

October 23, 2015

TO: NIH Executive Officers  
NIH Acquisition Community  
NIH Grants Management Community  
NIH Project Officers  
Intramural and Extramural Administrative Management Committee Chairs

FROM: Acting Deputy Director for Management, NIH  
Deputy Director for Extramural Research, NIH

SUBJECT: NIH Policy on Promoting Efficient Spending: Use of Appropriated Funds for Conferences and Meeting Space, Food, Promotional Items, and Printing and Publications

The purpose of this memorandum is to revise and replace the subject policy, NIH Policy on Promoting Efficient Spending: Use of Appropriated Funds for Conferences and Meeting Space, Food, Promotional Items, and Printing and Publications, dated June 15, 2015. The implementation date for this new policy will be November 1, 2015. In addition to the revised NIH policy, the ASFR memorandum, dated October 20, 2015, HHS Policy on Promoting Efficient Spending is provided as a separate attachment. This memo reminds the OPDIVs of their responsibility to ensure that we are conducting a thorough assessment of the costs proposed by conference support contractors and encourages the use of NIHCATSII for conference support or other vehicles cited in the conference toolkit.

The revisions to the NIH policy address changes regarding review and approval of attendance at Non-NIH Hosted Conferences. These changes are discussed in Section 1.3. C. and include the following:

- Rolling approval requests for Non-NIH Hosted Conferences are being discontinued. Instead there will be two approval windows. The new submission deadlines will be:
  - Six months prior to the month the conference begins to allow for early registration.
  - Three months prior to the month the conference begins will be the final submission deadline.
- Conference approvals between \$5,000 and \$75,000 will be reviewed and approved by NIH's Senior Travel Official (STO). Conferences with aggregate costs exceeding \$75,000 will be approved by NIH's Deputy Director or Director once a month.
- ICs will receive decisions within one month after the submission deadlines.
- Should there be directed reductions to conference attendance, OFM will publish the reductions to the Non-NIH Hosted Conferences SharePoint Submission System for ICs to review. Additionally, OFM will send email notifications to the subject ICs. After the ICs forward their reduction adjustments, OFM will submit this information to the Deputy Director/Director for approval. ICs wishing to appeal the directive need to submit a

justification for their position. Once the Deputy Director and/or Director approves/rejects the reductions or appeals, the conference attendance will be locked-down as final.

Requests for approval to attend non-NIH hosted conferences during the transition to the new OFM Travel SharePoint Site will be processed as follows:

- Until November 15, 2015, ICs will continue to use the current SharePoint system for conference submissions to attend non-NIH hosted conferences.
- After November 15, 2015, the new OFM Travel SharePoint site will be available to enter all requests for attendance at non-NIH hosted Conferences.
- Existing submissions will automatically be migrated from the old to the new SharePoint systems.

In addition to the policy revisions, the Office of Management will:

- Develop communications plan for the new non-NIH hosted Conference attendance process.
- Develop training, job aids/training guides and FAQs.
- Work with the Executive Officers (EOs) to utilize the EO SharePoint site for sharing Question and Answers and Frequently Asked Questions with the community.

The revised policy is attached.

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John J. McGowan, Ph.D.

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Dr. Michael S. Lauer

Attachments:

NIH Policy on Promoting Efficient Spending

Attachment A NIH Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval Form

Attachment B NIH Conference Request for Waiver Form

Attachment D Promotional Item Approval Form

Attachment E Report on NIH Hosted Conferences in Excess of \$20,000 Spreadsheet

Attachment F Annual Report on NIH Hosted Conferences in Excess of \$100,000 Spreadsheet

Attachment G Exemption Determination - Template