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Lobo Researchers,

The federal landscape has witnessed numerous developments in the last few weeks. In light of these changes, we believe it is essential to share the diligent efforts of the Research Rapid Response Team (RRRT) alongside staff in your research offices, who have been working behind the scenes. In the first of a two-part communication, the ensuing sections aim to illuminate the intricate processes—often referred to as the “sausage making”—that underpin our strategic responses to the dynamic federal funding environment.

OSP/SPO Perspective

When UNM submits a proposal or accepts an award, regardless of the source, we are required to provide a range of certifications, assurances, and/or confirmations regarding the institution’s ability to perform the research. Moreover, accepting the terms and conditions of a federal award signifies a recipient’s agreement to abide by the rules and obligations outlined in the notice of award (NoA). This signals to the funding agency that the institution will be compliant with all legal requirements and responsibilities. Acceptance sometimes means signing the NoA, and in other cases, drawing down funds from a payment system.

With each federal agency responding differently—in both process and timing—to changes in administrative priorities, the terms and conditions of each award must be reviewed carefully. Our sponsored projects offices are working closely with University leadership to ensure that, as an institution, we are aware of these changes and understand their implications. As a result, additional time is sometimes needed for both proposal submission and award acceptance.

Post-Award Perspective

As noted above, one of the steps in managing a federal award is to receive funds transferred to UNM. For most federal agencies, we do this through a request to draw down funds from the agency. This process is generally seamless — our Contracts and Grants Accounting (CGA) offices make requests approximately once a month and it generally takes a few days before we see the transfer.

On Feb. 26, the Administration issued [Executive Order 14222](#) that mandates federal agencies implement new mechanisms for recording, justifying and approving agency payments. Consequently, CGA has had to develop agency-specific responses to new systems for required justifications for each draw down we request. In some instances, the agencies have rejected the initial requests, often requesting additional information. We are working as One University to develop new processes tailored to each agency for our draw downs.



Steps Forward

We also have been working to help researchers retool their proposals and research programs. As policies, procedures, and expectations related to federal funding opportunities continue to change, [ADVANCE at UNM](#) and the [Faculty Research Development Office](#) are hosting a series of workshops this summer for researchers on ways to diversify funding sources. The effort includes a new online guide, [Diversifying Your Research Funding](#), which offers resources and information. The virtual workshops will cover working with a variety of funders including foundations, state organizations, and private groups. The sessions include “Demystifying Foundation Funding,” “MacGyvering Funding Sources to Meet your Research Goals” and “From Capitol to Corporation: Unlocking Research Funding from the State and Private Industry.”

As part of this series, ADVANCE and the Faculty Research Development Office hosted a workshop in May on partnering with the Explora Science Center for broader impacts, while discussing new National Science Foundation proposals based on updated federal priorities. Videos on both topics are posted on the [new web page](#), where you can also register for the upcoming events.

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