

**Expanding the Expanded Authority Task Force
Minutes
May 20, 2004**

The task force reviewed that status and opened the discussion on the action items identified in the January task force meeting.

USDA 2nd No Cost Extension Requests: Carol Langguth from the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service had queried the USDA database, and reported that of 490 no-cost extension requests, only nine (9) had been denied. It is suspected that some of the 9 may have been due to statutory limitations on awards. Given this information, Carol and Louise Ebaugh are willing to do a demonstration of extending the EA's to second no-cost extension requests.

DoD No-Cost Extension Requests: DoD is not willing to consider a demonstration with respect to no-cost extensions at this time, nor a revision to the DoDGERS. It was noted that ARO still retains the authority for foreign travel approval, and perhaps that this is one area that we could pursue.

Carry-Forward Requests for NIH P Grants: Joe Ellis, Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration, NIH was able to compile data on carryforward balances for FY 2000 and 2001 for NIH "P" and "U" awards from the IMPAC II database. The data does show substantive carryforward amounts, particularly in the over \$150,000 per award categories. Of particular concern to Joe are the unobligated balances remaining at the end of the project period, as in these cases it appears there was an inadequate plan in place to spend within the scope of the project, and these resources could have been used to fund other grants.

The group discussed possible scenarios for the existence of carryforward amounts, and possible strategies for a limited pilot on the P mechanisms given NIH's concerns. It was suggested that a demonstration or pilot be for a limited time or to certain dollar amount limits. Joe agreed to bring the following proposal (with no guarantees) to the NIH Grants Management Staff:

- Recommendation for a pilot for FDP grantees to have the ability for a single-action carryforward of P01 grants using a 25% threshold. The expectation would be that there would be a more effective use of balances and lower balances over time;
- A 5-year maximum time limit to substantiate data, but hopefully there would be an earlier end point to the demonstration;
- Financial Status Reports would still be required for all budget years on all "P" awards.

The expectation is that this allowance would also enhance scientific performance, but that communication to the program manager and PI's is critical for the success of this pilot. It would also be useful to track qualitative statements as to why carryforward balances occur.

(Note: NIH already has already provided carryforward authority on P01 mechanisms; see http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps_2003/NIHGPS_Part7.htm#_Toc54600128. NIH is not willing to consider a pilot on other P mechanisms at this time. OPERA will however, be checking with the Institutes to ensure that on the P01's there is a sound basis for any exclusions from automatic carryover.)

Research Business Models (RBM) Subcommittee interaction: Geoff Grant attended the Task Force meeting and spoke briefly about the initiatives of the RBM Subcommittee and initiatives on award terms and conditions. He noted the importance of interdisciplinary research and its dramatic growth, and the need for consistent practices especially with the increased emphasis on collaborative research.

Geoff noted the 2 CFR initiative, and the longer term goals of consistency in terms and conditions. He noted that the shorter term goals are not yet finalized, but that he would bring back the goals of the FDP EA Task Force to the RMB. The Task Force hopes that we can interact with this group in some way to further the goals of both organizations.

FDP Matrix – Other Potential EA considerations: The task force discussed other possibilities for expanding the EA's. Foreign travel approval under ARO grants, or clarification for carryforward requirements under NASA grants, was cited as a possibility. Dan Nordquist offered Washington State University's site and survey instrument for future use.

In summary, the going forward action items are:

- USDA (CSREES) has agreed to do a demonstration on second no-cost extensions. Mary Ellen and Gunta will follow up with CREES on the format of this pilot;
- The Research Business Models Subcommittee will continue to consider utilization of the FDP EA Task Force;
- The Task Force will continue to explore other opportunities (e.g., foreign travel approval requests)