

From: Pell, Eva J. [mailto:ejp@psu.edu]
Sent: Friday, February 27, 2009 4:33 PM

Dear Deans and URC members,

I am writing to update you on the status of our efforts to prepare for stimulus funds to support research and what we have learned from the various federal agencies. I am including my memo from last week below this message to avoid repetition. Naturally you should feel free to share this information with faculty in whatever ways you feel appropriate.

- We have received no official word from any of the agencies about new solicitations. They have promised to post any news on the following websites: http://www.nih.gov/about/director/02252009statement_arra.htm, <http://www.nsf.gov/recovery/>, www.recovery.gov. We expect new opportunities to be posted at any time, and the stimulus legislation stipulated that 20 and 30 day deadlines for funding opportunity summaries on grants.gov and full announcements on agency web sites come out in mid March. We will announce any new opportunities to the URC as soon as details become available. Any required downselects for limited submissions opportunities will be handled by my office as usual.
- Priority for funding appears to be for highly reviewed proposals that were submitted to NIH/NSF but not awarded due to lack of funds. It may be helpful for PI's to contact program managers for those proposals to verify that they are under consideration. NIH PI's may also want to contact program officers if they are considering asking for a supplement. NSF has indicated that they are not likely to give supplements to existing awards, but we do not have definite word on this.
- NIH expects that funding for those projects awarded would be spent out within 24 months; NSF appears to be planning to stagger their deadlines but will also be under pressure to spend the money quickly. We will not know the details until the solicitations come out, but faculty might want to think about funding for equipment, senior grad students, and postdocs rather than starting new grad students for whom support may not be available in the longer term.
- Both the Office of Sponsored Programs and the Office of Research Protections are gearing up to be ready for a significant surge in activity. Faculty can help themselves by being prepared for budgets and IRB approvals.
- We expect significant reporting requirements for any stimulus funds, and these reporting requirements will go well beyond the normal requirements. The Office of Sponsored Programs is preparing for this, but faculty should be made aware as well.
- Both NIH and NSF have pots of money for renovations and construction as noted previously. My office is working with OPP and the interdisciplinary institutes and relevant colleges to gather ideas and have them as "shovel ready" as possible.
- My office is working with members of the URC to consider opportunities for major equipment grants. The NIH has an annual call for shared equipment proposals due March 23 (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-09-028.html>), and both Huck and SSRI faculty are preparing submissions. We have assistance available to faculty who might want to try for this deadline, and they should contact Peter Hudson, Susan McHale, or Peter Schiffer if interested. NSF has not announced a new solicitation for equipment proposals, but we will hold an expedited limited submission downselect if they have a special call for their Major Research Instrumentation program or if NIH announces a new solicitation which is limited.

- The Obama Administration and Congress are pushing through FY09 budgets now with expected passage in the next few weeks. The FY10 budget proposal from the Administration includes significant increases for NSF and parts of NIH and DOD which are relevant to PSU researchers. Please see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/> for details that were posted on Feb. 26. Of course, these funds are separate from the stimulus funds, but they do give a picture of the possibilities for longer term strategy of the administration.

We will hold an emergency URC meeting as soon as we have sufficient detail to make such a meeting useful; at that time we will update everyone on the ongoing activity and get input and share ideas. Stay tuned....