

Windows of Opportunity

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OSP Sees Strong Cayuse Rollout

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After several years with Cayuse 424 (now Cayuse Proposals), MSU launched a new phase of cloud-based, sponsored project lifecycle management with the implementation of Cayuse SP in July 2020.

All PIs requesting funding for a sponsored project must initiate an Institutional Processing Form (IPF) in Cayuse SP. The IPF is an amazing tool to track data, proactively manage compliance issues, and ensure necessary approvals through the use of electronic routing. As a result, Cayuse SP is truly serving as a hub of research activity for PIs, departments, colleges, and research administrators throughout the University.

As of October 25th, 70 IPFs have successfully been created and routed to the necessary approvers. These approvers continue to have access to the proposal record as it moves along its lifecycle (hopefully, as an award!). These IPF records allow OSP to report not only the typical, high-level proposal data (direct and indirect costs, project period, type of sponsor, etc.), but also additional data points. For instance, of the 70 proposals submitted since July:

- 1 in 7 was the result of the Lead Principal Investigator receiving an internal award;
- Over 75% have paid students in the budget; and
- 51% are multi-institutional collaborations.

In addition to the access that the system is providing to PIs and approvers, Cayuse SP is also enhancing the administration of proposals and awards. A system-to-system communication between HR Workday and Cayuse SP seamlessly

provided new employees with access to the system, and it will continue to update Cayuse professional profiles to reflect current job titles. Internal business

processes between OSP, Grant Accounting, and Research Compliance have been streamlined in Cayuse SP to ensure compliance issues are identified and addressed, new awards and award amendments are efficiently processed in Workday Finance, and all research administrators have access to the documents and information they need.

With each of these efforts, our true objective is to improve the service that we can deliver to the research community. Our future goals include providing access to enhanced, user-friendly reporting for administrators, as well as a system-to-system communication between Cayuse SP and Workday Finance to push award information directly into the University’s financial system.

OSP has developed several resources for PIs and approvers that can be found on our [website](#). An FAQ page is coming soon. Additionally, we offered several Open Lab sessions throughout August and September and are exploring more in the New Year. These sessions will continue to provide information on completing the IPF, as well as orienting approvers (Chairs, Deans, etc.) to the Cayuse SP Dashboard and the robust information they now have at their fingertips.

We hope you are enjoying Cayuse SP! If you have any questions, please contact us at osp@montclair.edu.

Kate Dorsett
Sponsored Programs Administrator, OSP

Navigating International Collaborations

MSU's research portfolio is expanding to include an increased number of proposals and awards that involve international collaboration and, in some cases, international (foreign) sponsorship. With today's technologies, the world is getting smaller, and it is far easier to communicate and collaborate daily than in the past. Global problems and even global pandemics require global multidisciplinary solutions, across traditional borders.

International collaborations present tremendous opportunities for partnership and open new avenues for sponsorship. They also present unique challenges that necessitate thoughtful pre-planning prior to proposal submission and consideration of a wide range of issues to include (but not limited to) varying exchange rates, language barriers, scope of work, export compliance, and governing jurisdiction. Partnerships that are already well-established pose far less risk than new partnerships. In the latter case, it is very important to clearly define what each partner expects of the other in the pre-planning stage. Often, this can be addressed via a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) prior to embarking on a proposal submission. In some cases, the negotiation of a non-disclosure agreement if one or more parties will be sharing propriety and/or confidential information with the other party.

Budgeting on an international project can be tricky. It can be very risky to accept a grant/contract in a foreign denomination. If for any reason the foreign exchange rate drops, it can make it very difficult to complete the work with the funds available. University contract negotiators almost always request that payment be made in \$USD, even if we are not always successful in negotiating this request. There are methods to mitigating this risk—e.g., advance payments, modifying the scope of work through a contract amendment, and pre-agreement on a “fixed” (non-fluctuating) exchange rate at time of award.

The compliance landscape can be quite challenging depending on where the funding is coming from and the rules and regulations surrounding governing jurisdiction, arbitration, and human and animal subjects, to name a few. For example, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) requires human

subjects research to abide by the applicable set of foreign ethics regulations as found in the International Compilation of Human Research Standards. However, the collaborating countries' regulations must be at least equivalent to US regulations and if not, the PI should apply the

current US law for human subject protections. In terms of animal research, the foreign site may be required to obtain a Foreign Assurance with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare.

Yet another compliance complexity involves the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) current study regarding foreign threats to the integrity of medical research and intellectual property in the NIH-funded biomedical enterprise. OIG is looking to assess steps grantee institutions are taking to protect the integrity of NIH-funded research while honoring the strong international collaborations necessary to advance the biomedical research enterprise. As such, it is required that investigators be transparent on foreign support, foreign activities, and financial conflict of interest during the “Just-In-Time” applications (and National Science Foundation current and pending support).

Finally, export compliance considerations remain a major consideration where international research collaborations are contemplated. Considerations include location of the project's activities, access to data and equipment shared, and payments to individuals and organizations, among others.

All the above stated, most international collaborative projects are successfully proposed, funded, and managed—again, the importance of the pre-planning phase cannot be overstated. Many of the above considerations can be proactively mitigated in order to avoid delay in the project's start and execution.

Ted Russo

Director of Sponsored Programs

Hila Berger

Director of Research Compliance



NSF Moves Proposal Submission to Research.gov

It is official: The National Science Foundation's proposal submission system, FastLane, will soon be retired. Per NSF's [Important Notice No. 147](#), the organization is currently working to have Research.gov—which has already been in service for award management—take over proposal submission duties in 2022. Many researchers will no doubt find this to be harsh news; after all, FastLane has been in operation since 1994. However, NSF found that they were at a tipping point: they could no longer make significant updates to FastLane and it was becoming increasingly expensive to maintain. While FastLane was at one time a cutting-edge tool, it now lacks features that would help PIs with proposal submission.

With that in mind, NSF has spent the last few years testing and gradually opening the Research.gov portal. The system accepts research proposals—and has just included RAPID, EAGER and RAISE proposal types—that are from one institution, one institution with subawards, and separately submitted collaborative proposals from multiple organizations. PIs should note that the rollout of Research.gov will be incremental, meaning not all funding opportunities will be available through the portal—some applications must be submitted using FastLane. Also, in a recent [NSF Electronic Research Administration Forum](#), it was stated that the Directorate for Biological Sciences will begin to require Research.gov for core programs that do not have deadline dates. Your assigned OSP pre-award specialist will be able to assist you in determining if Research.gov is an option for your proposal.

With all that being said, PIs may be concerned with what such a change brings and whether or not there are any advantages that will come from this new system. First, the most important thing to note is that NSF has not made any changes to the required sections of a proposal. Instead, they have better organized the portal to make uploading information more efficient. For example, there is now a Senior Personnel Documents section where a PI can upload the Biographical Sketch, Current and Pending Support, and Collaborators and Other Affiliations Information for all senior personnel on the project, and everything is viewable on that one page. Also, all years of a budget can be added on the same screen with real-time calculation—no more hitting the Calculate button after each section! There are also video

tutorials and links to relevant entries in the NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide in each section of the application.

In addition to these conveniences, Research.gov also supports greatly expanded real-time [validation checks](#). This means that the system will review every uploaded section and will be able to warn a PI of any issues with margins, line spacing, and if there is no Broader Impacts section in the Project Description. These checks will help PIs correct many of the issues that the Office of Sponsored Program's pre-award specialists note during a proposal review, which will reduce the length of OSP reviews and—most importantly—help to ensure proposals will not be returned without review due to formatting issues.

NSF has recognized that this is a considerable shift for PIs and, to that end, has created a [Proposal Preparation Demo Site](#) that mirrors Research.gov in virtually every way. This will provide users with a “safe” space to see how the new system functions, right down to the most recent list of validation checks. However, PIs should be aware that information entered into the demo site cannot be imported into the full version of Research.gov. Moreover, OSP also understands the significance of this change and is ready to assist. The MSU community can expect announcements for training sessions in the near future, and PIs should feel free to contact their assigned pre-award specialist with any questions.

Sam Wolverton
Pre-Award
and Outreach
Specialist, OSP

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Awardee Profile: Katia Paz Goldfarb

Dr. Katia Paz Goldfarb, Assistant Vice President for Hispanic Serving Initiatives, recently received an award from the National Science Foundation in response to a Dear Colleague Letter in support of conferences that foster relationships with minority-serving institutions in order to promote fundamental research, perspectives, and ideas in the social, behavioral, and economic sciences. As part of our *Awardee Profile* series, we asked Dr. Goldfarb to share her insights about the proposal submission and award process.

What are the major aspects of your awarded projects?

The Build and Broaden Conference: Long-term Impacts of COVID-19 on Hispanic Communities in the Tri-State Area (Summer 2021) has four major aspects:

1. This conference will provide an opportunity for researchers and scholars to present their findings on the long-term impact of COVID-19 on Latino communities focusing on health disparities, community structures, and educational processes. The presentations will shed light on how the pandemic has transformed community contexts, access to healthcare, and educational outcomes.
2. This conference makes a concerted effort to broaden participation by Latina and Latino scholars and scholars that teach and do research with Latino communities. It also subsidizes participation for qualifying presenters.
3. The conference is organized to institutionalize social networks across regional Hispanic Serving Institutions.
4. The knowledge developed from this conference will help policymakers and community leaders develop an in-depth understanding of the impact of the pandemic on Latino communities.

It is the combination of these four interconnected aspects that makes this conference a unique space for sharing and

producing knowledge that will impact future research and practices.

What were your first thoughts after having received the news that you were awarded?

My first thoughts were a combination of excitement, accomplishment, happiness, and the overwhelming feeling of satisfaction from having the support needed to provide an opportunity to support researchers so they can share the knowledge so desperately needed.

What are some of the challenges involved in projects like yours? How are you tackling these?

The biggest challenge at this moment is to make sure the information for this conference is shared with researchers in the targeted 30-plus Hispanic Serving Institutions in the tri-state area. We have been reaching out to colleagues and, depending on the institution, the Office of Research and/or the Provost's Office.

How would you advise colleagues interested in submitting a grant application?

My advice is at multiple levels. These are some of the things I have learned, I think it is best if you have a team either supporting you or working with you. It was the work of Dr. Rivera-Rodas, Dr. Rusczyk, Dr. Lejter, Dr. Grinberg, Dr. Schwarzer, and I that made this grant happen. The topic of the grant needs to be a fundamental part of your research, teaching, and/or service agenda.

It is crucial to start as early as possible and one of the first steps should be a conversation with OSP to get the support needed, and more importantly, to get their expertise, knowledge, and perspective. There are many more pieces that are part of having a successful grant experience. I encourage you to persevere, keep trying, and reach out to colleagues that are open to share their experiences with you.



Enhancing Effort Certification and Cost-Sharing

Uniform Guidance changes to the federal regulations governing effort reporting offers institutions the ability to reduce the administrative burden on faculty by transitioning to an acceptable alternative method for certification. With the Workday enhancements released this year, we have been able to provide additional data to assist faculty with certifying effort. Montclair State University has the opportunity to shift the effort methodology from looking at effort reporting from a PI and percent-effort perspective to a grant-level look at actual dollar amounts charged via payroll charges on your award.

Faculty who had effort in the summer may have noticed some new tabs when certifying summer 2020 effort. We found the most useful of the new features is the “Aggregate” tab that shows not only the percentage of time, but the estimated dollar amount proportionate to the certified effort for the period. There is also an additional “Organization” tab showing the breakdown per pay period and for the positions

being certified. You can [view step-by-step instructions](#) on the Finance and Treasury website, or you can reach out to your grant accountant with any questions.

Trisha Sardesai
Director of
Grants
Accounting

In addition to the enhancements to effort certification, the Grants Accounting office has partnered with the Finance Systems team and the Office of Budget and Planning to develop a procedure to capture cost-share on grants in Workday after the award has been received by the University. We have updated and enhanced the cost-share commitment form, which is requested by the Office of Sponsored Programs at the pre-award or proposal stage. This is a significant shift in the documentation of cost-share commitments and approvals, making it less of an audit risk for the PI and the University as a whole. If faculty have cost-share commitments on their grants, your grant accountant will reach out to you individually and walk you through the process in Workday.

Featured Awards

Drs. Tanya Maloney, Bree Picower, and Jennifer Robinson of the Department of Teaching & Learning and the Center of Pedagogy received an award from the U.S. Department of Education for their project titled “Urban Teacher Residency at Montclair State University: UTR@MSU”. In partnership with the Newark Board of Education and Orange Public Schools, this project will implement an urban teacher residency to recruit talented individuals with bachelor's degrees, especially people of Color and individuals from other occupations, into the teaching force and ultimately improve student achievement by applying rigorous research-based teacher preparation.

Dr. David Rotella of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry received an award from the National Institutes of Health titled “Pharmacologic Inhibition of PDE11A for Age-Related Memory Disorders”. His project will aim to evaluate the hypothesis that phosphodiesterase 11A, an enzyme expressed in a brain region closely associated with memory, and increasingly expressed as humans age, can be inhibited by small molecules and improve performance in animal models of memory without mechanism-based adverse events.

Dr. Jennifer Yang of the Department of Psychology received an award from the National Institutes of Health for her project titled “A Profile of Spatial Abilities in People with Down Syndrome and Their Correlations with Everyday Behavior”. Her project will illustrate the strengths and weaknesses in spatial abilities and behaviors, and therefore provide insights for clinical trials improving spatial skills and everyday spatial competency in people with Down syndrome by using both an experimental/behavioral and an application/survey approach.

Drs. Jiayin Wang, Charles Du, and David Trubatch from the Departments of Computer Science, Biology, and Applied Mathematics and Statistics received an award from the National Science Foundation for their project titled “MRI: Acquisition of a High-Performance GPU Cluster for Research and Education”. The Major Research Instrumentation award will support the purchase of a GPU-based computing cluster effectively expanding and updating the shared-use scientific computing infrastructure of MSU.

Human Subjects Research in a Time of Social Distancing

To define "human subjects research," one must break up the phrase and define "human subjects" and "research" separately. The US Department of Health and Human Services' Policy for Protection of Human Research Subjects defines each accordingly:

"Human subject means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research:

- (i) Obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual, and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or
- (ii) Obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens."

"Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities that meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities."

In general, much of the human subjects research occurring at Montclair State University involves an interaction where the researcher is in the physical presence of a human subject. For example, a researcher may administer a survey in an effort to gather information on individuals' behaviors. However, what happens to the research when a researcher is not able to be physically present to interact with their identified human subject?

Many human subject researchers encountered this exact situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Does the research stop? Does the researcher need to start over? In most cases, no. Many researchers adapted their research methodologies and revised their IRB protocols so that their research could continue.

The Office of Sponsored Programs reached out to two researchers to learn how they managed the new COVID-19 landscape.

Catherine Bruno
Post-Award Officer,
OSP

Dr. Chris King, Assistant Professor, Psychology

Language Preferences, Self-Perceptions, and Sophistication–Maturity as Relevant to the Legal System:

This human subjects research study has been investigating several topics concerning persons who are involved with the criminal justice or juvenile justice system. There are three primary study aims. The first concerns the extent to which individuals who are incarcerated, relative to college students, show a preference for person-first language (such as "individuals who are justice-involved") versus condition-first or condition-exclusive language (such as "justice-involved individuals" or "offenders"). The second line of investigation concerns the degree to which individuals who are incarcerated can accurately predict their risk for reoffending upon release. It is also examining the extent to which self-perceptions about treatment needs and other relevant issues for correctional rehabilitation comport with the results of assessments conducted by corrections staff. Finally, the third line of investigation concerns the relative developmental maturity and criminal sophistication displayed by young adults who are incarcerated, versus young adults in college and external samples of justice-involved adolescents.

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the project: The overall sample, consisting of both persons who are incarcerated and college students, was about 75% complete at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic warranted the suspension of in-person data collection, to protect both participants and study staff. As an alternative solution, approval was obtained from the MSU IRB to continue collecting data from college students using remote technology. A similar solution was explored for running participants

who are incarcerated, but technology limitations at the current correctional study site have thus far precluded this option. Alternative correctional study sites continue to be explored.

In the meantime, project staff have been developing a method to reliably score a semi-structured interview that was administered to all participants, finalizing an interim master data set, and preparing to collect the first wave of reoffending data for justice-involved participants. Interim results have also been, and continue to be, presented at academic conferences.

Maria Mera, Evaluation Associate, and Dr. Eden Kyse, Director, Center for Research and Evaluation on Education and Human Services (CREEHS)

New Jersey Risk and Protective Factors Survey: Through a grant from the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, CREEHS is administering the New Jersey Risk and Protective Factors Survey to 7th and 8th grade students in 110 randomly selected public schools across the state. From November 2019 to March 2020, CREEHS recruited 84 schools to participate and administered the survey in 54 of these schools. Surveys were fielded by a team of trained data collectors who proctored in-person online and paper versions of the survey.

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the project: In March 2020, all data collection activities came to a halt as a result of

the COVID-19 pandemic and schools transitioning to online learning for the remainder of the year. The nature of the pandemic has produced new limitations to in-person data collection, classroom cohort sizes, and schedules. Recognizing these challenges, in Fall 2020, CREEHS pivoted consent and survey administration processes to meet the changing needs of schools by transitioning to an all virtual survey administration process. Instead of visiting schools in-person to distribute consent forms and administer the survey, the new model includes paperless school and student recruitment and survey administration with the virtual assistance of a CREEHS Survey Proctor. CREEHS has developed a variety of new online tools and resources to assist students, parents, and school staff throughout the process, including animated videos, email and notification templates, guides, and frequently asked questions. Schools that completed the survey administration process before COVID-19 played an important role in testing these new resources and providing feedback. In addition, the pandemic has inadvertently created an opportunity for CREEHS to add a block of new questions to the survey to examine the effects of pandemic related experiences and interruptions on students, including potential effects on substance abuse and gambling or gaming behaviors.

These are just two examples of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected research, but has not stopped it.

OSP Spotlight: Grants Resource Center

Recently, OSP has added a new resource to its toolbox: [Grants Resource Center \(GRC\)](#). This unit of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities offers a number of features that benefit of MSU faculty and staff. This is an institutional subscription, so please [reach out to OSP](#) for our user name and password.

Among the features is a trio of publications devoted to funding opportunities. [Deadlines](#) is published monthly and focuses on opportunities that are due in the next 90 days. [GRC Bulletin](#) is released twice a week and features recent funding announcements. [GrantWeek](#) is a weekly digest of research administration announcements, many of which are relevant to grantseekers.

GRC also maintains a robust database and well-organized

lists of funding opportunities. Their [GrantSearch](#) feature is broken up by academic discipline and also allows the user a great amount of control to get even more specific results. [Faculty Alerts](#) allows users to create search agents using similar criteria in GrantSearch. [Annual Deadlines](#) and [Limited Submissions](#) are lists that identify opportunities that recur each year, as well as those that limit the number of submissions per institution.

Finally, GRC offers a collection of funded proposals that can provide MSU submitters with clear ideas of what a funded project looks like. If you do not see one for your particular opportunity, contact your pre-award specialist for help.

For more information, please visit our [GRC webpage](#).

Reflecting on Change

At eight months into the COVID-19 pandemic, many things have changed across our institution. For the Office of Research and the Office of Grant Accounting, many issues needed to be addressed—from ensuring research continuity to assisting faculty and staff who were used to working in-person on various issues, but now had to arrange time in a remote environment. For many of the employees who work to support the University's research enterprise, necessary changes happened quickly and did not leave much time to reflect. The following are comments from colleagues who have taken a moment to think about all the changes the recent months have brought and found positivity during the most trying of times.

- **Ted Russo, Director of Sponsored Programs:** Some very good news to report in what has been a tumultuous 2020. MSU received a record \$22.4M in awards in FY 20. Congrats to MSU faculty and staff on this tremendous achievement!
And, a shout out to my colleagues in the Office of Research and Grant Accounting—we hardly skipped a beat! Grateful to be working with this team.
- **Hila Berger, Director of Research Compliance:** Researchers were swift in adapting to remote research designs. Many studies could have fully stalled in the pandemic and instead their adaptation and ingenuity was truly inspirational.
- **Trisha Sardesai, Director of Grants Accounting:** It has been fantastic to see how efficient, productive, collaborative and flexible everyone has been throughout the pandemic despite having to adjust to a new environment without missing a beat!
- **Dana Natale, OSP:** I'm so grateful for my exceptional colleagues. We remain a cohesive team, working toward a shared goal, even in this virtual reality.
- **Catherine Bruno, OSP:** As per Bob Dylan, "The times, they are a changin". This lyric rings especially true right now and I'm so impressed with how everyone involved in research here at MSU, in big ways and small, has been able to adapt and not miss a beat. I truly believe that we have become closer, stronger, more nimble and efficient during these trying times.
- **Amy Krenzer, IRB:** Zoom works for researchers! Besides using the platform to collect data, the IRB staff met with over 80+ researchers one on one since March.
- **Kate Dorsett, OSP:** Our research "family" has grown to include actual family members! Zoom calls with kids, pets, and parents in the background make me smile and remind me that we do this work for our communities.
- **Amanda Lopez, OSP:** Zoom continues to be a great collaboration tool that allows researchers and our teams to meet more frequently than expected. The way we swiftly adapted to our new norm was amazing to see and experience.
- **Sam Wolverton, OSP:** It has been amazing to see my colleagues and MSU researchers adapt to new environments and new formats. Our Pre-Award Team has seen proposal submissions remain strong and our commitment to customer service has never been higher.



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