

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION NEWS

Federal Sponsor News : Conflicts of Interest

The Inspectors General (IGs) for Federal agencies such as NSF and NIH are appointed to conduct independent reviews of the performance of Federal agencies and departments. IGs conduct audits, investigations and inspections with the goal of preventing and detecting waste, fraud and abuse. IGs communicate through a variety of written reports such as audit, investigative, and inspection/evaluation reports, semiannual reports to the Congress; and, in some cases, direct correspondence to the agency head to report egregious problems or abuses. IG reports generally will include recommendations or findings for consideration by the agency. These reports ultimately affect administrative requirements for recipients of federal funds.

One recent noteworthy IG report comes from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Its focus is on management by the National Institutes of Health of conflicts of interest in the extramural community. Released on January 17, 2008, the report focused on the number and nature of financial conflicts of interest reported to NIH and the extent to which

NIH practiced effective oversight of those reported financial conflicts of interest.

The IG noted that NIH (1) could not provide an accurate count of the financial conflicts of interest reports submitted by grantees during the period 2004-2006; (2) did not know the types of conflicts because the policy does not require detailed reporting of the nature of the conflicts; and (3) relies on the grantee's assurance of compliance with the regulations, as stated in the policy. The IG recommended that the NIH institutes and centers be required to submit the reports they receive to the NIH Office of Extramural Research (OER) for posting to an OER database to ensure an accurate count of the reports received by the agency. The IG recommends greater oversight by NIH. This would be accomplished by amending the regulations to require grantees to submit more detailed reports on the nature of the conflict, the individuals involved and how the conflict is being managed, reduced or eliminated by the institution.

NIH Director Elias Zerhouni agreed with the findings and supported two of the recom-

mendations: providing greater oversight through targeted site visits and expanded informational outreach; and the need for accurate counting to be achieved through a new web-based reporting system for NIH staff that will help track reports received by each Institute and Center.

Whether or not a change in the regulations occurs, the report and NIH's implementation of a pilot program to assess institutional compliance with the NIH requirements is a strong indication that institutional compliance with Federal financial conflicts of interest policies is and will receive significant attention in the coming year.

Announced on October 25, 2007, NIH has begun selecting institutions for reviews of compliance with the conflicts of interest regulations—or Objectivity in Research. The reports issued by the IGs can be a reminder to research organizations of their roles in meeting agency obligations for good stewardship. Check out the University of Denver's policy on Conflicts of Interest at: <http://du.edu/orsp/conflict.html>

Volume 1, Issue 3

SPRING 2008

Grants Workshops

Expand your knowledge...

- ◆ ORSP Departmental Grants Administrators Meeting
Thursday, April 10, 9-11am, Ren South
- ◆ ORSP Workshop # 5 Thursday, April 17: 2-4pm,
Life-Cycle of an Award,
Ren South
- ◆ Department of Human Communications: Research Methods, Monday, April 28, 2-4pm

All ORSP Events held in Renaissance South of Mary Reed Building. Check with ORSP for possible changes to the schedule. To register: Send an email to ORSP@du.edu

Upcoming Funding Opportunities:

- **Environmental Protection Agency-Deadline May 2, 2008** Sustainable Skylines Initiative Grant
<http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&oppId=41094>
- **Corporation for National and Community Service Learn and Serve America-Deadline May 7, 2008**
2008 Higher Education College Student Social Media Initiative Grant <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&oppId=41100>
- **Corporation for National and Community Service Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service 2009 Deadline April 15, 2008**
CNCS-GRANTS-032008-001

Spotlight on Faculty Research



Seamless Connections Between Brain and Prosthetics?

Rahmat Shoureshi, dean of [Engineering and Computer Science](#) at DU, received a \$295,000 National Science Foundation grant this summer to fund development of brain-imaging technologies that may soon allow amputees to control electronic prosthetics with just a thought.

For a soldier back from Iraq, the victim of a sports accident or the survivor of a traffic mishap, the technology could change lives. Shoureshi notes that there are about 1.6 million Americans

living with the loss of one or more limbs.

“The grant focus is on developing what is called adaptive human/machine interface,” Shoureshi explains. “What we are trying to do is develop systems that allow individuals who have physical disabilities and have prosthetic devices to be able to directly control those with a natural motion.”

Shoureshi says the new technology uses light waves that peer inside the human brain without surgery and in real time.

Patients would wear a slim, lightweight scanner on their head. The light waves would “read” activity in carefully mapped areas of the brain, and then convert the thought of movement into an electronic signal to the prosthetic. Thinking about moving an artificial arm or a leg would make it actually move. The goal is to achieve that in an affordable, easy-to-use device that would be work without the patient having to shave for it to work.

Excerpts from *DU TODAY* article by Chase Squires, December 2007

PHOTO BY: Mike Richmond

A new device in development at DU could allow amputees to control prosthetics with their thoughts.

NIH Issues New Public Access Policy

The NIH recently announced its new Public Access Policy regarding peer-reviewed publications. The new NIH Public Access Policy will ensure published NIH-funded research is accessible to the public, health care providers, educators and scientists and will help advance science and improve human health.

The new Public Access requirement is an important opportunity to make published research funded by NIH and written by you and your colleagues accessible to all - the public, health care providers, educators and scientists, among others. This improved access will help advance science and, ultimately, improve human health.

In accordance with federal law, the NIH now requires the submission of published articles resulting from NIH-funded research to PubMed Central. These articles will be made publicly available on PubMed Central within 12 months of the publication date. The length of this delay period is determined by the copyright holder, which may be the author, their institution or their publisher. NIH will

continue to work with all three groups to make this new policy a success.

There are three actions grantees must take to comply with the policy:

1. Address copyright: Beginning April 7, 2008, authors of articles arising from NIH funds are responsible for ensuring that publishing agreements allow for full compliance with the policy.

2. Submit the article to NIH. Beginning April 7, 2008, authors must submit to PubMed Central an electronic version of every peer-reviewed article arising from NIH research funds, once an article is accepted for publication. NIH has worked with publishers to develop several ways to submit articles:

*The author or someone in their organization may deposit a copy of the peer-reviewed manuscript in the NIH Manuscript Submission (NIHMS) system (<http://www.nihms.nih.gov/>). Author verifies content.

*The journal may offer to send the peer-reviewed manuscript files to the NIHMS. Author verifies content.

*Publish in a PubMed Central Journal. No additional effort required from the author. See http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm for a list of these journals.

3. Cite. Beginning May 25, 2008, authors must include PubMed Central ID numbers in NIH applications and reports when citing their articles covered by the policy.

Public Access Policy Web site:

<http://publicaccess.nih.gov/index.htm>

FAQs:

<http://publicaccess.nih.gov/FAQ.htm>

ORSP Website!

<http://www.du.edu/orsp>



“Research is the act of going up alleys to see if they are blind.”

-Author unknown