



UMSN Research Newsletter

September 2021

Message from the ADR:

Welcome to Fiscal Year 2022; Academic year 2021-22!

I sincerely hope everyone had a chance to have some relaxation this summer and time to enjoy summer activities. I thought I would begin this newsletter to start out the year with some thoughts about expectations...what can you expect from the UMSN Office of Research this coming year. I will also address some news updates from University of Michigan Office of Research (UMOR) and the National Institute of Health.

UMSN Office of Research

UMSN Office of Research has a busy year planned. Three objectives guide the strategic activities for the year.

The first objective is to develop and implement activities to advance our vision and mission. As you will recall, the vision we, as a faculty, developed a couple years ago is “UMSN will be a national and global leader in team science to improve health and health equity” (developed 2019, edited 2020). Consistent with the vision and this objective, the School is launching a signature initiative related to health equity, anti-racism, social justice, and inter-and transdisciplinary research. In various venues, we have been discussing health equity and community engagement around health promotion for some time. The impetus to make pursuit of health equity a priority objective was facilitated by the Provost’s Initiative for the Cluster Hire in Anti-Racism and Social Justice. As a School, we submitted two proposals for the first round cluster hire proposals. In doing so, our strengths and engagement in this area of research and practice became very apparent. At least thirteen faculty contributed to the cluster hire proposals and there are several more that are developing or already have programs of research to address health equity. Still others have practices with populations who suffer from systemic racism and discrimination. This same group of faculty are working on a proposal for round 2 with the School of Social Work and Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning. Faculty have given up time in the summer months to work on this.

For the next couple of years, activities to support this area include hiring initiatives and resource support for pilot grants, planning grants, and group activities. We have one active search committee for the cluster hire proposal that was funded. We are also developing a search committee that will span the next two plus years to recruit and interview faculty from all ranks who have expertise in anti-racism, health equity, and social justice. We want to continue to build an interdisciplinary collaborative network to strengthen, broaden, and innovate the science in this important area.



A call for proposals for donor funds for pilot studies that was distributed in August, with proposals due in September, highlights interdisciplinary science and health equity related topics. In addition, Dr. Patricia Tillman-Meakins was also successful in getting educational grant funding to implement the Common Read activity you should all have heard about. As a reminder, this is a project where we will all read the book “Caste: The Origins of our Discontent” by Isabel Wilkerson and discuss it in smaller groups with the intent to inform our work both as individuals and a community.

Please let me know if you have a special interest or area in which you wish to be involved or if you have ideas for what we can do as a School to facilitate engagement from all.

A second objective for the year is to sustain and increase capacity of core resources for grant submission and implementation. One new activity under this objective is the development of a nimble internal small grants program that will allow submission of research projects on a monthly rolling basis. This idea came from your two Department Chairs. One example of how this grant program could be used is to quickly develop additional pilot data in response to an external grant critique so that the resubmission will be stronger. More information about this program and its initiation will be coming soon to your email inbox and on the CANVAS site.

The third objective is to develop a culture of transparency and accountability around the research mission. Continued transparency will be achieved through the research newsletter that will be distributed twice each semester. I am also working with GRO to develop standard operating procedures around our grants infrastructure. These SOPs will be posted on the CANVAS site for easy reference for all faculty. Any policies, grant programs and procedures related to the UMSN Office of Research will be available on an ongoing basis on CANVAS for everyone’s information.

News Updates

University of Michigan Office of Research (UMOR)

During the last academic year, UMOR changed their central pilot grant funding program to align more with strategic priorities of the University and also to assist with funding for those in the arts and humanities. The new initiative is called the [“Research Catalyst and Innovation Program”](#) which sets aside 1.5 million dollars annually to support 4 areas. One area is anti-racism grants, a second is large scale center and initiative planning grants, a third is catalyst grants that represent partnerships between the Office for the VP of Research and Schools to develop new pathways for grant funding. Finally, there are set aside block grants for the arts and humanities. Take a look at these on the [UMOR website](#).

[Dr. Lisa Prosser](#) will be the new Associate Vice President for Research for the Health Sciences, replacing Dr. Srijan Sen. This role serves as our liaison with the Office of the Vice President for Research. Dr. Prosser is Professor in the Department of Health Management and Policy in the School of Public Health, Professor in the Department of Pediatrics in the Medical School, and Director of the [Susan B. Meister Child Health Evaluation and Research Center](#) at Mott Children’s Hospital.

National Institutes of Health

If you have not had a chance to look at the [NIH Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#), I would encourage you to do so. There are numerous areas that are relevant to our School and our passions for promoting health and health equity. Under their first objective of “Advancing Biomedical and Behavioral Sciences”, the first principle of “Driving Foundational Science” has a section on understanding biological, behavioral, and social determinants of population health. In addition, cross cutting themes for all objectives and initiatives include “improving minority health and reducing health disparities”, “enhancing women’s health”, and “promoting collaborative science”. These cross cutting themes as well as others, fit well with UMSN’s Research Vision but also with our signature initiative.

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Are you familiar with the [NIH Data Book](#)? This is an interactive data base where you can look at success and funding rates, as well as a host of other data, often by specific institute. For example, you can look at how many grant applications of what type were submitted to which Institute and how many were scored at each percentile. For example, I just looked up data on the National Cancer Institute and found that in 2020, they had 60 R01 equivalent grants that scored at the 1st percentile, 2 of which were not able to be funded. When making decisions about where to submit your grant, and therefore how to frame it, it may be worth a little exploration on this site.

Communication with the ADR

As we start another new year, I want to remind you to reach out to me with questions, concerns, unmet needs, suggestions, or even to let me know what you think we are doing well. I am always happy to meet with you, and using Zoom or phone calls, we should be able to connect quickly around any issue. To connect, just send me an email with a request to meet and I will get it on our calendars as expediently as possible.

Wishing you a satisfying fall semester,
Deb



Clinical Research Operation Management System (CROMS) in use at National Institute of Aging (NIA)

Dr. Sheria Robinson-Lane tipped us off to a new system in place at the NIA. Developed in response to increased funding after the signing of the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA), the Clinical Research Operation Management System (CROMS) will track, report, and manage extramural clinical research enrollment data, study documents, activities, and portfolios in real-time across NIA clinical research projects. Benefits to NIA grantees are expected to be:

- Generate reports/inclusion enrollment tables formatted to meet requirements for annual NIH/NIA reporting (with no double entry of data).
- Automatic reminders related to NIA grant activities, like approaching deadlines, study milestones, and enrollment milestones. It will automatically track progress in one system, reducing the need to track by email.
- Access tools and visualizations to monitor and compare planned and actual participant enrollment for each study and across your portfolio.
- View study-specific data and documents shared with NIA in one central system (e.g., participant enrollment data, investigator information, site information, and final study documents).
- Receive information on best practices around enrollment and retention that have been identified and summarized through CROMS.

Priority for using this system is being given to AD/ADRD clinical trials at this time but expansion into other NIA-funded trials is expected. Want more information? Email NIAClinicalResearch@nia.nih.gov



GRO NOTES



COMING
SOON!

January 2022 is just around the corner!

There are **THREE IMPORTANT CHANGES TO NIH GRANTS** that take effect January 2022.

The **Biographical Sketch (Biosketch)** and **Other Support format page** have undergone significant changes. It is critical that you use the new format for these forms for applications and Research Performance Progress Reports (RPPR).

Changes for the **Biosketch** can be found [here](#). The new biosketch form is *expected* to be used in any application or RPPR submitted on or after May 25, 2021 but will be **REQUIRED after January 25, 2022**.

Applications that do not use the new format may cause NIH to withdraw applications from or delay consideration of funding. Changes for the **Other Support** form can be found [here](#). A summary of key changes to these documents is in the table below.

IN ADDITION - faculty who have or will have any senior key personnel listed in their grants.gov forms for NIH submission must now include an era commons log in ID. This means **all key personnel** (not just the PI) are required to have an [eRA Commons log in](#). This is particularly important for those working with any foreign collaborators or partners. Please reach out to these collaborators and ask them to establish an eRA Commons log in or GRO will not be able to add them to the proposal as key or senior personnel. More information can be found [here](#).

Format Page	Changes
Biographical Sketch Format Page (Biosketch)	Section B 'Positions and Honors' has been renamed 'Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors'.
	For the non-Fellowship Biosketch, Section D. has been removed. For the Fellowship Biosketch, Section D has been updated to remove 'Research Support.' As applicable, all applicants may include details on ongoing and completed research projects from the past three years that they want to draw attention to within the personal statement, Section A.
Other Support Format Page	The format page has been re-organized to separate funded projects from in-kind contributions.
	Signature block added, for Program Director/Principal Investigator or Other Senior/Key Personnel to certify the accuracy of the information submitted. Each PD/PI or senior/key personnel must electronically sign their respective Other Support form as a PDF prior to submission.