How can SPARCS help me?

As NC State faculty and administrative support personnel work to further the University’s research and public service mission, Sponsored Programs and Regulatory Compliance Services (SPARCS) offers guidance and assistance. We help interpret and apply Federal regulations. We start by providing education and resources that assist the proposal and award process; continue through risk assessments and the negotiations of agreements and subawards; and finally we administer funded projects. With our help, faculty and staff have the freedom to concentrate on their research objectives while maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements and ethical standards.

RESEARCH EDUCATION

We offer educational programs and electronic resources for the campus research community. From formal training sessions (e.g., Creating Budgets, System training) to informal events (e.g., Q&As), we provide resources to help you learn and be more effective in your job. To learn more, visit:

https://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/training/

eRA SYSTEMS

Electronic systems are in place to facilitate proposal submission, award administration, and the other aspects of research administration discussed here. Please visit:

https://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/systems-portal/

HUMAN SUBJECTS

If you perform research with human subjects, you will need approval from the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) prior to beginning any research activities. Research with human subjects typically involves interaction or intervention with living human beings, or collection of private, identifiable data. These activities require careful planning and prior review by the IRB to minimize risks to human subjects. Visit the IRB website at:

https://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/compliance/irb

ANIMAL SUBJECTS

The Animal Care and Use Office houses the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Contact information as well as extensive information on the use and care of animals is available from the following website:

https://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/compliance/iacuc/

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Sponsored Programs and Regulatory Compliance Services

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AGREEMENT NEGOTIATION

SPARCS focuses much of its attention on negotiating the terms and conditions of agreements. Why? Because the institution’s driving principles to maintain objectivity in science, explore new knowledge without restriction and to remain unencumbered in the transfer of knowledge is almost always compromised by the initial terms of sponsored agreements. Most contract negotiations take between two and eleven days. Some of the main negotiation points center around:

- Publication restrictions
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Legal issues such as indemnification and insurance
- Payment and financial reporting provisions
- Technical reporting and breach of contract terms

SUBAWARDS

The requirements for pass-through entities imposed by Uniform Guidance make subawards a particularly complex subset of the University’s agreements. SPARCS has committed dedicated expertise to:

- Risk Assessment
- Subaward development and modification
- Appropriate monitoring tools for high-risk entities
- Federal reporting (FFATA)

RESEARCH INTEGRITY

RECORD Record the scope, hypothesis, experimental design and conclusions for the day. If your scholarship is in a field not conducive to bound lab notebooks, update your journal on your academic pursuits and endeavors.

REVIEW Review your entries for the past several days and ensure they are complete.

INSTRUCT Document instructions given to subordinates or received from supervisors of your work.

COUNSEL Counsel your subordinate scholars on how to maintain lab notebooks and journals.

THINK Stop and think about what you and your subordinate scholars are doing, how you are ensuring objectivity, your place in the world of exploration and knowledge transfer. Are you satisfied or are you overwhelmed? If the latter, fix your problems NOW.

DOUBLE CHECK Check, double check and seriously, triple check your literature searches, references lists and other bibliographical materials and assure yourself that you’ve properly referenced others.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest (COI) is a circumstance that might impair your objectivity as an employee of North Carolina State University. Most circumstances are not intolerable if they are disclosed in a timely manner and properly managed. Learn more at:

https://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/systems-portal/coi/

Disclosure is your opportunity to transfer the risk of impaired objectivity to the institution. Why wouldn’t you do it?

CONFLICTS OF COMMITMENT

A conflict of commitment occurs when the pursuit of external professional activities involves an investment of time that interferes with the employee’s university duties and responsibilities.

External professional activities are encouraged of our EHRA professionals and faculty. Why? Because they afford an opportunity for “real-life” knowledge to be added to the intellectual fabric of the institution.

EXPORT CONTROLS

Export controls regulate the transfer of items and technology from the United States to foreign countries and foreign entities. Research projects that involve military or dual-use technology, publication restrictions, international collaborations, or travel can be affected by export controls. Learn more at:

https://research.ncsu.edu/sparcs/compliance/export-controls/