Research Administrators Trivia Challenge

Session Transcript: 2022-2023 NIH Grants Conference

Cynthia Dwyer: Welcome, everyone, to our Research Administrators Trivia Challenge. We have an exciting 45 minutes for you today. We do want to give the chance for everyone to log in to the Zoom, so we're going to take the next 15, 20 seconds and give people time, who are just joining us. In the meantime, why don't you tell us in the chat where you're from? I love to see where people are from in these sessions. So use that chat box. All right. I see Iowa, Seattle, Massachusetts, all right, Omaha. Lots of cold-weather states in this meeting. Let's see, Houston. All right. We got a warm one, although you all have been getting ice, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Delaware. All right. Any other countries, continents joining us for this? We wanted to hear from you as well.

[ Chatter ]

Cynthia Dwyer: Oh, Pakistan, there we go.

Michelle Bulls: Yeah!

Cynthia Dwyer: All right. Glad to see - thank you. We know that it's all hours of the day and evening, and Pakistan is - gosh you're up late joining us. So thank you. South Africa, this is terrific. All right. Let's go ahead and get started. So welcome, everyone, to the wrap-up of the NIH Grants Conference and this special session of our Research Administrators Trivia Challenge. I'm really excited about this. We've never done this in our conference before, but we have two awesome experts from the Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration. We have Michelle Bulls, who is the Director, and we have Kristin Ta, who is the Deputy Director. So thank you to both of them for joining us for this late session on the East Coast. We've got a lot of great questions for you. We are doing this in the form of "Jeopardy!" where we are going to give you an answer, and we're going to have you use the chat box to give us the question. Now, because there's hundreds of you, we expect, on this, it will be kind of hard for us to go too much to the chat box, but we might be able to. But we want to see what you know and help us get some answers and questions into the chat. There is no prize. I'm sorry, no $10,000 prize, but you get the honor of knowing just how many you got right. So the prize of knowledge, I love that. All right. So I'm going to go ahead and pass it over to Michelle and Kristin to get us started for this very interactive and fun event.

Michelle Bulls: All right. Well, we are very excited to be here with you guys today. OPERA "Jeopardy!" is our thing, and I think ending on a high note with the prize of knowledge is just the best way to say it. So touche for that. So I'm going to start, and I like to start a bit dicey. So let's start with Show Me the Money, and I'm going for it, $400. Foreign recipients and subrecipients are eligible to receive 8 percent facilities and administrative cost reimbursement to support these types of costs. Juan said, "What are indirect costs?" What are indirect costs? What is trainee?

Kristin Ta: So I'm going to jump in and provide a clue for this one because it's a little more specific than just indirect costs. If you know what it is, this is foreign recipients and subrecipients. So their F&A goes for a specific type of cost. That's what we're looking for.

Michelle Bulls: What are the costs of compliance? I saw it.

Kristin Ta: Yup. That's -

Michelle Bulls: It popped up. That's it. What is the cost of compliance? Very good, 400.

Kristin Ta: All right, Michelle. Why don't we take it to another policy that's a brand-new one that's just rolled out that I know folks have been asking lots of questions about? Let's do Share That Data for 200.

Michelle Bulls: Giselle, you're fine. You did well.

Kristin Ta: All right. In a grant application, the DMS Plan must be attached here. Oh, awesome. You guys have been reading our updated application instructions because I'm seeing tons of correct answers in the box. In the Other Plan(s) attachment. Absolutely.

Michelle Bulls: That's right. All right. Let's do ... Since everybody has probably been looking at the data policy, let's do Share That Data again, Kristin. Well, let's go for 400. Changes to these items in the DMS Plan require NIH prior approval. What are they? There are three items, just to give you a clue. Yes, that's one.

Kristin Ta: So data storage, that's definitely one that would require prior approval and changes to your report.

Michelle Bulls: Timeline, there it is. They're kicking it up. Mm-hmm. Okay. All right.

Kristin Ta: Type of data and timeline, yup.

Michelle Bulls: That's it.

Kristin Ta: One comment for those who are saying budget, that's actually not one of the ones that's in the plan. That's a separate part of the application, but, yeah, definitely repository, timeline.

Michelle Bulls: Repository, timeline, Mm-hmm, and new scientific direction.

Kristin Ta: Yup. All right. So I'm going to switch up the category, and let's do To Disclose or Not To Disclose for $200. So the NIH Biographical Sketch must include theses types of positions and appointments.

Michelle Bulls: What is a foreign appointment?

Kristin Ta: Foreign is definitely covered.

Michelle Bulls: What are scientific appointment in-kind?

Cynthia Dwyer: She said, "What is all?" I love it.

Kristin Ta: There, we're getting to it now.

[ Chatter ]

Kristin Ta: All right. Let's look at the answer.

Michelle Bulls: What are all positions and scientific appointments.

Kristin Ta: Right, all current positions and scientific appointments, and so just to be clear on that one, when we say current, that's everything that's currently active. So your previous positions, if you've been around for decades, you don't have to list all of your previous positions, just current positions and scientific appointments.

Michelle Bulls: All right. Let's do End of the Road for 100. The three reports required to close out an NIH award. I love this topic. Mm-hmm! Answer? They're doing it.

Kristin Ta: Yeah.

Michelle Bulls: That's right: Final RPPR, Final FFR, Final Invention Statement. And this is the administrative closeout. Very good, everyone.

Kristin Ta: All right. Let's stick with the closeout theme and do the End of the Road for 300. All right. So now we know the three reports. This is the due date of all closeout reports, as outlined in 2 CFR 200.

Michelle Bulls: All right.

Kristin Ta: All right. Everybody knows this one.

Michelle Bulls: The answer ...

Kristin Ta: Let's take a look at the answer.

[ Chatter ]

Michelle Bulls: I just want to jump in there really quick, Kristin. Let's remind our colleagues that when you submit your final FFR, you have to submit a reconciled FFR. Excuse me. So making sure that once you submit those FFRs and the closeout after 120 days, everything needs to be lined up, so we can close it out administratively and financially. There are a lot of grant accounts that are sitting open in the payment management system. That's because they're not reconciled, so we want to make sure we do that.

Kristin Ta: Yup. Because just like there's a regulatory requirement for the recipients to do it in 120 days, we also have a requirement to close everything out within 1 year, and HHS is very interested in us meeting those requirements.

Michelle Bulls: Absolutely.

Kristin Ta: All right. Let's do Show Me the Money for 200. This type of supplement requests additional funds to cover increased costs due to unforeseen circumstances and is always within the scope of the original project. All right. Let's take a look at the answer. So, yes, this is an Administrative Supplement, and so the other types of supplements you might see is a competitive revision, and that type of supplement actually expands the scope of your project, and competitive revision applications, unlike Administrative Supplements, have to undergo peer review.

Michelle Bulls: That's right.

Kristin Ta: That's the distinction between these two types.

Michelle Bulls: We actually now call Administrative Supplements within scope Supplements, just for that very reason, right? All right. Okay. Let's see here. I'm going to do a fun one too. Let's see. Let's see. All right. Let's do Show Me the Money for 300. NRSA Fellows and Trainees are eligible to receive $2,500 per budget period to support this type of cost. This is right. They're doing it, Cynthia.

Kristin Ta: You guys are up to speed on your comments here.

Cynthia Dwyer: I think we might have made me these harder, Michelle and Kristin.

Michelle Bulls: Yeah, we're going to next time. Trust me.

Cynthia Dwyer: They know everything!

Michelle Bulls: We were trying to put our feelers out there, but we're definitely going to do it next time. So we just want to remind folks that childcare costs are permitted for the dependent children living in the eligible full-time trainee fellowship's home from birth to the age of 13. That's all in the grants policy statement. We also talk about the fact that they do not apply to elder non-childcare dependents, and one of the things that I want to make sure of is, no matter what happens, we need to make sure that we retain the documentation that's used to support, all supporting documentation, proof of a provider that is licensed, and it must be made available to NIH officials if requested. We've noted that not a lot of folks have taken advantage of this opportunity as we rolled it out a couple of years ago, but we believe that having the opportunity to know what's out there, know what the requirements are, encourage you to take a look at it, work with your institution to make sure that you have all of the information you need to apply.

Kristin Ta: Yup. Absolutely. All right. So let's head back to data sharing and do Share That Data for 300.

Michelle Bulls: That's right, Robin.

Kristin Ta: So true or false? DMS costs are included when considering budget cost caps such as the $500,000 direct cost cap. All right. You guys know your stuff. Let's take a look at the answer. This is true. So your DMS costs and that single line item for DMS are included in your total direct costs, so that impacts the $500,000 limit. It impacts the $250,000 modular budget limit and then any limits identified in the funding opportunity as well.

Michelle Bulls: That's right. Ashley Jackson asked, "Will this limit potentially be adjusted to account for DMS?" There are not internal discussions about that at this time. We do have a federal demonstration partnership pilot where we will be looking phase two, looking at the costs and trying to identify whether or not NIH needs to consider that. But at this time, all of the caps are in place, and the costs for DMS should be considered regardless of the cap or not. So that's where we are, but that's a very good question, and we are considering it under the pilot to see how that looks. You're welcome, Ashley.

Kristin Ta: All right. So let's go to Show Me the Money for 100. So this is something that's reported in the FFR as funds obligated but not yet paid. All right. So let's take a look at the answer. That's right. It's unliquidated obligations. So these are obligations where they've been incurred by the federal entity, but they've not yet paid out the invoice, and as we were talking about those closeout FFRs earlier, when you have your final FFR, you have to resolve all of those unliquidated obligations, finish all of our drawdowns and have everything ready to go before you submit that final FFR to NIH to close things out.

Michelle Bulls: That's right.

Cynthia Dwyer: That was a great question too because in our "Notice of Award Arrives, Now What?" that was a question. What's the difference between an unliquidated and an unobligated balance?

Michelle Bulls: Yup.

Cynthia Dwyer: So great, great question, great answer.

Michelle Bulls: Yup. And the other thing too is that we want to make sure that if you have subrecipients that you obtain that information from them timely as well because that does cause a lot of problems with unliquidated obligations in the management of your grants. So please be mindful to put that information, set time lines that are reasonable in your subaward agreements and make sure that those terms and conditions for those requirements to submit the timely FFRs and unliquidated obligations are outlined in your subaward agreements, very important.

Kristin Ta: And it looks like we have a question about, how will future data management costs fall under the unliquidated obligations and final closeout?

Michelle Bulls: The same way, really. What will happen is - so I see where they're going with this question in that there may be costs that are incurred during a project, but they have not been expended after the project, and that's a part, again, of an analysis that we'll be needing to do during our federal demonstration partnership to gather that information, to determine whether or not we need to modify policies or re-establish, or establish, new policies that will allow for you to spend those funds down, but we have not had those discussions of yet because we're truly trying to make sure we take in the information as it comes in, and since this just rolled out, that data that comes in for us will be very helpful for us to make some informed decisions. So to be determined, but a very, very good question. Okay. To Disclose or Not To Disclose. You going with 300, Cynthia?

Cynthia Dwyer: Three hundred.

Michelle Bulls: When submitting Other Support to NIH, this type of research requires supporting documentation. Better go grab that disclosure table.

Kristin Ta: So looks like most folks are getting it.

Michelle Bulls: Yeah. They're doing it. What is in-kind? Yeah. Some different ones. Yeah.

Kristin Ta: Okay.

Cynthia Dwyer: Wow. We got a couple, "I'm not sure." So this is a great question, or answer and question to give out today.

Michelle Bulls: And so we're, as Kristin mentioned early on, we're going to give a cheat sheet, a resource slide, so that you have that, so that you guys can go out and take a look at that. Really, really important, and I'm really grateful for the individuals that said, "not sure," because that is the kind of thing we need to know and understand, and as you go out to look at the resource tool, if you see that it's not as clear as you need it to be, feel free to send us additional questions. But when submitting other supports to NIH, this type of resource requires supporting documentations: all foreign activities and resources. NIH requires all of our researchers to provide foreign contracts, grants and other specific agreements to senior key personnels for appointments, affiliations and/or employment with a foreign institution. That information needs to be provided as part of a PDF or the other support. Any personal services, contracts for labs, do not need to be provided. This is truly contracts for the individual. And then NIH will review those contracts, grants and other agreements to confirm that all the information is accurate and appropriate, and if the contract is not in English, it has to be translated, and I think the goal here really is to understand the resources that are available to the researcher so that NIH can make a determination of whether we're duplicating funding or whether we have budgetary overlap, commitment overlap and to determine whether or not we need to provide resources that they are getting from somewhere else, and so those funding decisions are really important. So I do encourage you to go out and take a look at the FAQ and familiarize yourself with this because this is a very important policy that has given folks a lot of pause in terms of what they're supposed to be submitting and how they're supposed to be submitting as a result of this presidential memorandum that was issued by the Office of Science and Technology and Policy. So it's really important. This is not truly just an NIH effort. This is a federal-wide research effort protecting the research platform.

Kristin Ta: All right. So I'm going to go back to data sharing and do Share That Data for 100. So the time line for data sharing that's outlined in the final NIH Policy on Data Management and Sharing. So what is that expected time line?

Cynthia Dwyer: Good answer.

Michelle Bulls: I love Ashley. She just throws it out there.

Kristin Ta: So someone doesn't understand the question. So in the NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing, it lays out the expectation for when scientific data must be shared, so what that time line should look like. So I see a few folks have gotten it.

Cynthia Dwyer: Phone a friend. I love it. Wrong game!

Michelle Bulls: Lifeline.

Kristin Ta: All right. So why don't we take a look at that answer? So the answer is: as soon as possible and no later than the time of an associated publication, so a publication that's associated with that project and data, or the end of the performance period, whichever comes first. And so when you're preparing your data management and sharing plan to submit with your application, you're going to outline the time line that you plan to share your data, how long you plan to make it available and if there are any issues that are anticipated with sharing in this timeframe, you can outline those as well. So if there's anything that would impact your ability to share the data, you have the opportunity to outline that in your plan.

Michelle Bulls: Okay.

Cynthia Dwyer: Did you see? We have someone who's asking about journals. There's a couple of questions in here we might want to follow up before we move on. So does journals not require it at time of publication? And then clarify, do you mean by your final publication? If they publish several times per project.

Kristin Ta: No. It doesn't have to be.

[ Chatter ]

Michelle Bulls: Whichever comes first, Kristin. Do you want to bring down the ..,

Kristin Ta: Right. So it's any associated publication. So once you publish, the expectation is that you're making your data available. And requirements may vary depending on the journal, so we really base it on the time of a publication or the end of your performance period.

Cynthia Dwyer: Yeah. Even if it's not final, it's at the end of the performance period.

Michelle Bulls: Whichever comes first. I think that's the key.

Cynthia Dwyer: All right. So do you mean - All right. So we're getting more questions on this. So we'll take a couple more questions before we move on. So we've got: so even if you publish a baseline paper, and then do you mean that it needs to be on NCBI?

Michelle Bulls: I didn't ... I'm trying to ...

Cynthia Dwyer: Do you mean on NCBI?

Michelle Bulls: Oh, My NCBI?

Cynthia Dwyer: Mm-hmm.

Michelle Bulls: I believe so. Isn't that where they published their papers? Yes. So the venue for publications haven't changed, right?

Kristin Ta: Right.

Michelle Bulls: All of those policies remain intact. It's the timeline for when you publish and what that looks like.

Cynthia Dwyer: And will extensions be granted to share beyond the end date?

Michelle Bulls: That would depend on whether or not the program official has been contacted, and the researcher negotiates that with the program official. If it modifies the timeline, that's invoking prior approval, so that would need to be discussed and approved before it could be extended, and there's not a guarantee that it would be, but it is something that would be considered.

Cynthia Dwyer: Excellent. All right. Thank you.

Michelle Bulls: You're welcome. Exactly. That's right. That's exactly right. Let's do To Disclose or Not To Disclose. I'm going with 100. I'll start off with a bang. True or false? An Authorized Organizational Representative can sign other support on behalf of the PI. Oh, you guys got that one.

Cynthia Dwyer: They think that you're trying to trick them.

Michelle Bulls: "What is false?" was the answer. False, that is exactly right. The PI or a Senior/Key person must sign electronically on the Other Support form. That is very critical. Now, what does happen is that the AOR submits on behalf - the application on behalf of the recipients or on behalf of the applicant because that's where the relationship is with NIH, but the researcher has the responsibility to make certain that all of the information that is in that Other Support form is current, accurate and complete, and that is the purpose of signing that form.

Kristin Ta: Yup. And just to reiterate what you've already said, it's an electronic signature, not wet-ink signatures.

Michelle Bulls: Yes, yes.

Kristin Ta: All right. So let's wrap up To Disclose or Not To Disclose for 400. Recipients are required to notify NIH when these individuals are removed from their position or otherwise disciplined by the recipient institution due to concerns about harassment, bullying, retaliation or hostile work conditions. So which individuals?

Cynthia Dwyer: Yeah.

Kristin Ta: All right.

Cynthia Dwyer: Very nice.

Kristin Ta: So let's take a look at the answer. That's right. It's Principal Investigators or other Senior/Key Personnel. And so this was a policy that we rolled out last year. It was in response to a legislative mandate, and so institutions are required to notify NIH within 30 days of the removal or disciplinary action, and we have a dedicated NIH Web form where you have to submit that information to NIH, and so that must be provided by the authorized organization representative within those 30 days. And at a minimum, those notifications need to include the name of the AOR submitting it, the name of the individual of concern, a description of the concerns, the actions that were taken and any anticipated impact that may have on the NIH funded awards. And when we receive those types of notifications at NIH, the Office of Extramural Research follows up to make sure that if there was any impact on NIH grants that we work with the recipient institution to address those changes and impacts.

Michelle Bulls: Yeah. And I think it was really good that this was put out as a legislative mandate because it really did give NIH the authority that we needed to enforce this in a very clear and concise way. So I think that was worth raising, Kristin, that you made it clear that this is a legislative mandate.

Kristin Ta: Yup. Okay.

Michelle Bulls: We're at the End of the Road.

Cynthia Dwyer: This is quite appropriate for you to be in the last category.

Michelle Bulls: Yes. And so I'm going to take 400, just because I got to end big, right? Let's just hope I know the answer. Federal Financial Reports are submitted in this system. All right, now! Everybody knows the one-stop shop. Yeah, what is PMS?

Cynthia Dwyer: I don't know. What's that shop? Why was that not a category?

Michelle Bulls: Yeah. And this means, PMS, payment management system, not Michelle or Kristin having a bad day. All right. What's the answer? HHS Payment Management System. You got it. This is great. You want to do our last one, Kristin?

Kristin Ta: All right. Let's go for the last question.

Michelle Bulls: Let's do it. Let's go for it. Next time, we're going to do some really hard ones, so we can really get them, right?

Kristin Ta: Mm-hmm.

Cynthia Dwyer: Absolutely.

Michelle Bulls: And get ourselves.

Kristin Ta: I hope we know the answer.

Michelle Bulls: We better!

Kristin Ta: All right. This quarterly report submitted directly to the HHS Payment Management System was eliminated in April 2022. And we were excited to see it go.

Michelle Bulls: You better be excited.

Cynthia Dwyer: I think you ... you might've actually stumped a few on this one.

Kristin Ta: Oh, okay.

Cynthia Dwyer: Yeah, I think you did.

Kristin Ta: Oh, I see a couple correct answers popping up.

Cynthia Dwyer: Yup.

Kristin Ta: But some don't-knows and I-don't-knows. So let's take a look at the answer. So it is the Federal Cash Transaction Report. So this report used to be submitted quarterly to HHS via the payment management system, and it was really kind of .. .

Michelle Bulls: What is, "I'm confused"?

Kristin Ta: This was really a holdover from back when we used to have pooled accounts where everything was in one account, and and you had to report which grant all of your money was tied to. Now that we have a subaccount for each grant, there's really no need for that quarterly cash transaction and report. So it's been eliminated, and now when you submit your FFRs in PMS, it pulls real-time data on your cash drawdowns so that everything is reconciled right when you submit your report instead of having to come back every quarter and reconcile things.

Michelle Bulls: Yeah. That was something that we worked on with FDP for a long time, and this is something that we had been working on. I guess it was, what, about 5? It was about 5 or 6 years. And then it finally came to pass, and we were really excited about that. I'm going to take it another step further, Kristin, this wasn't even just about your projects within HHS. This was across the federal government, right? And that was the challenge with the pooled account. And that's why we weren't able to reconcile nor close them. Because if one agency closes them, or even an audit within HHS, they'd zero-out the account, and other people were in a deficit, so this was a really good elimination and a very strong win for NIH, I will say. And I love the person that says, "What is the confused?" I love it. It's just, that's what it's about, fun, having a good time. So that was really great.

Cynthia Dwyer: So we have a couple of questions. So would this be something that the special projects person would deal with officer and not the PI? Or ...

Kristin Ta: Yes, this is likely your financial office, your sponsored projects supervisor would be handling for PIs.

[ Chatter ]

Cynthia Dwyer: Okay, great. So we do have somebody who had put something in our Q&A box, so I'm going to just go ahead and ask this. This is about a biosketch, actually. So what if a PI wants to include past appointments on the biosketch? Is there a penalty for that? The PI wants to include past appointments.

Michelle Bulls: So there's no penalty because you're looking at the qualifications, but we do have a limit, right? I thought we had put a limit on that for 3 years. Did we put 3 years back on there, Kristin?

Kristin Ta: So there's no requirement to list your past appointments. A lot of folks are concerned about the page limit for the biosketch, and so if that's any concern for you, you might not want to be listing out all of your past appointments, but only current appointments are required.

Michelle Bulls: Yeah. Our current appointments are required, but I do believe that what we talked about was that when there is something that's going to help with the qualifications that they should consider listing it.

Kristin Ta: Yeah, you can definitely list.

[ Chatter ]

Michelle Bulls: That's going to be something that's going to be in - for those of you that are familiar with the efforts that we're doing with developing the common form for all of the research agencies, that will be something that might be more optional than it is for NIH right now. So even though we said that today, things might change in the future, so don't hold us to it. This is a snapshot in time. This is a better way to learn. Yay! So this was fun. Thank you so much, guys, and thanks, Megan Columbus for acknowledging the great win that we had with eliminating the FCTR, really good. Thank you.

Cynthia Dwyer: All right. So do you want to end on that note? Do you want to take a couple more questions? Or do you think, this is the end? We're ready to go?

Michelle Bulls: Let's end on a high note.

Cynthia Dwyer: All right. I'm with you.

Michelle Bulls: I'll start coughing before Kristin does too.

Cynthia Dwyer: We really appreciate all of you who stuck it out to this last session with us, and thank you to Michelle and Kristin, who both are kind of feeling under the weather, so they were really struggling a little bit at times to get all of that out to you, but they wanted to make sure that you had this opportunity to play along with us, and I say you all win the prize of knowledge today. You did great.

Michelle Bulls: I agree.

Cynthia Dwyer: So thank you, thank you, everybody.

Michelle Bulls: And I got give a shout-out to Kristin because she's been doing, pulled in a million different directions and pulled this game together and walked me through it in minutes, and I'm so glad, everyone. I appreciate it. But I appreciate you, Kristin, for ...

[ Chatter ]

Kristin Ta: First time trying it virtually, and I think it was great. So ...

Michelle Bulls: It was great. Yup. Thank you, guys.

Cynthia Dwyer: All right. Well, we will post that resource slide. We'll try to get it on there by Monday, and perhaps, soon, we'll get it, and all of our sessions that did have PowerPoints, we will have videos available within 7 days. We're just so pleased that you all joined us from across the world. Thank you to our presenters and thank you to all of you, and that's, I guess, a wrap?

Michelle Bulls: All right. Thank you, guys.

Kristin Ta: Thank you. Take care.