MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 2020

TO: Research Foundation Project Directors and Administrative Staff

FROM: Paul C. Parker, Associate Vice President for Research Administration and Research Foundation Operations Manager

SUBJECT: Summer Sponsored Project Activity Notes and Important Notices

Each year, this document is distributed to Principal Investigators and their project teams to provide important information to assist with managing sponsored programs during the very busy and often challenging summer months. This year we are facing an additional challenge … COVID-19. In a time of so much uncertainty, I want to reassure you that staff in the Office of Sponsored Programs and Sponsored Funds Administration are working to maintain essential research administration functions and continue to be available to support your efforts.

In response to this pandemic, we have implemented new procedures and measures to address the current crisis. As you read through these notes you will notice accommodations have been made, such as the waiving of signatures on certain documents, the use of digital signatures, and expansion of electronic forms, to minimize the number of people on campus and adhere to social-distancing guidelines. We ask that you take particular note of deadline dates for submission of payroll and purchasing/reconciliation forms.

We are committed to the health and safety of the entire Binghamton University community and are closely monitoring news and information as it relates to your sponsored program activity. We encourage you to visit the Sponsored Programs and Sponsored Funds websites for additional information or contact the individuals listed in the attached pages with any questions you have. All campus communications regarding coronavirus can be accessed on the COVID-19 website

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support.
SPONSORED PROGRAMS AND SPONSORED FUNDS ADMINISTRATION

Contact List
Sponsored Programs and Sponsored Funds Administration is located in the Biotechnology Building at the Innovative Technologies Complex. Individuals listed below can be contacted at x7-6752 or via the emails indicated.

Account Establishment/Budget Adjustments
Grant and Contract Administrators (GCA)
Tanja deMauro (tdemauro@binghamton.edu)
Jason Dearin (jdearin@binghamton.edu)
Ben Fay (bfay@binghamton.edu)
Jennifer Flanagan (jflanagan@binghamton.edu)
Linda Hoke (lhoke@binghamton.edu)
Elizabeth Luckert (eluckert@binghamton.edu)

Grants Management Staff
Don Miller (demiller@binghamton.edu)
Alexanderia Stebbins (stebbins@binghamton.edu)
Sherline Williams (sherwill@binghamton.edu)
Linda Fox (lfox@binghamton.edu)

Effort Reporting (Certification of Salary Distribution Forms)
Alexanderia Stebbins, Don Miller

Financial Reports, Invoices to Sponsors
Sherline Williams, Don Miller

Checks to be deposited to Research Foundation Accounts
Geri Ashley (gashley@binghamton.edu), Paul Parker (pparker@binghamton.edu)

Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR) transactions
Don Miller, Paul Parker, Alexanderia Stebbins

Independent Contractor, Non-Resident Alien Payments
Julian Johnson (jjohnson@binghamton.edu), Don Miller, Paul Parker

No Cost Extensions
Grant and Contract Administrators, Lisa Gilroy (lgilroy@binghamton.edu)

Policy and Contract Issues or Other Sponsored Project Problems
Paul Parker, Lisa Gilroy, Tanja deMauro, Don Miller

Project Terms and Conditions
Lisa Gilroy, Paul Parker, Grant and Contract Administrators
Proposal Preparation and Submission
Grant and Contract Administrators

Property Control, Equipment Inventory, Equipment Insurance
Geri Ashley

Purchasing, Bid Preparation, Supplier and Human Subject Payments
Julian Johnson, Chris Karl (ckarl@binghamton.edu)

Refund/Reimbursement checks for deposit to Research Foundation Accounts
Julian Johnson, Chris Karl, Tyler Whiting (twhiting@binghamton.edu), Marianne Cannon (macannon@binghamton.edu), Kelly Luce (kluce@binghamton.edu) Geri Ashley

RF Human Resources and Payroll
Appointments, benefits, check distribution, hourly payroll and leave records:
  Tom Popielarski (tpopiela@binghamton.edu)
  Emily Hermanovitch (ehermano@binghamton.edu)
  Kendra Woods (kwoods@binghamton.edu)
  Tammie Hickok (tkickok@binghamton.edu)
  Kathy Korba (kkorba@binghamton.edu)

RF Report Center Access and Training
Alexanderia Stebbins

Summer Faculty Appointments/Calculations
Tom Popielarski, Emily Hermanovitch

Technical Reporting Requirements and Report Submission Dates
Don Miller, Linda Fox

Travel Assistance/Travel Advances/Travel Reimbursement Policy, Other Advances
Tyler Whiting, Julian Johnson, Marianne Cannon, Chris Karl, Kelly Luce
COVID-19 Impacts on Sponsored Programs

COVID-19 is a significant challenge that will continue to impact research and sponsored programs on campus for the near future. Sponsoring agencies are beginning to release guidance regarding impact in project progress and the level of flexibility allowed for the continued charging of costs. Agencies are expecting that progress towards approved scopes of work are continuing and that you can verify the effort of individuals currently being paid in meeting required deliverables. Please remember any costs charged to a sponsored program must be reasonable and necessary for the performance of the project. We cannot assume supplemental funding will be available should the charging of salaries and other expenses during this period result in a shortage of funds.

The Sponsored Programs website is being updated as new information is released from agencies in regards to proposal deadlines, new funding opportunities, and the management of your sponsored program. Please refer to the website or contact grants management or your assigned GCA with any specific questions.

SPONSORED PROGRAMS

New Staff
We are excited to welcome three new Grant and Contract Administrators to the team: Jason Dearin, Ben Fay and Elizabeth Luckert. The Grant and Contract Administrators (GCA) work closely with faculty and staff to identify funding opportunities, review sponsor guidelines, develop and prepare proposals for submission to sponsors, negotiation contracts and awards, issue subawards, and act as the primary liaison with sponsors for no cost extension, budget revisions and approvals for changes in scope. To contact your assigned Grant and Contract Administrator, please refer to the unit assignments listing.

No Cost Extensions
While sponsors expect Principal Investigators to complete projects within the period of performance listed in the award document, additional time may be needed, particularly during this COVID-19 pandemic. If you feel you will need an extension to complete your project, please contact your GCA as soon as possible for guidance.

GRANTS MANAGEMENT

Award Closeout
There are various activities associated with closing out a sponsored project or award, such as final financial reporting. Generally these closeout activities and tasks must be completed within 30 days of the award end date. Therefore, in order to be compliant with sponsor closeout deadlines, it is imperative that PIs timely submit all expenditures for reimbursement within the 30 day period. Late posting of expenditures to a sponsored program budget will not be included in the final financial report and will become the responsibility of the PI to cover those costs.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/PURCHASING

eForms Initiative
The Office of Sponsored Funds Administration, in partnership with Information Technology Services, has embarked on an initiative to transform the most frequently used Research Foundation (RF) paper forms to electronic forms, or E-forms. The E-forms will not only allow for online completion and attachment of necessary documentation, but also electronic workflow for routing, approvals and submission to Sponsored Funds for processing.
Features of the new E-forms include:

- Auto-populated fields to assist users with completion and submission of forms for review and approval
- Automated workflows provide reviewers and approvers with email notifications alerting them when an E-form requires their attention and provides a link to go straight to the submitted form for their review
- Ability to check the status of the review and approval process

To kick off this E-forms initiative, two forms have been released on the Sponsored Funds website: the Signature Authorization form and the Bank of America P-Card Application form. Over the course of the next several months, additional E-forms will be released and posted to the site for principal investigator and project staff use.

**Workshops**
Once normal business operations resume we will schedule multiple RF P-Card and RF Travel workshops via Zoom. Please feel free to send an email to julian.johnson@binghamton.edu with any topics that you would like added to the agenda. We are also happy to provide small group Zoom meetings for project specific topics upon request.

**Start-up Support**
For any faculty member that has start-up funds please feel free to request a Zoom meeting with Tyler Whiting twiting@binghamton.edu at any time to go over your account and any areas where support is needed.

**Monthly Bank of America Procurement Card Reconciliation**
The reconciliation of procurement card statements must be completed monthly and submitted to Sponsored Funds by the end of the following billed month. Please remember to provide all backup documentation tied to the month’s P-card charges. If you are paying for business meeting expense, please provide purpose of the meeting and names of attendees. Please review the procurement card guidelines for the listing of allowable and unallowable purchases.

**Documentation Requirements for Meeting Meal Expenses**
Reimbursement from the Research Foundation for hosting expenses (meals, gatherings) must include an itemized receipt of all expenses, purpose of the event and who participated. This includes reimbursement for working lunches and dinners. The allowance rate is 150% of the location per diem. The gratuity allowance is capped at 20%. If this information is not included, reimbursements will not be processed. This type of expense is generally charged to non-sponsored project types such as infrastructure and fixed price balance account. Alcoholic beverages consumed during business meals and or meetings should be reasonable. As a reminder, reimbursement for alcohol is not allowed on sponsored awards unless specifically necessary for the aim and scope of the project and has received prior sponsor approval.

**RF HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL**
Of particular note when completing appointment forms, whether for new hires or faculty summer effort:

- The requirement of dean or department chair signatures on the form is temporarily being waived
- We are encouraging the adoption and use of an Adobe digital signature when completing and endorsing the interactive appointment form.
**Faculty Summer Salary**
Faculty who have summer salary funding from their sponsored projects should contact Tom Popielarski, tpopiela@binghamton.edu as soon as possible to review form requirements. New faculty members receiving summer salary must complete new hire paperwork before work begins, because the Research Foundation is a separate employer from state HR. We have developed a process for new hire paperwork to temporarily be completed remotely requiring original Form I-9 documents to be presented after Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted. The RF appointment form is available online at https://www.binghamton.edu/research/hr/forms.html

**Student Building Access**
If you are employing students during the summer months, please contact the building administrator to ensure they have access to the necessary offices and laboratories. The listing of building administrators can be accessed at https://www.binghamton.edu/organizations/building-administrators/administrators-list.html.

**2020-2021 Research Foundation Salary Plan**
The Research Foundation is currently developing the 2020-21 salary plan. We will provide further information once it is available. Please be aware that employees of sponsored projects are eligible to receive merit, equity and promotional increases with the approval of the Associate Vice President for Research Administration and RF Operations Manager.

Employee salary adjustments for graduate and undergraduate employees can usually be processed at any time and are not tied to the campus salary plan. Please process a Research Foundation Employee Appointment/Change Form to initiate any salary change. Contact Tom Popielarski or Paul Parker if there are any questions.

**Fringe Benefit Rates for 2020-21**
Fringe benefits are charged for all employees and cannot be waived. For fiscal year 2020-2021 is as follows:
- Regular Employees: 41%
- Postdoctoral Associates: 25%
- Graduate Students: 16%
- Undergraduate Students (enrolled full time during the spring and fall semesters): 5%
- Summer Only appointments: 14%

All rate changes are expected to be effective with the pay period beginning June 22, 2020. Please contact Grants Management or your GCA for information on fringe benefit rate information for fiscal years beyond 2020-21. Please contact Paul Parker with any questions.

**Payroll Periods and Vacation Days**
The Summer Salary payroll period begins May 18 and Ends August 21. This period is the same for faculty and students, including those transferring from state appointments. If funds are available and sponsor policy permits, faculty may remain on the Research Foundation payroll up to, but not more than, 66 business days regardless of the length of the summer period. When faculty work full time on their project(s) during the summer, sponsors expect full time effort during this period. Any leave, with the exception of holidays, is leave without pay. If a faculty member is involved in activities other than sponsor related project activity during their full time employment, there could be adverse actions.

**Note:** We verify faculty who receive salary for summer teaching and who are involved in and receiving salary for new student orientation. If necessary, we will adjust their Research Foundation compensation.
Appointment Forms
Due to heavy summer volume, appointment forms should be submitted early to the RF HR/Payroll Office to assure they are processed timely. **The deadline for appointment forms and accompanying documents is payday, Friday, of the previous payroll.** New hires must complete a Form I-9 and present original documents supporting that they are eligible to work in the United States after an offer has been made and **before the start date.** Additional new hire paperwork will also be completed with RF HR/Payroll to include tax withholding forms and direct deposit authorization. We will require a voided check be included with direct deposit. If an employee was previously on the RF payroll, tax withholding forms and direct deposit forms will only be required if changes are necessary. Existing employees may access “Employee Self-Service” on [www.rfsuny.org](http://www.rfsuny.org) to change tax withholdings, direct deposit and address.

Employee appointment or change forms are available from the RF HR/Payroll Office, located in Room 1214 of the Biotechnology Building in the Innovative Technologies Complex and online as linked below: [https://www.binghamton.edu/research/hr/forms.html](https://www.binghamton.edu/research/hr/forms.html)

Social Security Withholding
All US and resident alien undergraduate and graduate student employees must pay Social Security through the summer unless enrolled full-time during the summer at Binghamton University. Graduate students must enroll in one (1) credit hour of either thesis dissertation or independent study. Undergraduates must enroll in three (3) credit hours to remain exempt from Social Security taxes. Students must produce a copy of their class schedule detailing the credits enrolled when asking for the student FICA exemption.

Graduate Student Health Insurance
Graduate student employees are eligible for the student health insurance plan during the summer if they meet certain criteria. Please contact Kendra Woods, kwoods@binghamton.edu for information on Graduate Student insurance eligibility.

Graduate Research Project Assistants whose appointments terminate after May 8, 2020 and who expect to be reappointed on the RF payroll in the fall, are eligible to continue their health insurance coverage through the summer by paying in advance the employee’s share of insurance costs.

Documentation was sent in March requesting confirmation of summer insurance eligibility. If you have not responded to that email, please do so as soon as possible.

Retirement Contributions
The Research Foundation may contribute to an employee’s TIAA account depending upon certain eligibility factors. Students, however, do not receive such contributions. Certain employees do not automatically receive Research Foundation contributions to their TIAA accounts. New faculty receiving summer salary must complete and return a Request for Retirement Service Credit based on Prior Employment no later than August 21, 2020 in order to waive the one-year waiting period.

Eligible summer employees appointed to the Research Foundation payroll may make voluntary tax deferred retirement contributions through salary reduction to TIAA. Please notify Tom Popielarski in advance of an appointment start date on the Research Foundation payroll. Summer employees must re-enroll annually for recurring deductions.
**Drug Free Workplace**
Employees appointed to the Research Foundation payroll, including summer faculty, are required by federal law to receive and adhere to the Research Foundation’s policy on the Drug Free Workplace Act. The policy is a condition of employment. Linked below is the policy:
http://www.rfsuny.org/media/RFSUNY/Policies/per_drug-free-workplace_pol.htm

**On-The-Job Injuries**
Notify Tammy Hickok immediately at ext. 7-2319 of any on the job injury. Notification should be made no matter how minor the injury may appear. We will assist employees and supervisors with completion of the necessary Workers Compensation insurance forms and help with issues that arise with hospitals, doctors and emergency rooms.