Addressing Today’s Opportunities and Challenges in Research Administration: Project Next

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Project Next: Initiatives that support the continuous improvement of research administration

Concerted campus-wide efforts have focused on understanding and improving research administration

- Policy and procedure
- Roles and organizational structure
- Technology
- Training

Project Next goals define real, pragmatic solutions that embody RAI, RACC, and OSP objectives
We’re experiencing a rapidly changing climate of research administration

- Heightened concern about federal funding cuts
- Demand for information access
- More complex relationships, agreements
- Transparency, compliance requirements resulting in more reporting
- More, varied sponsors needed

Complexity calls for flexibility from systems and processes that were designed for consistency
The changing climate of research administration: Challenges of increasing complexity

- Time pressure and resource constraints
- New kinds of sponsored projects generate more varied, often unpredictable, demands
- Compliance and consistency requirements are high
- Exceptional projects require continuous, collaborative communication to problem solve
- Frequent policy and process guidance required to respond to project developments

But we stand to gain a great deal if we address the challenges
The changing climate of research administration:
Responding to the Challenges

- Acknowledge that change is needed cooperatively address the consequent administrative needs
- Leverage or design “systems” that can respond to variable requests
  - Includes processes, procedures, policy-making, people, and technology
- Share learnings and develop innovative solutions from experience

How to respond to the challenges without being swept away on winds of change?
Project Next: How we’ll approach the work

- Deliver recognizable and/or measurable benefit to the Institute
- Collaborate with stakeholders across campus
- Communicate regularly and broadly, as appropriate
- Cut unnecessary, redundant work for all parties
- Balance choice and standardization
Project Next: Integrated Solutions for What’s Next In Research Administration

Proposal Process  Non-Federal Negotiations  Training  Coeus
Project Next: Operating principles

Collaborate with stakeholders across campus

• Accomplishments
  – Surveyed PIs on satisfaction with, and ways to improve, negotiations of non-federal agreements

• Work in progress (targeted delivery dates in FY2012)
  – Revitalize fundamentals courses in collaboration with partners in the Office of the Vice President of Finance
  – Seek input on other cross-campus training needs

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OSP Forum: Project Next
Project Next: Operating principles, cont’d.

Deliver recognizable and/or measureable benefit to MIT

• Accomplishments
  – Create solutions for ARRA, FFATA reporting
  – Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA) learning program

• Work in progress (targeted delivery dates in FY2012)
  • Improved non-federal negotiations
Project Next: Operating principles, cont’d.

Cut unnecessary work for all parties

• Accomplishments
  – Contract Administrator credentialing process
• Work in progress (targeted delivery dates in FY2012)
  – Automated email notifications for NSF training requirements for Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)
  – Award budget module for Reporting and Forecasting Tool (RAFT)
  – Centralize MIT Non-disclosure Agreement (NDA) request website
Communicate regularly and broadly

• Accomplishments
  – Reintroduced OSP Forums to provide regular, topical updates on research administration topics

• Work in Progress(targeted delivery dates in FY2012)
  – Improving communications with stakeholders throughout improved non-federal negotiations process
Leverage technology to support business processes

• Accomplishments
  – OSP and Coeus websites
  – CITI on-line training modules for RCR

• Work in progress (targeted delivery dates in FY2012)
  – Transition routing of proposals from paper to Coeus
  – Streamline patent reporting process
What questions do you have?