What you should know about your Sponsored Projects: A Summary of the SPA COVID Town Hall 5/8/2020

OVERALL SUMMARY:

- This is as of 5/8/20: things change rapidly so please check website below and the sponsor websites
- Documentation is key.
- Keep in touch with the SPA project officer, who will contact the financial officer at the sponsor.
- Keep in touch you your sponsor project officer, and keep an email trail of all correspondence.
- Go to sponsor websites (e.g. NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts) for the latest changes in due dates for specific FOAs.
- NIH has instructed review panels to assume COVID-19 disruptions will be resolved by the start up of funding for the projects they are reviewing
- See this website: https://research.columbia.edu/COVID-19_Research

1. Documentation
- Clear need to document all issues related to ramping down of projects
- Documentation should include:
  - Human subjects pause, including altered timelines and milestones needed to recreate a new revised targeted inclusion table
  - What progress you have made remotely, and what you cannot do remotely
- Personnel changes
  - Percent effort changes due to altered workscope
  - Paid absences, i.e. the employee is unable to work remotely due to illness, or is a worker who cannot perform assigned duties and is unable to contribute to the project in any other way
  - Redeployment of a fellow/worker to clinical duties in response to COVID
  - Some of these issues are sponsor specific (e.g. NIH is fine with redeployment to clinical duties and with the CU policy of keeping employees on the payroll). PLEASE check with your SPA project officer who will contact your sponsor project officer.
- Financial impact
  - Paid absences
  - Cancelled travel, especially nonrefundable travel
  - Lab specific line items that cannot be ordered (e.g. animals)
  - Donated PPE
  - Sponsor specific rules regarding large unobligated balances so you need to be able to justify these in a progress report. Most sponsors anticipate >25% carry overs, but this needs to be documented.
- How to document
  - No standard format, so use whatever you are comfortable with
  - CUIMC developing COVID-19 Impact tracker tool – will send website when available
- How will the documentation be used
  - Facilitate progress reports
  - Back up documentation for sponsor requests and audits
2. Sponsor flexibilities and prior approvals

- Progress reports
  - Most sponsors, but not all, are being flexible for late progress reports.
  - For NIH: must contact SPA project officer and inform him/her of the lateness and reason why
  - For NSF: progress reports that were due 3/1 through 4/30 have an automatic 30-day extension

- No Cost Extensions
  - Must contact SPA project officer
  - NIH: very flexible with 2nd no cost extensions, including extensions for training programs and fellowships
    - Must justify that this was due to COVID impact

- PPE donations
  - Document (See above)
  - NIH allows
  - NSF/NASA must get sponsor project officer approval (in writing)

- Application Due DATES
  - NIH: Regular late application policies are now in effect
    - Some FOAs have extended deadlines, please see the latest NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts
  - NSF: Some FOAs have been extended
  - DOD/CDMRP: Some preapplication deadlines have been extended
  - Approval necessary to use grant funds for COVID-19 related research unless you have written approval from SPA and the sponsor
    - Look at COVID-19 competitive revisions

3. Other Issues

- Need to report if research staff goes outside of US as there are implications as to whether they can work from another country (it may need to be reported as a new foreign component)
  - Contact SPA with: which country, how long, scope of work

- Supplemental funding: need to go to sponsor project officer

- Supply chain delays: contact SPA as they will go to agency sponsor

- Subcontractors with delays: monitor subawards, please keep track of invoices that are submitted with ramped down work, must report to SPA/sponsors

4. Work Related issues

- Who is responsible for disinfecting spaces and PPE
  - Grant funds for grant specific purposes
  - Otherwise: institutional responsibility, but no guidance yet

- Undergraduate research
  - No policies in place beyond the summer

- MD Scientists on T32s and fellowships who have been recalled to clinical duties
  - Track and documents