



# Grant Management

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# In Practice



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# Key Processes, Pitfalls, and Transitions

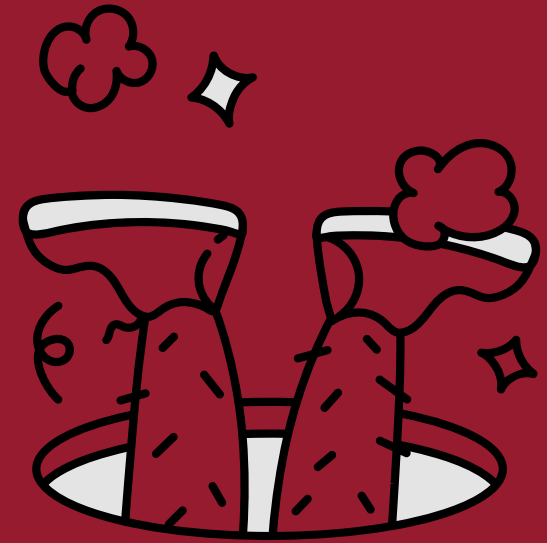
Managing federally funded projects within the UH system

- Receiving an Award is the goal of the Proposal Process
- It is just the first step towards creating a Successful Project
  - And of the Work

➤ Who has managed a grant before?

➤ What was the most stressful aspect?

➤ What is your greatest concern?





### **The Proposal**

Modifications by NSF (Award Letter)  
Subsequent Approved Modifications

### **Award Letter**

Read the Award Letter for any special conditions or reporting requirements

### **Institutional Policies & Procedures**

Understand and follow your institution's policies and how to address potential conflicts

# Transitioning from Proposal to Project Implementation

## **Pre-Award Negotiations**

Prior to an Award Letter (NSF)  
Prior to accepting Award (generally if conditions were placed on award – reduced budget)

## **Pre-Award Costs**

Necessary for the effective and economical conduct of the project.

**At your own Risk** (typically within 90 days prior to start date)

**Institutional Policy** may be more restrictive than NSF policies

# Project Implementation

The proposal, as approved, is your primary guide for implementation.

If you deviate from this plan, you may be violating the terms of the agreement. However, this does not mean that the plan can never be changed or that there is no flexibility in meeting the objectives of the project.

- New strategy to overcome challenges
- Unexpected opportunity to achieve objectives
- ***Is the change within the Scope of the Project?***
- ***Change to restricted budget line?***

**Prior Approval** is required for certain changes, especially if this could potentially change the Scope of the project or impacts a restricted budget line.

**Strong proposals can still struggle operationally**

**Most project challenges emerge after the award**

**NSF expects both programmatic and compliance success**

**NSF Program Officer**

Communicate with your Program Officer

[Proposals](#)

[Reviews & Meetings](#)

[Awards & Reporting](#)

[Fellowships & Opportunities](#)

[Manage Financials](#)

[Administration](#)

## Prepare New Notification / Request

United Tribes Technical College

[← Back to Notifications & Requests](#)

[i Policy Guidance](#)

### Prepare New

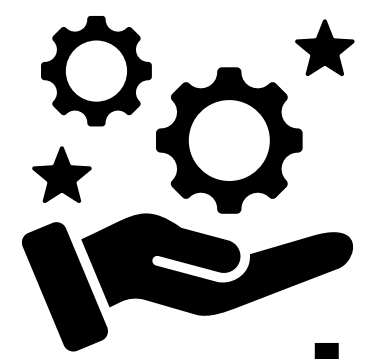
#### Step 1: Select type of change

- All
- Budget Activities
- No-Cost Extensions
- Changes in Objectives, Scope, or Methodology and other Significant Changes
- Changes in PI/PD, co-PI/co-PD or Person-Months Devoted to the Project at the Initiation of the Awardee Organization (Including PI Transfer)
- Post-award Disclosure of Current Support and In-Kind Contribution Information
- Other

#### Step 2: Select notification / request

\*The "Other Request" option must only be used to submit requests for prior approval specified in PAPPG Chapter X.A.3. that do not already have a specific request type. In addition, it may be used at the direction of NSF or when specified in the applicable terms and conditions. Any request submitted that does not meet these criteria will be rejected.

Select Type of Change First



# UH Actions Also Required

Most Notifications and Requests will also require one or more actions and/or collaborations through your campus offices, UH Office of Research Services (ORS), Office of Research Compliance/IRB, and the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH). Be sure you check on all needed actions.



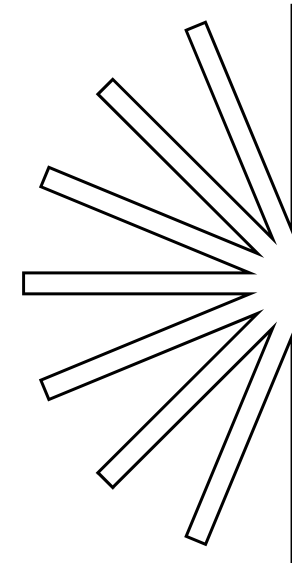
**Campus Action**



**ORS and IRB (if relevant)**



**RCUH**



# Documenting Activities and Reporting



## Documenting Deliverables (examples)

- Courses Developed or Offered
  - Number of Students
  - Faculty (number hired or courses taught)
  - Outcomes
- Workshops
  - Agenda or other documents
  - Participants (tracking information)
  - Outcomes
- Research Projects or Presentations
- Progress towards Objectives
  - Lessons Learned/Adjustments

## Participant Support Costs

- Do they qualify as Participants?
- Can you document if they participated or the number of hours?
- Impacts

## Project Personnel, Collaborators, and Partner Organizations

## Annual Reports (<https://www.research.gov/research-web/content/rpprdemosite>)

- Due 90 days before anniversary date
- When overdue (must be approved) you are unable to receive new disbursements or awards.
  - Also applies to the Co-PI

## Questions (examples)

- What are the major goals of the project?
- What was accomplished under these goals and objectives?
- Have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?
- What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?
- What is the impact on the development of the principal discipline(s) of the project?

Not all questions must be answered  
May provide Supporting Files

# Common NSF Compliance and Management Pitfalls

Budget Management	<b>Under- or Over-Spent Unexpected Costs</b>	<b>Cuff Account/Reconciliation Restricted Line Items Do you need Prior Approval?</b>
Budget Management	<b>Unallowable Expense Equipment: Inventory Requirement</b>	<b>Review PAPPG – Internal Monitoring &amp; Support Contact Program Office / DGA</b>
Budget Management	<b>Reasonability of Expense</b>	<b>Consistent with Institution's Practices Document all Quotes and reasons for accommodations</b>
PI & Senior Personnel	<b>Change in Personnel or Commitment on Project</b>	<b>Submit Request on Research.Gov Impact on Project Qualifications</b>
<b>Adding new Activities or going in new Directions (going off script)</b>	<b>Change in Scope Significant Change in Budget</b>	<b>Seek Prior Approval -have reason it may not be (10% or 25% reallocations?)</b>

# Common NSF Compliance and Management Pitfalls

Hiring Delays	Missed Timelines Budget Deviation	Start Early – Pre-Award? Plan for in future Proposals Flexible Implementation Plans
Turnover in Key Personnel	Delays and loss of Expertise	? ?
Poor Documentation	Reporting Challenges Audit Issues	Multiple Points of Documentation ?
?	?	?



# UH Operational Realities

## Managing Grants Within the UH System

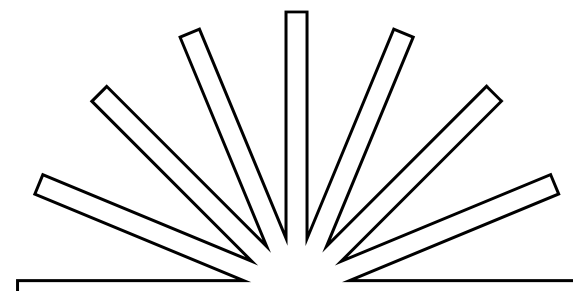
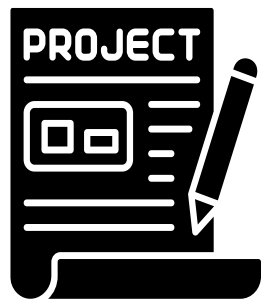
### Interactive Discussion (5 minutes)

Briefly discuss these three questions with the person next to you.



**What themes arose?**

**Key Takeaway:** Successful implementation requires designing projects around operational realities.



➤ **What operational issue creates the most delay at your campus?**

➤ **What process surprised you most after receiving a grant?**

➤ **What has worked well at your campus?**

## Workload (Faculty/Staff)

- What kinds of work did you not anticipate after receiving a grant?
- What tasks consumed the most unexpected time?

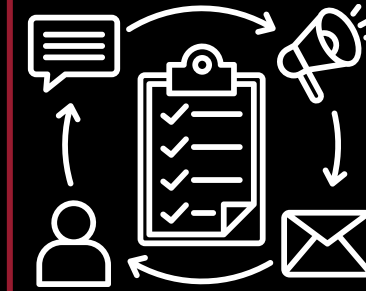
Briefly discuss these two questions with the person next to you. (1 minute)

## The Hidden Labor of Grant Management



## Communication

- Some project challenges are not technical or scientific, but rather communications.
- **How can projects benefit from:**
  - regular check-ins,
  - shared documentation,
  - meeting notes,
  - centralized files, and
  - clear decision-making structures?



# The Hidden Labor of Grant Management

Briefly discuss these four questions with the person next to you. (3 minutes)

## Institutional Coordination & Relationships

- How do successful projects often depend on relationships across institutional units?
- Why do you need good relationships with HR, procurement, and fiscal folks?
- Why does peer/chair/dean/VC/chancellor support matter?



## Workload (Faculty/Staff)

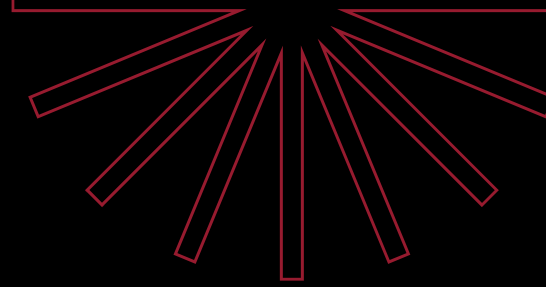
- Release time and workload impacts
- Faculty workload realities
- Burnout risks
- Hidden admin work
- Department impacts
- Managing expectations

## Communication Structures

- Importance of communication systems
- Regular meetings and shared updates
- Clear documentation practices
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Communication during delays or changes

## Institutional Coordination & Relationships

- Importance of chair/dean/VC/admin support
- Relationship-building with:
  - grants offices,
  - HR,
  - fiscal & procurement, and
  - institutional leadership.



# The Hidden Labor of Grant Management

## Key Takeaway:

Strong grants are not managed by one person alone.

Grants depend upon communication systems, institutional relationships, and shared operational ownership.



### Scenario 1

Your project coordinator resigns midway through Year 2 during annual reporting preparation.

Discussion Questions:

- What immediate risks emerge?
- What documentation becomes critical?
- What NSF reporting concerns could result?



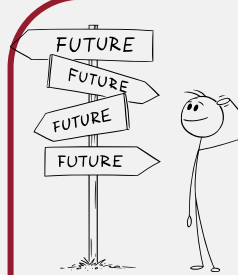
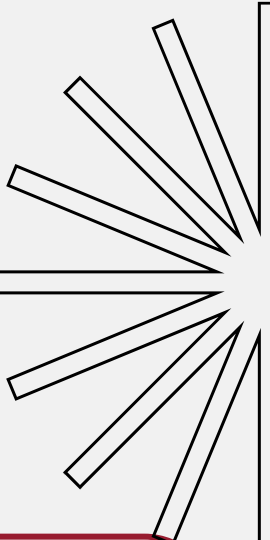
### Scenario 2

Equipment procurement delays significantly impact implementation timelines and planned activities.

Discussion Questions:

- When should communication occur internally?
- At what point might NSF communication become necessary?
- How do you document impacts and adjustments?

# Managing Disruption During an Active Grant (5 minutes)



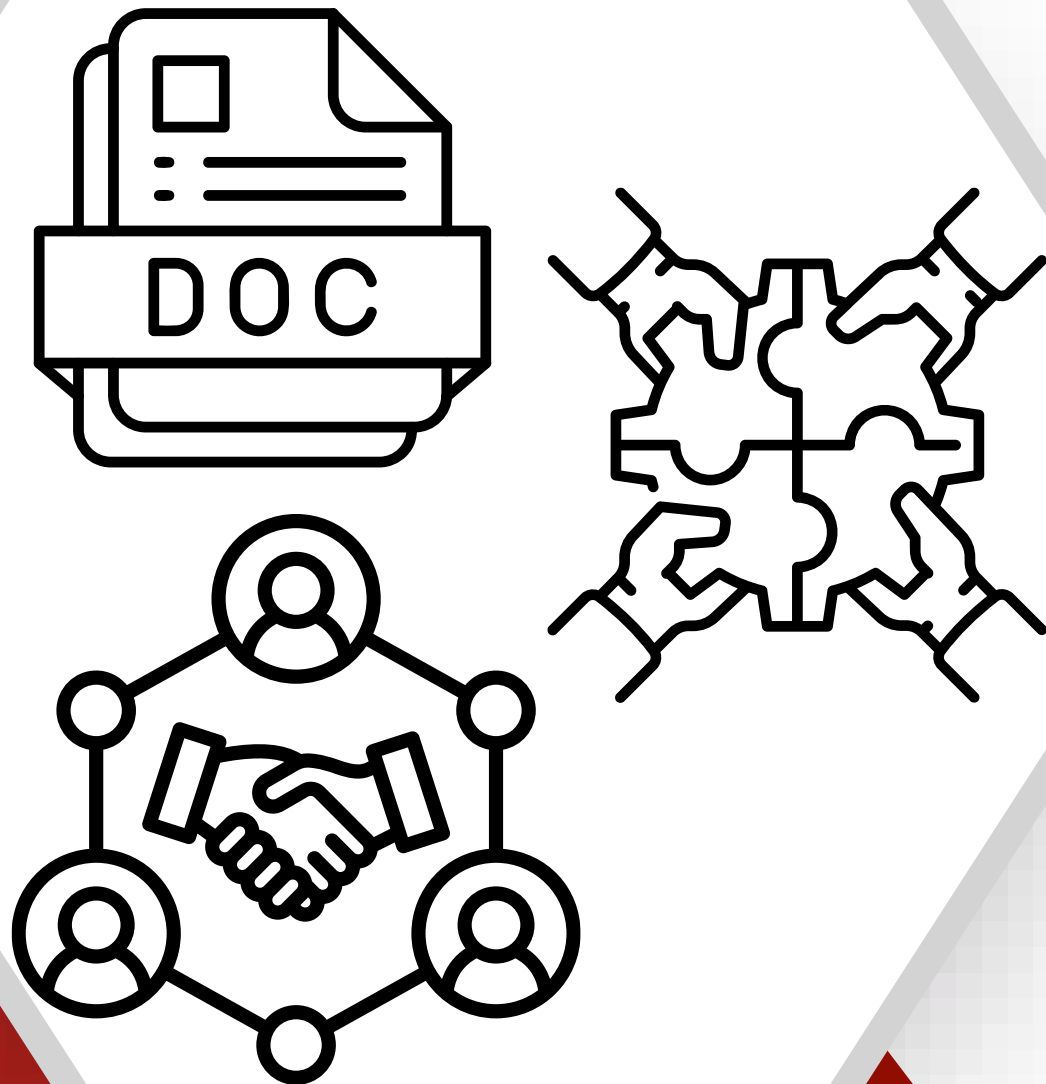
### Scenario 3

Midway through a multi-year project, the VCAA or Dean who originally supported the grant leaves the institution. An interim admin is appointed, priorities shift, and communication slows around hiring, release time, and institutional commitments

Discussion Questions:

- What project risks emerge during leadership transitions?
- What project components become vulnerable?
- How can continuity be maintained?
- What documentation and communication systems should already exist?
- How can project personnel effectively communicate project obligations to new leadership?

# Managing Disruption During an Active Grant



## Key Discussion Themes:

- Institutionalizing projects beyond one administrator
- Maintaining continuity of commitments
- Preserving documentation and institutional memory
- Aligning projects with institutional priorities
- Shared ownership across units

**Key takeaway:** Strong projects are sustained through systems, documentation, and institutional ownership and not solely through one administrator or champion.

# Final Takeaways



**01**

**Build strong working relationships and communicate early and often**

**02**

**Document continuously**

**03**

**Plan for delays and transitions**

**04**

**Share institutional ownership of the project**

Strong projects require both strong ideas and strong operational systems.



## Questions & Discussion

What grant management lesson do you wish you had learned earlier?

Discussions can continue through the Networking Lunch.

