

Subject: SERCC Newsletter

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From: Scientific Editing and Research Communication Core

To: Widmayer, Heather A

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Scientific Editing and Research Communication Core



Research support from the Carver College of Medicine (CCOM) Office of Research

From navigating the administrative aspects of grant applications to managing compliance and facilitating collaboration, the CCOM Office of Research provides and coordinates resources for investigators who conduct clinical and/or basic

science research. **Erin Brothers** serves as the Research Administrator for this office, and as the Director of the embedded Research Administrative Support Office (RASO). In this newsletter, Jennifer Barr (SERCC Grant Writer), interviews **Ms. Brothers** to learn about the specific ways the Office of Research supports investigators in the College of Medicine.

What new or ongoing initiatives is the Office of Research promoting that you are especially excited about?

There are a few different initiatives that I'm excited about.

- I'm very excited about the [Research Administrative Support Office \(RASO\) Dedicated Support Team](#), which provides administrative support for all pre- and post-award activities and helps to establish best practices for grant submission and management.
 - This team was established to support departments that do not regularly process grant submissions.
 - We have staff who are dedicated to providing pre- and post-award support, which can help save a department from having to pay for a full-time appointment when that may not be needed. Importantly, our staff are knowledgeable about best practices for pre- and post-award processes, which can be helpful for departments that may not have a lot of experience in this area.
 - The service is open to any department in the CCOM. If they are interested in using it, I encourage them to reach out to our office to start a conversation on how we can work together.
- We are also working on establishing a T32 web app.
 - The purpose of this app is to reduce the administrative burden of putting together the data tables required in T32 applications. These data tables provide information about the support of past trainee success, faculty research productivity, trainee outcomes, and institutional support.
 - Currently, the data for these tables are collected manually, which is very time consuming.
 - The app will help populate the tables by merging data from the different systems at the university that collect information about trainees (e.g., MAUI, HR systems, Sponsored Program systems). This will make it easier to standardize how the data are collected and presented so they are in accordance with NIH rules and guidance, which will help ensure consistency within and across applications.
 - Any administrator in the CCOM will be able to use this app, and we anticipate that this will help establish best practices and greatly reduce administrative burden in compiling these data tables.
- We've also launched the [Large-Scale Proposal Development Service](#), which

aims to alleviate some of the burden on investigators who are submitting large-scale proposals, such as NIH P-, U-, and S-series; T32 training grants; and other large collaborative initiatives such as ARPA-H proposals.

- We have an administrator who can provide pre-award and budgetary support for these proposals.
- There is also a grant writer who can help in writing and editing the proposal.
- This service is currently free to any principal investigator (PI) or multi-PI in the CCOM.

As you know, there have been a lot of changes (or anticipated changes) in the funding landscape in the last few months. What are some of the ways the CCOM Office of Research helps investigators with their funding efforts and scholarly activity?

The Office of Research sponsors several initiatives that support investigators with their funding efforts.

- We have a [Focused Grant Revision Supplement Opportunity](#). The goal is to help improve high-scoring NIH R01 proposals that were not funded on their first submission. Investigators can apply for funds to address specific weaknesses raised by the reviewers. Some activities that could be funded include showing feasibility of a new technique or reagent, or creating a new animal model.
- We have an incentive program in which we reward investigators who have received two R01s by providing some additional funds for their research, and these funds don't ever expire.
- We also coordinate with the Office of the Vice President for Research and research departments to provide [bridge funding](#), which can help investigators who are in between grants.
- We manage the [Stead Family Scholars Program](#), which is designed to recognize exceptional early-career investigators at the university. The program provides financial support to pursue innovative research ideas. Scholars also receive some professional development training.
- Our office supports [events](#) that foster community and collaboration, such as bringing distinguished speakers to campus and Research Day.
- The office also manages all of the [core services](#) in the CCOM, which are vital in maintaining a strong research environment.

Funding agencies sometimes change their instructions or requirements for grant applications. For example, the NIH will be requiring a new format for the Biosketch. In what ways can the Office of Research help investigators navigate new requirements from funding agencies?

- Our office runs a college-wide research administrators' meeting about once a month. These meetings provide an opportunity for us to relay changes in funding agency requirements, which administrators can share with their faculty members. It is also a way for administrators to ask their colleagues questions and share best practices and lessons learned.
- Our office also puts out emails to highlight any notices or changes in NIH guidelines. Sometimes this overlaps with information from the [Division of Sponsored Programs](#), but we just want to make sure everyone is getting the information.
- If we hear of a funding opportunity that may be a good fit for someone's research then we will also reach out to those investigators to let them know about it.
- We have an Office of Research [email](#) and are always available to answer questions.

What are the best ways researchers can find out information about services and initiatives sponsored by the Office of Research?

- The [Office of Research website](#) has all our contact information on it. Reading our newsletters is also a great way to hear about programs and initiatives that we are sponsoring.
- People should know (and not just investigators, but administrators too) that we are here as a resource. If they can't find the answer to something they can reach out to our office. We are always open for a conversation, and although we can't do everything, we want to do what we can to support research in the CCOM.

We are grateful to Erin Brothers for taking time to discuss the programs and services offered by the Office of Research. If you have questions about any of the information she shared, feel free to [email](#) the Office of Research.

Best of luck with your research!
Jennifer Barr and the SERCC Team

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Announcements

[New: Open Writing Sessions](#)

The SERCC is introducing monthly open

[Preview of NIH Common Forms](#)

The NIH will adopt the Common Forms

writing sessions to support CCOM graduate students and postdocs who are writing grant proposals and research articles as part of a course assignment or for submission. The writing sessions will provide a welcoming space and dedicated time for writing. A scientific editor will be on hand to answer questions, provide one-on-one consultation, and share scientific writing resources. Participation is on a walk-in basis—no appointment is needed. Sessions will be held 2:00–4:00 p.m. in CMAB 106 on the following Fridays: Oct. 17, Nov. 7, and Dec. 12.

for the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support documents. In anticipation of this change, the NIH has launched preview versions of the Biographical Sketch and Current and Pending (Other) Support Common Forms as well as the Biographical Sketch Supplement. These are not official versions but will allow users to save, reopen, and edit the preview forms in SciENcv. Official NIH Common Forms are anticipated to become available in November 2025. Click the link above for the full notice (NOT-OD-25-152) from NIH.

Upcoming Opportunities

Have a question about writing grants or research articles? [Contact us](#) and we will answer it in a future newsletter.

Ask the Editor: SERCC Virtual Office Hours

1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month | next sessions October 1 and 15 | 12:30 p.m.–1:30 p.m. | [Zoom](#)

The SERCC is hosting virtual office hours twice a month. If you have a question related to writing a grant, manuscript, or other scientific document, stop by to talk with a scientific editor. We are also happy to answer any questions you have regarding our services. Open to all faculty, staff, fellows, postdocs, and students.

[More information](#) | [Link to event](#)

Write Winning Grant Proposals Seminar

October 9 | 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. | Iowa Memorial Union
[Registration deadline September 24](#)

Sponsored by the Research Development Office in the Office of the Vice President for Research, this seminar comprehensively addresses practical and conceptual aspects that are important for grant writing. Content is appropriate for faculty members, postdoctoral researchers and administrative staff with some exposure to grant writing.

[More information and to register](#) (deadline to register is September 24)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Invites Proposals for Exploring Equitable

Futures Program

[Application deadline: October 15](#)

The Exploring Equitable Futures Program, previously called Pioneering Ideas for an Equitable Future, has several goals: Economic Inclusion for Family Wellbeing, Equitable and Accountable Public Health and Healthcare Systems, and Healthy and Equitable Community Conditions. Proposals are accepted on a rolling admission until October 15, 2025.

[Apply here.](#)

NIH K Club+ 2025-2026 Information Session

[October 17 | 10:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m. | Zoom](#)

This is an information session to describe the NIH K Club+. Created through a collaboration between the Research Development Office and the Institute for Clinical and Translational Science's K Club, the NIH K Club+ (2025-26) is designed to give you the knowledge and resources to craft competitive K award applications.

[More information and to register](#) (deadline to register is October 16)

NSF CAREER Club 2025-26 Information Session

[October 17 | 11:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m. | Zoom](#)

The NSF CAREER Club is designed to give you the knowledge and resources to craft competitive CAREER applications. Club participants will take part in skills development events and services including editing, graphic design, and review services.

[More information and to register](#) (deadline to register is October 16)

Maximize Pivot to find Funding and Collaborators

[October 20 | 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. | Zoom](#)

[November 19 | 2:00p.m.–3:00 p.m. | University Capitol Center \(UCC\)](#)

Join the Research Development Office to learn how Pivot can save you time and effort in identifying the right funding opportunities or collaborators for your research program.

[More Information and to register](#)

ORCID: Open Researcher and Contributor ID

[November 6 | 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. | Zoom](#)

Attend this Hardin Open Workshop to learn what an ORCiD is and the benefits to having one. This will be a hands-on workshop with the opportunity to create an ORCiD and learn the most efficient ways to populate your profile with your publications.

[More information and to register](#) (scroll down to appropriate session)

Pivot Administrative Features: Connect Your Researchers to Funding

Opportunities

November 6 | 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. | Zoom

Are you looking for ways to assist researchers with identifying grant funding opportunities? Attend this session to learn more about the enhanced administrative features of Pivot. Topics include crafting and saving funding opportunity searchers, creating calendars and newsletters, sharing and tracking opportunities, editing profiles, and enabling weekly email alerts.

[More Information and to register](#)

Early Career Funding Opportunities, Support, and Perspectives Information Session

November 11 | 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. | Zoom

The RDO is sponsoring a virtual information session to highlight key federal and private foundation programs, introduce University of Iowa support resources, and share insights from successful awardees on navigating the early stages of research funding.

[More information and to register](#) (deadline to register is November 10)

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