

Office of Sponsored Programs Bulletin June 2008

The SJSU Research Foundation (SJSURF), Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) Bulletin is a monthly publication informing the SJSU academic community about sponsored program information, trends and opportunities. It is published every month (except July) with articles contributed by members of OSP and the SJSU Research Foundation Central Office. Extra time-sensitive messages may occasionally be issued at other times of the month. To view the OSP Bulletin online, visit the SJSU Research Foundation website at <http://www.sjsufoundation.org/>.

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1. **New Online Tools for Higher Education Research**

iBreadCrumbs is a new online tool that allows researchers to record all the web pages visited during the course of online research. The free software, compatible with the internet browser Firefox, also gives researchers the capability to annotate and share the pages with other researchers using any internet browser. For more information, see <http://www.ibreadcrumbs.com/>.

Digital Research Tools (DiRT) is a recently-launched wiki that provides a directory of online resources for humanities scholars. Resources include tools for compiling bibliographies, note-taking, analyzing text, and visualizing data, as well as the comprehensive software reviews. Many of the tools listed in the directory are free. The DiRT editorial team encourages contributions and reviews from users. To access DiRT, go to: <http://digitalresearchtools.pbwiki.com/>.

2. **New Report: "Advancing Research in Science and Engineering (ARISE)"**

As part of its Initiative for Science, Engineering, and Technology, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences has released a report titled, "Advancing Research in Science and Engineering (ARISE): Investing in Early-Career Scientists and High-Risk, High-Reward Research." The report analyzes current funding mechanisms and processes with the goal of recommending strategies to maximize the impact of science funding and determining whether the current system can support and retain early-career scientists. In addition to its recommendations for federal agencies and private foundations, the report recommends that universities establish better mentoring programs for young faculty, and reconsider their tenure and promotion policies. For more information, see <http://www.amacad.org/>, or download the report at <http://www.amacad.org/arisefolder/ariseReport.pdf>.

3. **Chronicle Addresses Community Economic Development**

Participation in economic development is growing among institutions of higher education, both because of and in spite of current economic uncertainty. Recognizing academia's growing role, the federal government is supporting more programs to help schools engage in workforce development, business development, and economic planning in their communities. Two recent Chronicle of Higher

Education articles examine the need for colleges and universities to continue taking responsibility for economic development and to assume the role of “community anchors.”

One article finds that even small institutions with relatively few resources are in a position to effect change. “Colleges can help move their regions forward,” says Teri Ooms, executive director of the Joint Urban Studies Center. Ooms works at a Pennsylvania regional research organization started by Wilkes University (in Wilkes-Barre, PA), King's College, and five other colleges in northeastern Pennsylvania. Unlike their “powerhouse” counterparts, smaller institutions depend on regional collaboration, the loyalty of their alumni, and support not just from government agencies, but also from local foundations and businesses to finance the ventures their modest endowments can't tolerate. The results can range from improved image, to upswings in local economy, to--in some notable cases--finding a symbiosis to sustain each through times that seem sure to promise failure.

In another article, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) President Eugene Trani discusses the ways in which economic news does, and should, affect higher education institutions’ priorities. “During hard times, both public and private institutions may be tempted to become more insular and reduce investment in activities that are sometimes considered tangential to our core missions of teaching, research, and service.” But Trani contends that the partnerships VCU formed out of need during some temporary, “punishing” economic times proved to be directly supportive of the institution’s mission. “As the knowledge economy becomes more sophisticated, the country's towns, cities, and regions need more of everything that universities have to offer, be it students who are well trained for jobs, scientific expertise, medical skills to provide trauma and other health care, vibrant arts events and performances, or the cultural and historical understandings [...]. Put simply, universities are becoming indispensable partners in almost every major activity in which society is engaged.”

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4. Improvements to NIH Peer Review System

After a year of development, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has announced a plan to enhance and improve its peer review system. Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D., Director, stated on June 6, 2008, the plan represents “concrete solutions that will maximize flexibility, remove any unnecessary burden, stimulate new innovation, and promote transformative research.” The four priorities and key components of the plan are:

1. *Engage the Best Reviewers:* Increase flexibility of service, formally acknowledge reviewer efforts, further compensate time and effort, and enhance and standardize training.

2. *Improve Quality and Transparency of Reviews:* Shorten and redesign applications to highlight impact and to allow alignment of the application, review and summary statement with five explicit review criteria, and modify the rating system

3. *Ensure Balanced and Fair Reviews Across Scientific Fields and Career Stages:* Support a minimum number of early stage investigators and investigators new to NIH, and emphasize retrospective accomplishments of experienced investigators; encourage and expand the Transformative Research Pathway; create a new investigator-initiated Transformative R01 Award program funded within the NIH Roadmap with an intended commitment of a minimum of \$250 million over five years; continue the commitment of — and possibly expand the use of — the Pioneer, EUREKA, and New Innovator Awards. NIH will invest at least \$750 million in these three programs

over the next 5 years; reduce the burden of multiple rounds of resubmission for the same application, especially for highly meritorious applications.

4. *Develop a Permanent Process for Continuous Review of Peer Review*

For more information, please see <http://www.nih.gov/news/health/jun2008/od-06.htm>.

5. **Several UC Grant Programs under Reorganization**

On June 2, 2008, the University of California (UC) Office of the President announced its effort to reorganize the administration of its grant-distribution and multi-campus research programs, including the California Breast Cancer Research Program (CBCRP), Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program (TRDRP), California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP), and grants involving industry/university collaboration. This effort, eventually encompassing the entire system-wide UC Office of Research and Graduate Studies, aims to reduce administration costs and put the savings back into research grants. Strategies to immediately reduce costs of program support include: (1) combining application and peer review cycles of similar programs into one unit; (2) obtaining standard business support services from larger department at the UC system-wide office; (3) improving post-award grant oversight and management; and (4) reducing the costs of program development services. Steven Beckwith, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, is currently soliciting comments regarding the reorganization plan which can be emailed to ORGS@ucop.edu.

6. **NEH and NEA Receive Millions More from House**

On June 11, 2008, the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee approved a bill that would provide \$160 million each for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in FY 09, reports the [National Humanities Alliance](#) (NHA). This is an increase of \$15.3 and \$15.6 million over the FY 08 enacted levels for the respective agencies. The next step in the legislative process is a markup of the NEH spending bill by the full House Appropriations Committee on June 18.

NHA and its members are advocating for an FY 09 increase of approximately \$32 million above the president's NEH budget request and the FY 08 enacted level, which would return agency funding to the pre-1995 level of \$177 million.

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7. **Fellowships**

SJSURF receives notification of several fellowship opportunities for faculty and students. This month's highlights include:

Program: Postdoctoral Fellowships in Polar Regions Research

Agency: National Science Foundation

Next Deadline: Aug 18, 2008

http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5650

Program: Fellowships to Assist Research and Artistic Creation

Agency: John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation

Next Deadline: Sep 15, 2008

<http://www.gf.org>

Program: Fellowship Programs at Independent Research Institutions

Agency: National Endowment for the Humanities

Next Deadline: Aug 19, 2008

<http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/fpiri.html>

Program: Research Fellowships

Agency: National Gallery of Art

Next Deadline: Sep 21, 2008

<http://www.nga.gov/resources/casvaflws.shtm>

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