



Workgroup on Extramural Training Systems (WETS)

Date: December 9, 2004
Time: 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
Location: Rockledge 1, Room 3502
Advocates: Barbara Huffman, Rick Ikeda, (Dr. Walter Schaffer)
Next Meeting: January 13, 2004, 10 a.m.–Noon, Rockledge 1, Room 3502

Action Items

1. (Marcia Hahn, WETS group) Request Office of Management and Budget to include full Social Security Number in new payback agreement form.
2. (All) Email Linda Stecklein if they know someone interested in applying for the job of Payback Specialist in her office.

Social Security Numbers on Form 2271

Richard Ikeda stated that the instructions on the new PHS 2271 form (Statement of Appointment form) ask for the last four digits of the trainee's Social Security Number. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will not allow nine digits. Because of the problems with payback, at least getting four digits will be helpful. One group member questioned the value of getting only four digits of the trainee's social security number. Rick responded that any bit of data that narrows down the person responsible for payback would be very helpful. He noted that the 2271 form is not filled by the person who owes payback; it is filled out by the Principal Investigator (PIs). Some universities will not allow PIs to submit Social Security Numbers for trainees as a third party. The group suggested asking for the nine digit social security number to be part of the payback agreement, the form to be completed by trainees and fellows during the first 12 months of postdoctoral support as a National Research Service Award trainee.

Marcia Hahn stated that the payback agreement form expires on June 30, 2005 and that would be an opportune time to request OMB to revise the form to include the full social security number. The justification would be that the full social security number is no longer part of the Statement of Appointment form and therefore should be on the payback agreement. Marcia said that she would make the request; whether OMB will add it or not is up to them.

Linda Katzper asked that if the payback agreement is eventually sent electronically, will the social security number pose a problem? Marcia replied that it may be a problem with the Department of Justice (DOJ), which always likes to see original signatures, not electronic ones. The original signatures help DOJ if they want to go after someone for not making the payback. One member stated that they accept faxed copies of payback agreements; however, what is the difference between that and electronic signatures? Barbara Huffman stated that they should probably not accept payback agreements by fax.

Action: (Marcia Hahn, WETS group) Request Office of Management and Budget to include full Social Security Number in new payback agreement form.

Updates on X-Train and X-Train/TA

Linda Katzper

The redesign of X-train is moving along. X-Train is an NIH eRA Commons electronic trainee activities system that allows program directors and trainees from institutions with National Research Service Award training grants to transmit confidential personal data electronically to the NIH. Linda noted that she had a meeting with developers last Tuesday (Dec. 7) to discuss data mapping. A meeting on code review is scheduled for next Tuesday (Dec. 14). X-Train will be developed in three iterations but none of the iterations will go into production until all three are in place.

As for the Training Activities module, several changes are being made, including some to the Payback Snapshot report. A request to change the text on the Balance Due Worksheet form to add the date June 10, 1993, in a couple of places was approved by the Configuration Control Board (CCB) on Dec. 9. The date reflected the precise day the NIH Revitalization Act was passed.

Action items from November

1. (Linda Katzper) Help Dwight Mowery contact the IMPAC II system staff so that he can discuss the possibility of using the IMPAC II system for National Library of Medicine (NLM) data. ***Linda Katzper stated the problem was more complex than she had thought.. NLM wants its data in IMPAC II so that it can use eRA's TA module for processing its training activities. Linda noted that while she had been able to get the NLM data into IMPAC II, she could not view the information. To view an appointment, one had to have the NRSA button showing. When the NRSA button was showing, the data could not be seen. Linda stated that she was still working on the problem. Rick noted that given these problems, it is unlikely that NLM data will be in place before the Training Activities module is placed in containment (meaning no changes to the module are allowed) from January 2005 to May 2005 during its conversion from a client-server module to a web-based J2EE version. Rick suggested that NLM's request could be accommodated when TA gets redesigned, by including a non-NRSA section. X-Train is also slated to have more flexibility. He noted that the idea of flexibility is being driven by the fact that down the road, X-Train will not only track trainees and training grants, but also track graduate students on research grants.***
2. (Linda Katzper) Investigate the possibility of implementing a flag indicator in the IMPAC II system to distinguish between NIH and NRSA grants.
3. (Rick Ikeda) Email WETS group the URL to QVR and include instructions on how to access reports containing training activity data. ***Rick stated that he will send the QVR link and instructions to access training reports through QVR after this meeting.***

Open Discussion

Centralization of Payback Center—Linda Katzper noted that all payback functions were centralized at the NIH NRSA Payback Service Center under the Office of Extramural Research, Office of the Director, sometime ago but some payback functions still exist in ICs. She noted that Tim Twomey had sent out a notice to ICs that all these functions need to be centralized at the Payback Service Center, but only one IC responded.

Termination button—Linda Katzper said that the problems users have been encountering in terminating fellowships is being worked on; the activation button on the termination notice is being fixed. In the interim, a data sweep has been conducted to enable users to terminate these records.

Payback Specialist wanted—Linda Stecklein stated that her office is looking to hire a Payback Specialist in the GS9 to GS11 range. They had advertised internally because they want to hire someone who is well-versed in the system. She urged the group to let her know if they knew someone who would be interested in the job.

Action: (All) Email Linda Stecklein if they know someone interested in applying for the job of Payback Specialist in her office.

DEAS representation on WETS—Barbara Huffman asked if there had been any headway in getting a Division of Extramural Activities Support (DEAS) representative to participate in the WETS monthly meetings. Rick said that he had sent out a few emails and was awaiting a response. He noted that a policy exists allowing DEAS employees to participate in committee work. Linda Stecklein said that a representative from Loan Repayment would also be good to have in the group; she recommended Marie Willett.

Attendees

Ikeda, Richard (NIGMS)	Katzper, Linda (OER)	Subramanya, Manju (LTS/OD)
Dingle, Linda (NEI)	Knipple, Joy (NIMH)	Turner, David (OER)
Freese, Michelle (OD)	Schultz, Susann (NIMH)	Venable, Beverly (OD)
Hahn, Marcia (OD)	Sprick, Carin (DEIS)	Khramkova, Tatiana (OER)
Huffman, Barbara (NIAID)	Stecklein, Linda (OD)	