

URA Weekly Update for the Week Ending March 20, 2009

Quick Links: [Final F&A Rate Agreement](#), [NIH Stimulus Meetings](#), [Grants.gov Updates](#), [Grants.gov Reminders](#), [PTF Reminder](#), [NSF Update](#), [NIH Update](#)

URA General Information

New F & A Rate Agreement:

The Fringe Benefit Rates for Fiscal Year 2010 (7/1/09-6/30/10) have now been **approved** by DHHS.

Benefits eligible -- Federal: 21.9%

Benefits eligible -- Non-federal: 24.7% (2.3% for dependent tuition remission)

Benefits ineligible -- 6.6%

The new date for the F & A rate agreement is **3/16/09** (replacing the previous agreement dated 9/2/08). This is the date that should now appear, for example, on NIH applications. [And just a reminder, only the fringe benefit rate has changed--not the F & A rate.] URA will post the new rate agreement on the website soon.

NIH Stimulus FOA Discussion Sessions:

We have scheduled 2 Open House Discussions on the NIH Stimulus Funding Opportunities. If you have questions about allowable costs, eligibility, form completion, deadlines, etc, please attend. To make the most out of the session, please review the FOAs first and email your questions to Lynda Wolter (lswolter@uchicago.edu). We will do a separate session for NSF, when they post their FOAs. Links to the NIH FOA's are available at: <https://researchfunding.uchicago.edu/nih/> and <http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/>

- [NIH Challenge Grants](#): March 26, 2009 CLSC 119 10:00am-11:30am
- [NIH Supplements](#): March 31, 2009 CLSC 119 2:30pm-4:00pm

Grants.gov System Updates

Over the past several grant deadlines, Grants.gov has struggled to keep up with the volume submissions. On Monday, March 16, the entire system was down most of the day and NIH had to postpone the R03/R21 deadline by one day to March 17 due to the technical problems with Grants.gov. Submissions must be received by the URA deadline policy. For more information on the institutional deadline policy, please see:

http://researchadmin.uchicago.edu/about/announcement_310policy.shtml

Grants.gov Reminders:

- Please make sure to hit the "Check Package for Errors" button prior to delivering the final ready-to-submit application to URA. Several applications have been submitted with fatal errors that required several hours of work to correct and resubmit (some multiple times).
- Do not use special characters or spaces in any file name in a Grants.gov submission. **Only use standard characters in file names: A through Z, a through z, and 0 through 9, Hyphen (-), underscore (_).** This includes documents that are uploaded. The Grants.gov system is generating errors if there are spaces or special characters

- URA has posted a sample [Grants.gov package](#). Please use this resource. It has all the institutional information completed.
- Please read the FOA for special requirements, formats, limitations, etc. We have had several grants submitted recently where the application did not meet the requirements of the FOA.

PTF reminder: Please indicate on the top of the form if the application is in response to ARRA Stimulus Funding. The reporting requirements are significantly different, and we need to identify Stimulus proposals and awards in TRACS.

Agency Updates & News

National Science Foundation:

NSF issued [Important Notice No. 131](#) on the Foundation's plans for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

NSF Programs Receiving Recovery Act Funding

The Recovery Act supplements NSF fiscal year 2009 funding by \$3.0 billion. NSF currently has many highly rated proposals that it has not been able to fund. For this reason, NSF is planning to use the majority of the \$2 billion available in Research and Related Activities for proposals that are already in house and will be reviewed and/or awarded prior to September 30, 2009.

The Foundation also expects to expeditiously award funds as specified in the Recovery Act for: the Math and Science Partnership program (funded at \$25 million); the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program (funded at \$60 million); the Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction Account (funded at \$400 million); the Academic Research Infrastructure (ARI) program (funded at \$200 million); and the Science Masters program, (funded at \$15 million). Solicitations for these latter two programs will be posted this spring.

NSF will post a solicitation this spring for the Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI) in order to make a sufficient number of awards to utilize the \$300 million provided in the legislation. The Foundation currently anticipates that no other solicitations will be posted that are solely in response to the Recovery Act.

Funding Prioritization

NSF will ensure that Recovery Act funds are awarded in a timely manner while maintaining its commitment to its established merit review processes. In keeping with this, NSF's overall framework for Recovery Act investments emphasizes the following:

- All grants issued with Recovery Act funds will be standard grants with durations of up to 5 years. This approach will allow NSF to structure a sustainable portfolio.
- Funding of new Principal Investigators and high-risk, high-return research will be top priorities.

With the exception of the MRI, ARI and Science Masters programs, the majority of proposals eligible for Recovery Act funding include those that are already in house and will be reviewed and/or awarded prior to September 30, 2009.

NSF also will consider proposals declined on or after October 1, 2008. The reversal of the decision to decline must be based on both the high quality of the reviews received on the initial submission and

the lack of available funding at the time the original decision was made. The cognizant program officer will contact the institution when a reversal is being considered by NSF. Specific procedural information regarding this new process is available on the NSF Recovery website.

Special Award Conditions

The Recovery Act mandates a significant level of transparency and accountability. The law and implementing guidance identify specific award conditions for awards made with Recovery Act funding. Therefore, award notices will include special award conditions identifying the funding as coming from the Recovery Act, and indicate the specific awardee reporting responsibilities mandated by Section 1512 of the Recovery Act. Given the goals of the Recovery Act, awardees will be informed that they are expected to expend funds in a timely manner on allowable award costs and that NSF will be monitoring awards for expenditures. If, after 12 months, no allowable expenditures have taken place, NSF may consider reducing or terminating the award and reallocating the funds.

Please contact URA (Lynda Wolter, lswolter@uchicago.edu) or your URA Manager if you have questions.

National Institutes of Health

Internal Selection Process for RFA-RR-09-008 and RFA-RR-09-007

For the two NIH opportunities with a limited number of slots available to the University, each Division or unit will rank their pre-proposals as advisory to Don Levy, VP for Research and for National Laboratories, and Don will make the final decision. Each academic division should send the **internal proposals** to Fred Stafford (f-stafford@uchicago.edu.) Each division should provide the rank order of the proposals.

Recovery Act Limited Competition: Extramural Research Facilities Improvement Program (C06), [RFA-RR-09-008](#). Applications are due **May 6, 2009**. Rank-ordered internal proposals from each Division should reach Fred Stafford by **Tuesday, March 31, 2009, 3 PM**.

Core Facility Renovation, Repair and Improvement (G20), [RFA-RR-09-007](#). Applications are due **September 17, 2009**. Rank-ordered internal proposals from each Division should reach Fred Stafford by **Thursday, April 30, 2009, 3 PM**.

For each **internal proposal**, please provide:

1. Name of PI(s)
2. Brief description of project (<1/2 page)
3. Amount to be requested
4. Brief description of expected impact – both scientific and institutional
5. Identification of space needs, including room numbers if known
6. Additional capital needs, if applicable
7. Animal use considerations, if applicable
8. Biosafety considerations, if applicable