|NU-RESearch Quarterly

A research compliance newsletter focused on raising awareness across the NU research enterprise

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RECENT FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT FOCUSES ON TRANSPARENCY AND CYBERSECURITY

By Jeff Seo

On October 3rd, the Department of Justice announced its $1.9 million settlement with Stanford University to resolve allegations that it failed to disclose foreign research support in federal proposals. The settlement relates to grants from various agencies, including the DoD (Army, Navy, Air Force), NASA and NSF awarded between 2015-2020. The DOJ alleges that on sixteen (16) proposals, Stanford neglected to neglected to disclose current and pending foreign funding for eleven (11) of its investigators, including one (1) investigator that was apparently jointly employed at Fudan University (Shanghai, China) unbeknownst to Army, Air Force and NSF which had funded the investigator through Stanford.

Stanford's settlement marks the third known settlement with a research institution (Van Andel Research Institute-2021; The Ohio State University-2022) involving similar allegations. The message from the DOJ is clear:

"Universities, institutions and researchers are required to make certain disclosures when applying for federal grants so that the government can assess whether to fund their research and development," said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Brian M. Boynton, head of the Justice Department's Civil Division. "The department will hold accountable applicants who undermine the integrity of the grant process by knowingly failing to submit complete and truthful applications."

We take this opportunity to remind our Northeastern community that resources are available to help resolve any questions as to what and how to disclose foreign collaborations and that any significant international commitment should be pre-approved pursuant to the University Policy on External International Engagements .

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- International Travel and Research Security
- RCR is Back
- Approaching Deadlines
- Helpful Response Procedures
- Updates to Salary Allocations for Research Related Funds

CHANGES TO SALARY ALLOCATIONS FOR PAID LEAVE ON RESEARCH GRANTS

By Paula Robinson

What is it? Prior to FY 2024, when a research-paid employee when on paid leave, it was directly charged to their respective research grants as salaries, reducing the funds available for the project. The changes rolled out for FY2024 involve the creation of a fringe pool for leave expenses. Leave pay is still provided to the research-paid employee, but instead of directly charging the grant, leave expenses are now included as part of the F&A fringe benefit pool.

Who does this impact? These changes apply to full-time, full-benefit-eligible employees with at least a portion of their salaries charged to research grants (i.e., research staff and faculty). This only applies to sponsored research (ledger 5). The fringe pool will only cover the portion of the salary charged to research grants, not operational funds. Operational funds will continue to support the paid leave.

Leave Types: The fringe pool will cover expenses due to medical, family, personal, and parental leaves of that type. The changes do not apply to an administrative, professional, sabbatical, teaching, and non-tenure track leaves.

Process for Requests: The leave request will follow the standard HR process, starting with the request submission in Workday. Once the leave has been approved, payment will be pulled from the central pool rather than from the previously allocated research fund. The cost allocation is based on leave start date. A request can be input, as well as approved, after the leave has started. If approved after the leave start, the research fund will be credited from the central pool the following pay period and there is no impact on the researcher. Once the leave ends, the payment allocation will revert to previous allocations. It is important to ensure that previous allocations are still appropriate upon the return date. For example, ensure that funds are available within the research fund, the account is still active, and the effort is still accurate.

Monitoring Process: The monitoring process takes place at the departmental level. It is advised that departments develop reports to reflect who is on leave. This will be important for identifying incorrect charges if they occur, as well as identifying which research sponsors require prior approval or notification of the impending leave. Rereview of the allocations prior to return is encouraged and NU-RES finance can assist.

RECENT FEDERAL ENFORCEMENT FOCUSES ON TRANSPARENCY AND SECURITY

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In other news, a federal court in Pennsylvania unsealed a federal whistleblower lawsuit brought forth by the former CIO of its Applied Research Laboratory against Penn State University (PSU). The Complaint alleges that PSU defrauded the government by falsely certifying compliance with cybersecurity requirements. The civil lawsuit alleges that despite the self-certification of PSU that it was compliant with requirements to protect Covered Defense Information (CDI), a number of gaps were identified by the whistleblower, including the allegation that in 2020 PSU moved its cloud services from a secure environment into a commercial version of Microsoft365 OneDrive, which was not certified. Additionally, the whistleblower claimed that he discovered missing records for university projects in the registration Supplier Performance Risk System, a database used monitor contractor performance around acquisitions and procurement. In response, PSU allegedly uploaded templates to make it appear that it was compliant.

Although whistleblower lawsuits under the False Claims Act are not uncommon in the realm of federally supported research, this marks the first known attempt to apply non-compliance with federal cybersecurity standards. Questions remain as to whether the DOJ will intervene on behalf of the plaintiff as well as to whether this lawsuit may be dismissed on the basis that state institutions are generally immune from federal False Claims liability. Regardless, the lawsuit reinforces the significance of our own efforts to comply with Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement ("DFARS") 252.204-7012 led by the Office of Information Security (OIS). Simply put, research involving CDI must be afforded great care to ensure encryption of sensitive data, restriction of access to sensitive systems, and conducting regular risk assessments. Resources for Northeastern investigators can be viewed on the OIS website.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

By Tessa Seales

Working in field environments is a vital part of research and education, we all hear about off-site or off-campus research, also referred to as field research. However, what does off-site or off-campus research really entail and what do students and faculty need to be aware of when doing so?

Earlier this year, UC Berkeley made headlines when a graduate student was gunned down during a research trip to Mexico. The student, 31-year-old botanist Gabriel Trujillo, was in Mexico looking for plants related to his research; he was a student in Berkeley's Integrative Biology graduate program. In his line of work, Gabriel frequently traveled internationally for research. On this trip, he was going into the field to look for cephalanthus occidentalis, a flowering plant also known as honeybells or common buttonbush. Three days later after leaving for the trip, his body was found in a ravine, not far from the car he had driven from his home in Oakland.

Depending on the location for field research, environmental and/or political concerns should be taken into consideration prior to travel. For example, certain countries or regions may not be safe for women or those who identify as LGBTQ to travel alone. Some areas may be unsafe based on the type of research being conducted, especially qualitative research requiring interviews.

As of January 2023, NSF's PAPPG requires proposers to certify that they have a plan for creating and maintaining a project-specific Safe and Inclusive Working Environment for Off-Campus and Off-Site Research (SAI) Plan for proposals with off-campus or off-site work. Each SAI Plan must address the following elements:

1. A brief description of the field setting and unique challenges for the team;
2. The steps the proposing organization will take to nurture an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment, including processes to establish shared team definitions of roles, responsibilities, and culture, e.g., codes of conduct, training, mentor/mentee mechanisms and field support that might include regular check-ins, and/or developmental events;
3. Communication processes within the off-site team and to the organization(s) that minimize singular points within the communication pathway (e.g., there should not be a single person overseeing access to a single satellite phone); and
4. The organizational mechanisms that will be used for reporting, responding to, and resolving issues of harassment if they arise.

NU-RES Research Compliance recommends that prior to traveling for off-site or off-campus research, students and faculty do their due diligence on the country and/or region they are traveling to. Some recommended steps are:

- Check travel advisories on Travel.State.Gov
- Conduct a quick web search on current politics, news articles, and crime rates in the area you are traveling to. This will give insight into any safety concerns or reservations for traveling to that location.
- Review NU Policy on Travel to High-Risk & Sanctioned Destinations and Policy on Travel Registry.
- Check the Academic Freedom Index (AFI) for a comprehensive overview of academic freedom in countries and territories around the world. Not every country has the same academic freedom rights as the US, so it is critical for students and faculty to be conscious if they are traveling to a country with limited or no academic freedom rights.

NU-RES Research Compliance is available to help with any reviews regarding research environment safety. For additional information regarding safe and inclusive work environments please visit our web page on NSF Offsite Compliance. For any questions or concerns please contact NU-RES Research Compliance at ResearchCompliance@northeastern.edu.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND EXPORTS CONTROL

By Lissette Gilster

Before traveling abroad, faculty, staff, and students at Northeastern University should be familiar with the impact export control regulations can have when traveling to foreign countries. Researchers especially need to ensure that any information discussed, or items taken out of the U.S. are either not controlled, or if controlled, have the proper export licenses in place. Individuals can be held liable, with both civil and criminal penalties, for improperly transferring controlled technology.

University travel includes academic, business, and extracurricular travel that is part of a university program or project, authorized by, at the request of, funded, coordinated, or administered by Northeastern University.

What is subject to export controls?

- Traveling with tangible items such as: Samples of physical materials, components, biologicals, toxins, pathogens, or chemicals, equipment and devices for field research (i.e., drones, GPS, optical equipment, lasers, sensors), non-commercial encryption software in source code or object code (non-published), Data/technology on a laptop, drawing, schematics, blueprints.
- Discussing information related to controlled items or technology, confidential, unpublished, or proprietary information, and/or technical data with military applications.
- Travel to comprehensively sanctioned countries (i.e., Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria) and/or provide a "service", money transactions, or the exchange of goods with entities from sanctioned countries.
- Conducting business with persons or entities on a restricted/denied list.

What is not subject to export controls?

- Basic marketing information on function or purpose.
- Educational information taught in universities and information regarding general scientific, mathematical, or engineering principles commonly taught in universities.
- Information that is generally accessible in the public domain or which falls under the Fundamental Research Exclusion.

When should you contact the export control office?

If you are planning to travel to a destination with comprehensive sanctions (i.e., Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, or the Crimea, Donetsk, or Luhansk regions of Ukraine) on university business, please contact the export control office as soon as possible. Travel to some destinations may be prohibited, while other destinations may require a license from the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). We can determine if a general license is available or if a specific license from OFAC will be required Please keep in mind specific licenses can take three to six months to obtain. All international collaborations should be reviewed as there are restricted entities in every country. Additionally, export license requirements may apply based on the nature of the collaboration and if you are planning to collaborate with a person/entity located in a country with sanctions. If you intend to travel with equipment, components, samples, materials, biologicals, prototypes, or other tangible items. Export license exceptions may be available when traveling with certain research equipment but there may be items that require a specific export license. If you plan on presenting information that is not in the public domain or is not fundamental research, then it may be subject to export control regulations.

Are there other NU requirements related to international travel?

Yes, please visit the Global Safety Office webpage for additional information related to international travel, such as travel registry requirements and the authorization process for travel to high-risk countries.

Also, NU faculty based in the U.S. with international engagements greater than 2 weeks, must comply with University's Policy on External International Engagements. This would include a consultant opportunity, sitting on a Scientific Advisory Board for a global company. Additional information can be found on the Research Compliance webpage for International Engagements Compliance.

SciENcv DEADLINE APPROACHING

By Tessa Seales

On October 23, 2023, SciENcv will become mandatory for any NSF funded research as outlined in the NSF PAPPG 2023. Science Experts Network Curriculum Vitae (SciENcv) is an electronic system created by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) that allows researchers to assemble their professional information needed for participation in federally funded research. SciENcv documents information regarding education, employment, honors, publications, and research grants. Researchers can use SciENcv to create and maintain Biosketches that are submitted with grant applications and annual reports.

The quickest and easiest way to populate your SciENcv biosketch is through an ORCID iD. An ORCID record is a free account that creates a persistent identifier that will follow a researcher throughout their career and allows the researcher to gather all their scholarly work in a single location – think of it as a digital resume or CV. A researcher can use it to add publications to their SciENcv Biosketch that they have already linked in their ORCID account.

Follow the instructions on this Link to External Accounts Quick Card to link your ORCID iD to your SciENcv account, and register for SciENcv here.

For more information on SciENcv and ORCID, please visit our Research Security and Transparency webpage.

FOREIGN TALENT RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS ARE EVOLVING

Here's what you need to know!

By Tessa Seales

As the geopolitical landscape changes, so does the global research ecosystem. Foreign Talent Recruitment Programs (FTRP) have been on the radar for federal agencies as well as academic institutions for many years now, one of the most prominent examples being China's Thousand Talents Program. However, countries are beginning to become more aware of the FTRP concept and how it is interpreted by their western counterparts. This information has allowed them to be more conscious of the perspective of the programs and how they can change program names and/or structure to be more inconspicuous. As the United States is working on revamping its policies surrounding research security, the topic of FTRPs arose again with the release of National Security Presidential Memorandum (NSPM) 33. FTRPs are mentioned in NSPM-33's disclosure requirements and standardization section, where disclosure of them "will be required across all research agencies, in accordance with the role of the participant in the R&D enterprise". FTRPs made headlines again with the release of the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, this time including an additional element to the term – malign foreign talent recruitment programs (MFTRP).

The C&S Act does not give a final FTRP definition – it instead directs OSTP to create one. Northeastern is currently using NSPM-33's initial FTRP definition until a final one is released: "[A FTRP is an] effort organized, managed, or funded by a foreign government, or a foreign government instrumentality or entity, to recruit science and technology professionals or students (regardless of citizenship or national origin, or whether having a full-time or part-time position)".

The C&S Act states that not all FTRPs are malign and gives guidance on how individuals can determine if the foreign talent program they are participating in is malign or not. The C&S Act "prohibits the participation in any FTRP by personnel of Federal research agencies and to prohibit participation in a MFTRP by covered individuals1 involved with research and development awards from those agencies."

Malign FTRPs are defined as, "Any program, position, or activity that includes compensation in the form of cash, in-kind compensation, including research funding, promised future compensation, complimentary foreign travel, things of non de minimis value, honorific titles, career advancement opportunities, or other types of remuneration or consideration directly provided by a foreign country at any level (national, provincial, or local) or their designee, or an entity based in, funded by, or affiliated with a foreign country, whether or not directly sponsored by the foreign country, to the targeted individual, whether directly or indirectly stated in the arrangement, contract, or other documentation at issue—." More information on MFTRPs can be found on our website.

NU-RES Research Compliance is here to help research administration staff and researchers navigate the research security realm. We are happy to review and screen potential foreign talent programs that researchers are considering joining and provide advice on how they can continue to collaborate internationally while protecting their research and IP.

HUSKY HEROES

RECOGNIZING THOSE WHO SERVE ABOVE AND BEYOND TO SUPPORT RESEARCH

John Harris

Our featured NU-RES Husky Hero for this is John Harris! John is the Director of College Research Administration at the Khoury College of Computer Science. He has been working at Northeastern for over 38 years and is a prime example of a phenomenally dedicated member of the NU-RES/Research Community. This section will showcase an interview with John and why he is our featured NU-RES Hidden Hero for this Fall issue.

What is your background? Where were you before you started working here at Northeastern?

Before Northeastern University, I was in high school. I graduated from Reading Memorial High School in Reading, Massachusetts in 1980. I enrolled in Northeastern as an Undergrad in the Fall of 1980. I still have my Northeastern college brochure from 1980, which talks about how much attending college was back in the day. Today, the old person's joke about Northeastern is 'I would not have gotten into Northeastern.' Back in my day, it was a commuter factory. Northeastern's co-op model worked so well for me that I never left.

I got a part-time co-op job in the University's Finance Dept during my sophomore year, where I tagged equipment, assets, and university inventory all around the campus. This work brought me into the world of research administration and grant management. During my coops, I handled grant expenditures, sent invoices to sponsors, and helped manage post-award functionalities for awarded grants and the indirect cost and fringe benefit proposal.

I graduated in 1985 with a degree in Business Administration and immediately started full-time as a Grant Administrator in the University Finance Office. A year into the role as Grant Administrator, my predecessor retired, and I was the only one left managing grants at the Finance Office. That's how I started and eventually moved up to Director of Research Finance in the Central Office for 29 years. Then, in 2013, I moved to Khoury College, where I am now the Director of College Research Administration. Fun fact: I have been here since June of 1985, which makes me a month older in tenure than fellow 2023 Husky Hero Anne McGrath. I could match story for story with Anne. I am old enough to remember the underground bridge connected to dirt parking lots and the commuter rail. The campus didn't have greeneries back then. We had just a few buildings. Richard's Hall was the main quad, which was all cement. Students used to call it the asphalt jungle. Before Khoury, the Computer Science Dept. shared a building in Cullinane Hall. Khoury was founded that same year, and we have just celebrated its 40th year as a college. I was an Undergrad before Khoury, or even Computer Science became a college, so I've been at Northeastern longer than Khoury's existence. I have certainly seen a lot of changes throughout the years.

As a Grant Administrator, I worked at the Central Office, the previous home of what is now NU-RES. It was called the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) when I started and went through several name changes until 15-20 years ago when offices merged. Post-Award was separate from Pre-Award and the rest of the research administration. We reported to the Controller and Vice Provost of Finance, while the Pre-Award division reported to the Vice Provost of Research until the merge. At the time of the merge, it was called the Office of Research Administration & Finance (ORAF) before the name change to NU-RES.

The University's Research size has grown tremendously, especially in the last ten years. When I started working full-time in 1985, the University's total research portfolio was $8 million. By the time I left ORAF, we saw roughly $85-90 million annually in research expenditures; today, it is $221 million annually. Khoury was taking in $7 million a year in research right before I arrived. That portfolio has reached $20 million a year today.

It has been truly amazing to witness the capacity growth of the University's research administration as it continues to handle these exponential increases in sponsored awards received year in and year out.

Could you briefly describe your current role here at Northeastern University?

As the Director of College Research Administration at Khoury, I oversee the pre-award and post-award grant lifecycle, from proposal to award close out. In addition, I oversee proposal submissions, faculty support including projections, and post-award monitoring of grant budgets and payroll certifications at yearend.

Could you briefly describe your typical day-to-day on the job?

A typical day-to-day is never what you expect. You go to bed and think about your tasks for the next day and what you think you'll get done until you wake up and log on to new emails, and that's when your day completely changes. It's nice because it's not a predictable job; even though some tasks are repetitive, you never know what you will get. For example, a sponsor could need a projection by the end of the day to get their next round of funding. So that becomes a priority, and you get on top of things like that.

It's rewarding work because we have a great group of faculty members. They are the best on campus. Again, I've been working here a long time, and I've enjoyed working with them. Mainly, my job is to ensure they stay compliant; the joke is to keep them out of jail so they can focus on doing their research and have the appropriate administrative help.

What is something you are proud of, and in what ways do you believe your work tends to go unnoticed by the broader Campus/NU-RES Community?

In terms of work that goes unnoticed, that was more apparent in my old role as Director of Research Finance at ORAF. Particularly, I would do the research overhead rate proposal, which I always felt was a task that went unnoticed. When a grant gets awarded, you charge an overhead rate, which is a ratio for every direct dollar charged; there's an indirect piece that gets recovered, and that's to pay for the gas, utilities, and administrative costs. All those things are negotiated with the federal government at a typical 3-4-year rate. We must submit a proposal every 3-4 years and negotiate rates. At Northeastern, it was 57 for years, but today it's 59.5. It's the same process for the fringe benefit rate, which is 25.9 today. These are tasks that take a lot of effort to come up with. Determining our rates was an entire process, and then the fun part for me was the negotiation with the federal agencies to iron out the rate. They would come out, do site visits, we would walk around space, and then get down to the nitty gritty to come up with a rate. It's one of those tasks on the research finance side where everyone just says, 'ohh, we have a signed rate agreement,' and they think it's a process that happens magically or swiftly while not knowing everything that goes into it. It's about a 200-page proposal that gets submitted to federal agencies with just details upon details. It's a lot of work.

Throughout my career in research administration and finance, I have been most proud of the community I have built over the years. I am a member of the National Council of University Research Administrators. I served at NCURA as a board member, secretary, treasury, and chair of the awards committee at the regional level, as well as sitting on several national research program committees like the Financial Research Administration (FRA). I have been very active with NCURA over the years. It has been a great experience; I met a lot of great people and a great resource to find answers to essential questions. I met Jeff Seo through NCURA before he came to Northeastern.

Another thing I pride myself on is the ability to find information or make contacts. Throughout my career, if someone comes to me with a question, I would know who to go to get the answer if I didn't know it. So, networking and building a great professional community have been a big part of the success of my tenure here. Building a good team and surrounding yourself with great people have been important. My team here at Khoury is a great group (Barbara Morris, Martha Collins, Ed Murphy, Jake McCall, Lauren Daley, Caroline Kiezulas), just great, dedicated workers. I couldn't be happier with this group. They make me look good! I definitely feel lucky in that regard. Also, having support from the top, Sully Baez & Alison Donnelly, to the Dean makes a big difference.

What does it mean to you to be working at/with NU-RES? How would you describe the overall impact that individual NU-RES entities like yours have brought to the University?

From understanding all the challenging yet rewarding tasks that go into research administration, there is a great synergy between Khoury and NU-RES. Two folks from OFAR came with me to Khoury, and they are still here. Khoury has a great working relationship with NU-RES. I can call them, and they're very responsive. Craig Mannett is one of the great people of NU-RES. Kelly Basner, my pre-award team, talks through the roof about Kelly, and she's terrific. Chris Tiller has also been excellent for us on the post award side. Our bi-weekly meetings with the NU-RES teams have always been productive and helpful to us at Khoury; as for the rest of NU-RES, they are excellent, dedicated, hard-working folks. I'll get lunch with Jeff and Fred Cromp occasionally, but I haven't so much since post covid. I graduated with Fred Cromp here at Northeastern. I have known Fred since the undergrad days. After graduation, Fred worked at Boston College for many years before returning to Northeastern and working with me at Research Finance, doing what he is doing now in NU-RES. He is one of those underappreciated guys, for sure. COVID has made things a little harder to connect with colleagues at a more personal level, but making those connections is still very important for working successfully together.

A rewarding thing about working at Khoury College now is that you work more closely with the faculty and can see the impact more directly. You get to the nitty-gritty of working with faculty less when you are working at the central office. At Khoury, you're more connected to the faculty and guiding them along. Working at the ORAF and dealing with a $221 million-a-year portfolio, you won't get the chance to know the faculty well. This only gets more complex when you consider all the recently acquired campuses nationwide, including Vancouver, Toronto, and London.

What are hobbies you like to do outside of work?

I live in Billerica, MA with my wife. I have three adult kids (2 sons & 1 daughter), but none went to Northeastern. Two of them received track scholarships to run track, so it didn't hurt so much. I coached both baseball and basketball for many years in Billerica. I really like sporting events. I love going to baseball, basketball, football, and hockey games. One of the things I loved about traveling to conferences was finding a sporting event in whatever city I was in, whether it be a basketball or football game or anything. For a long time, I would play basketball at the lunch hour. I would also play hockey in the morning before work at Northeastern. I follow Northeastern Hockey closely and attend a few games a year.

As I get older, I don't play basketball as much anymore. I tore my achilles last year, so my hockey days are over now. I tore it playing pickleball. My wife got me lessons for my 60th birthday, so we took classes together, and after the lessons, we played pickup with classmates. After the second pickup game, I tore my achilles, my last pickleball game. These days, I enjoy walking and staying active at the lunch hour. COVID had a significant impact on that. Being home five days a week, so getting outside at lunchtime to clear your head, taking a walk, and changing scenery helps a lot. On weekends, I like to travel around New England (Portsmouth, Portland, Providence, the North & South Shores, Vermont) and places around there.

If there is someone that you know and would like to nominate for this column, please reach out to ResearchComplance@northeastern.edu.

THE NSF GRANTED PROGRAM & CREATING A STEM WORKFORCE PIPELINE

By Amanda Humphrey

Northeastern University is a proud member of the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP), which aims to reduce administrative burden for faculty and institutions across the academic research enterprise. During the most recent FDP meeting, attendees received an overview of the NSF GRANTED Program.

GRANTED aims to systematically broaden the STEM pipeline and strengthen the entire value chain that supports the US academic research enterprise by engaging Emerging Research Institutions (ERIs) to expand participation beyond research intensive institutions, and enhance research administration systems, training, and other pain points for investigators and support staff.

As any research faculty member can tell you, the regulations surrounding research have only become more complex. New administrative requirements have significantly increased faculty workload. Some institutions have responded with additional support, while others have turned away from research or left PIs to sort through it with little guidance. Frustrated faculty have responded by turning away from grant submissions, as demonstrated by a 17% decline in NSF grant submissions from 2011-2020. While the increased payline may seem like a boon to some researchers, GRANTED Program staff pointed out that if NSF continues to experience declining interest in their programs, Congress may see them as a target for future funding cuts. To remain well-funded, NSF must remain highly competitive.

There are no undergraduate research administration programs and only a handful of programs at the graduate level. Not having a pipeline of individuals trained specifically for the field makes it difficult to attract and retain the right talent to support the world-class research NSF hopes to fund.

While Northeastern has taken proactive steps to address our pipeline, other less well-resourced institutions do not have the bandwidth or funding available for staffing, training, systems and other facets of a complex research enterprise network. A lack of access to the right professional staff exacerbates disparities in the ability to engage in research by academic institutions across the country, including community colleges.

The GRANTED Program is unique because it is aimed at stoking innovation across the research value chain, targeting not only faculty themselves, but also the infrastructure needed to successfully execute research projects. The GRANTED Program includes the ability to submit grants to fundamentally innovate research administration training programs, infrastructure and even educational programs.

There is no proposal deadline for the GRANTED Program, so if you have an idea, whether it be about strengthening partnerships or building research administration infrastructure, please submit a proposal.

The Fall Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Registration is Open!

By Morgan Fielding

The Fall 2023 RCR sessions have been scheduled and registration is active. Faculty and students are encouraged to review the NU-RES RCR Workshop Calendar and Registration to register for any applicable session.

What is RCR?
RCR promotes the aims of scientific inquiry, fosters a research environment that enables scientists to work together toward common goals and promotes public confidence in scientific knowledge and progress for the public good. Fraudulent or socially irresponsible research undercuts the public's trust in and support for science. The RCR program includes significant researcher facilitation and administrative support and uses discussions and case studies to examine basic ethical and regulatory requirements for conducting research. Additional information about Northeastern's RCR program can be found on the website.

Procedures for Responding to Alleged Research Misconduct

By Tessa Seales

NU-RES Research Compliance recently finalized a procedure document for faculty and students outlining the process for responding to and handling allegations of research misconduct: Procedures for Responding to Alleged Research Misconduct. The University takes research misconduct very seriously and aims to have clear and consistent guidelines applicable to all disciplines.

In addition, NU-RES Research Compliance is working with our colleagues in the UK at Northeastern University London as they begin to develop their policies and procedures around research misconduct. While the University understands that research misconduct policies may vary in the UK versus in the US, Northeastern University students and faculty will be held to the same standards.
For more information on research misconduct at Northeastern, please our website.

RESPONDING TO ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

By Curtis Van Slyck

Animal research plays a crucial role in advancing our knowledge of the world, and Northeastern's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and Division of Lab Animal Medicine (DLAM) work diligently to maintain the highest standards of care for the animals enrolled in our research programs. DLAM and the IACUC work together with researchers, to ensure adherence to an important animal safety principle, the "Three Rs": replacement with non-animal models or lower-order species whenever possible, reduction of the number of animals used to the minimum possible without compromising statistical integrity, and refinement to ensure the use of modern techniques to minimize pain and distress.

Nonetheless, as discussed in our last issue, animal rights activists would prefer animals not be used in research at all and will occasionally contact researchers or attempt to interfere with animal work. While these situations can be difficult to navigate, this article will provide guidelines to protect yourself and your work when interacting with animal rights activists.

- Talk openly about your animal work and explain how you use ethics in designing your research. While it may be tempting to keep animal procedures discreet, shrouding animal research in secrecy creates the perception of wrongdoing and ensures that animal rights activists are the only voice in the conversation. Instead, discuss your work openly and honestly, emphasizing benefits to humans and animals alike and measures taken to minimize discomfort to research subjects.
- While social media can be a great way to showcase your work, be judicious about what you share and who might see it. Though your intended audience may be your colleagues, friends, and family, animal rights activists have been known to search social media for certain topics, methods, and other key words and seek opportunities to paint animal research in an inhumane or unnecessary light.
- Maintain detailed records and follow all appropriate records maintenance procedures. As we discussed in the last issue, animal rights activists frequently seek information about animal research through public records laws and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). To minimize access, maintain accurate records and adhere to university policies regarding data and material retention.
- Avoid direct engagement with animal activists whenever possible. Direct engagement can lead to escalation, and activists frequently distort or misrepresent the words of researchers. It's best to maintain a professional distance. If you receive email inquiries about your work from someone you suspect may be an activist, document and save a copy of the message but refrain from responding. Forward to ResearchCompliance@northeastern.edu.
- Notify relevant parties. In some cases, activists may escalate their efforts, go to the press, or resort to legal actions. Our DLAM, OGC, and External Affairs teams, as well as the NUPD, have experience in handling such situations and can provide guidance on how to respond.

Becoming the focus of activists can be stressful and challenging but remember that you are not alone. Ethical animal research has made significant contributions to science, and the Northeastern community stands united in supporting its researchers when navigating confrontations with activists. Upholding our commitment to ethical research and the welfare of animals, we will continue to advance our understanding of the world while addressing concerns with professionalism and responsibility.

PROTECTING YOUR IP WHILE TRAVELING

By Amanda Humphrey

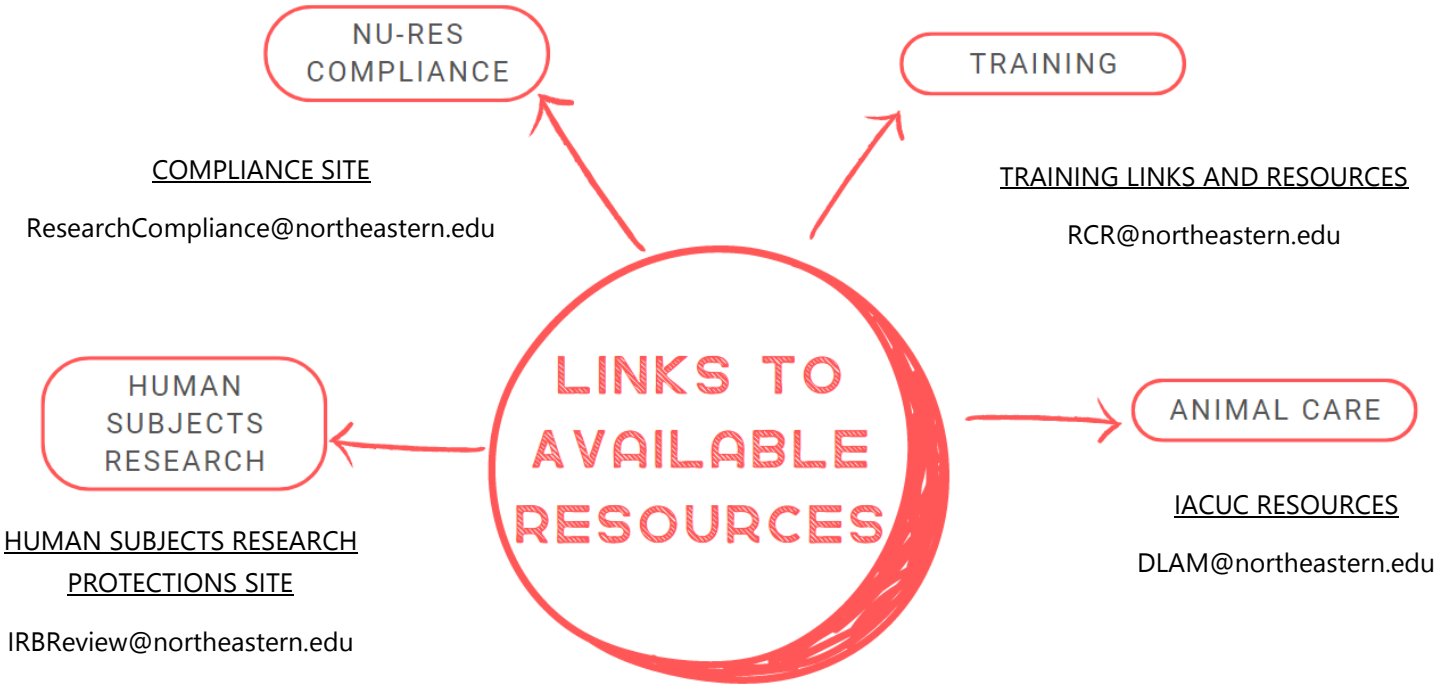
Working while traveling on university business, whether at the airport or at a hotel using publicly available WiFi is common for must of us. Time waiting for or during flights can provide opportunities to work on larger project documents, providing input to colleagues, or catching up on email.

A recent presentation by the National Protective Services Authority (NPSA, a UK government agency) highlighted security risks associated with working in a public space. Personal data or that of the university could be compromised in these public settings. For Faculty, there are additional considerations while traveling. Security breaches can compromise data, draft proposals or papers, or intellectual property.

Here are some considerations to reduce your risks:

1. Consider taking loaner devices, especially if you are traveling to a destination that poses increased cybersecurity risks.
2. Even when traveling domestically, only travel with the data, presentations or other resources you need for that trip on your laptop. If you routinely store information on your laptop hard drive, try moving it to your Microsoft365 account so it is protected in the cloud. As a bonus, it will be backed up automatically.
3. When utilizing public or hotel wi-fi, make sure to turn on your university VPN as soon as you connect. It is advisable to have any internet-based programs closed until after you have connected to the VPN.
4. Be careful to protect what is on your screen. Consider a screen protector or try to sit so that your screen is less visible to others.
5. Do not allow anyone to access or plug a device into your laptop, cell phone or tablet. External devices can either download your information or install spyware.
6. Do not accept any USB drives or other storage devices as gifts. Again, these can be used to insert spyware onto your devices.
7. USB charging ports are convenient to charge your phone on the go, but they do pose a security risk. Consider using a data blocker to prevent unauthorized data downloads.

Remember whether engaged in research or not, it is important to protect the intellectual property that forms the cornerstone of your academic career and protect university data.



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