS) Division within SMD has a new director effective July 2023,Dr. Lisa Carnell.. The BPS Division has also released the results of the Thriving in Space Decadal Survey for 2023-2032. For those interested in eclipses, NASA has a website

to help track the path of the upcoming solar eclipses. Christiane concluded the NASA update with select, highlighted funding opportunities, including graduate student research fellowships, EPSCOR, the University Student Research Challenge, and the Gateway to Blue Skies 2024 Competition Challenge.
Presenter Emails: christiane.diallo@nasa.gov and mary.f.sladek@nasa.gov

USDA/NIFA
Susan Rice, Policy and Oversight Division Director, Office of Grants and Financial presented the NIFA/USDA update. NIFA's move from Washington, DC to Kansas City, MO is complete, they are currently staffed at 350 employees, with an ultimate target of 390. NIFA welcomed a new director Dr. Manjit Misra in May of 2023. Prior to joining NIFA, Dr. Misra was the director of the Seed Science Center at Iowa State University, a position he held from 1991 to 2023. In FY2022, NIFA's budget of $2.2 billion supported 2,500 grants across 70 programs. Over the past fiscal year NIFA has successfully provided funding opportunities and implemented programming through recent legislation, notably the American Rescue Plan Act (including the Inflation Reduction Act),the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act, and the FY23 Consolidated Appropriations Act. Current NIFA priorities include advancing administration priorities, supporting partners, addressing critical needs, and driving federal efforts to advance agricultural related sciences. NIFA is also implementing a grants modernization initiative, key features of which include adopting the eRA Commons platform. Additional streamlining efforts include continued improvements to its Schedule of Program Implementation from RFA to Award Announcement (SPIRA) efforts and refreshing its RFA template. An updated NIFA Federal Financial Assistance Policy Guide is expected to be published in March-April 2024.
Presenter Email: susan.rice@usda.gov

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
Kasima Garst, Deputy Director, Division of Grant Systems Integration in the NIH Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA) presented the NIH update, beginning with policy updates. The SBIR and STTR Extension Act of 2022 reauthorized the SBIR/STTR Program and Pilot Program under the Small Business Act; guide notices NOT-OD-23-092 and NOT-OD-23-139 have since been issued to establish foreign disclosure requirements and minimum performance standards. The guidance for the NIH policy for Subaward/Consortium Written Agreements has been updated per guide notice NOT-OD-23-182, requiring written, signed agreements for all foreign subawards that include all requirements for providing access to copies of all lab notebooks, all data, and all documentation that supports the research outcomes as described in the progress report with a frequency of no less than once per year. Guide notice NOT-OD-23-149, related to notice NOT-OD-22-044 addressing security and confidentiality in peer review, was issued to clarify that the use of generative artificial intelligence technologies is prohibited for the NIH peer review process. Another peer review related notice, NOT-OD-23-156, was issued to implement review integrity and bias awareness and mitigation training modules for reviewers. The modules will be required for all reviewers for the May 2024 council round, and will have to be completed every three years thereafter. Phase 1 of the Data Management and Sharing Plan FDP Pilot began on March 1, 2023, testing two Data Management and Sharing Plan templates; phase 2, on costing policies, will begin in December 2023. Also, related to DMS policy, guide notice NOT-OD-23-161 was issued to remove the requirement for the use of the single DMS costs line item in applications. There was one systems updates, namely that on August 5, 2023 the updated FORMS-H application guide was posted to incorporate changes in recent guide notices for SBIR/STTR applications (NOT-OD-23-139) and removing the instruction for a single DMS costs line item (NOT-OD-23-161). The session concluded with policy reminders, specifically NOT-OD-23-111, a reminder of NIH Policies for NRSA Stipends, Compensation and Other Income; a reminder about annual RPPR due dates; guidance on recipients who need to return funds (see NOT-OD-23-102); a reminder about required lanaguge for government support clauses on patented intellectual property (see section 8.2.4 of the GPS); and lastly a reminder about grant closeout requirements.
Presenter Email: GrantsPolicy@mail.nih.gov