THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

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NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM EXPANDS WITH SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Heidi Von Dohlen was an educator and school principal for 27 years before becoming the director of the Principal Fellows program at Western Carolina University.

READ MORE...

Research Data Dive

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go.wcu.edu/researchcat

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PRE-AWARD SERVICES NEWS

Can't Make the Grant Seeking Workshop? Let's Bring It to You

If you're unable to attend the upcoming Grant Seeking workshop, we've got you covered. We're happy to schedule a one-on-one session tailored to your specific funding interests or work with you to organize a custom workshop for your department or college.

Whether you're just starting your grant-seeking journey or looking to refine your search strategies, we're here to help you take the next step toward securing external funding.

Contact Samantha Ellithorpe at sellithorpe@wcu.edu or Matt Salerno at msalerno@wcu.edu to schedule a session.

Get a Behind-the-Scenes Look at the Proposal Review Process

A great way to become familiar with how proposals are evaluated is by serving as a reviewer. Reviewing proposals offers valuable insight and helps you:

- Gain first-hand insight into how proposals are evaluated
- Learn common pitfalls and how to avoid them
- Discover strategies for writing strong, competitive proposals
- Connect with colleagues and program officers in your field

Volunteering as a reviewer is a powerful way to strengthen your own grant writing skills as you prepare to submit a federal proposal.

Explore opportunities with major funders:

- NSF Reviewer
- HRSA Reviewer
- NIH Reviewer

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POST-AWARD NEWS

New Closeout Procedures: Supporting a Smooth Transition

As your sponsored project approaches its end date, the ORA is here to support a smooth and timely closeout. We've developed a structured timeline to help Principal Investigators (PIs) and Project Directors (PDs) stay aligned with sponsor requirements and internal deadlines. Below is a breakdown of key tasks and responsibilities by timeframe.

View the closeout checklist (includes important deadlines and clear designation of roles).

ORA is committed to supporting you throughout the closeout process. If you have questions or need assistance at any stage, please don't hesitate to reach out. Together, we can ensure a successful and compliant project closeout.

Update Procedures for Honorariums

The university has updated its procedure for processing honorarium payments. For honorarium requests, they must now be submitted using the **Request to Authorize Honorarium Form**. The Check Request Form is no longer required.

To initiate an honorarium, complete the new form and draft a letter thanking the recipient for their time and contribution. A completed W–9 form from the recipient must also be attached to the form and letter. Once the packet is assembled, obtain all necessary departmental and administrative signatures.

After gathering the required signatures from the PI/Ao, send the full request to Ben Peters at bpeters@wcu.edu for grants approval via Adobe Sign. Once grant approval is complete and all signatures are in place, the finalized request should be emailed to Accounts Payable for processing.

If you have questions or need assistance with the new process, please reach out to Ben Peters directly.

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COMPLIANCE NEWS

NSF Research Security Policies

Effective Oct. 10, 2025, NSF requires Research Security Training (RST) covering cybersecurity, international collaboration, foreign interference, proper use of funds, disclosure, conflicts of interest/commitment, export control, and reporting.

As a result, investigators must complete RCR, RST, **and Export Control training** for NSF proposals.

This is based on the recent notice from NSF (Important Notice No. 149: Updates to NSF Research Security Policies | NSF – National Science Foundation)

Training Provider: citiprogram.org
For questions, contact: Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu
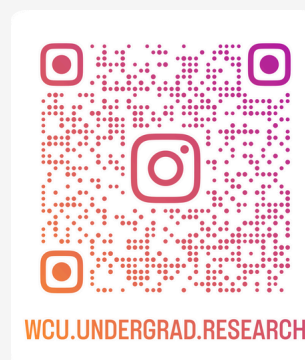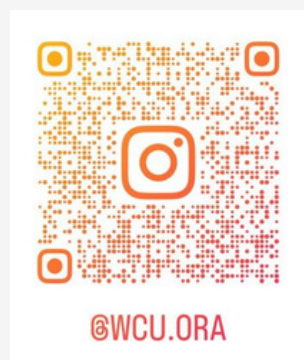
NIH RCR & RST Training

Beginning January 25, 2026, NIH will require all senior/key personnel to complete federally approved **Research Security Training (RST)** covering cybersecurity, foreign interference, international collaboration, and disclosure/conflict obligations.

NIH continues to require **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)** training for trainees, fellows, scholars, and career development awardees under specific programs (e.g., training grants, K awards, R25).

Training Provider: citiprogram.org
For questions, contact: Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu

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COMPLIANCE NEWS

Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) Visit

The Office of Research Administration's Research Compliance may be selecting you for a random Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) visit.

- The audits will be conducted on a random selection of non-exempt studies that have not been closed.
- To find protocols on which you are listed as PI, you can log into InfoEd (wcu.infoedglobal.com) and click the "**Locate my records**" tab at the top of the screen. If you would like to find any protocols on which you are listed as personnel but not necessarily PI, you will need to click "**Locate Records**" then search by "**Record Personnel**" and enter your name. See below:

For questions, contact: IRB@wcu.edu

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STUDENT RESEARCH NEWS

Empowering Student Research Through External Funding

At WCU, we believe bold ideas deserve bold support. That's why we encourage students to explore external funding opportunities that can elevate their research, creative projects, and academic journeys. Whether you're conducting fieldwork, writing your dissertation, or seeking a fellowship, external grants can:

- Provide financial support for travel, materials, and living expenses
- Enhance the visibility and impact of their work
- Strengthen their academic credentials
- Connect them with broader scholarly communities

Explore current opportunities and share them with your students:
Student Funding Opportunities

Academic Project Grants (APG) and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)

Continuing this year: APGs include individual travel requests to attend the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR). This year's conference will be held in person in **Richmond, VA, April 13 – 15, 2026.**

ORA offers first-come, first-served, limited, competitive funding for travel to NCUR through the APG process. To maximize your opportunity, submit your proposal early in the funding cycle. Additional travel support may also be available through your academic department.

Discover APG proposal guidelines, the template, and more.

Important NCUR Dates:

- Abstract Submission Portal Opens: September 9, 2025
- Abstract Submission Portal Closes: December 5, 2025
- Abstract Acceptance Notifications: January 14, 2026
- Registration Portal Opens: January 14, 2026
- Early Bird Registration Deadline: January 30, 2026
- Final Registration Deadline: March 6, 2026
- NCUR 2026: April 13–15, 2026

Contact Suzanne Melton, Research Programs Coordinator, at scmelton@wcu.edu for more information.

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PROGRAMS & MORE

Office of Research Administration Workshop Series

Register now for upcoming ORA Workshops. Seats are limited.

- **Financial Management:** designed for our more experienced faculty who want to learn more about shadow budgets, personnel costs, and purchasing rules and guidelines to help manage their grant. (Wednesday, 10/29/2025, 3:30–4:30 pm)
- **Grant Seeking:** designed to help faculty search and locate funding opportunities using the SPIN database and other grant-seeking resources. (Wednesday, 11/05/2025, 8:30–9:30 am)

Register Now.

Fall Proposal Opportunities: PSDA & FaRM Programs

The Office of Research Administration (ORA) is pleased to announce we are accepting proposals for two key funding opportunities: the **Provost's Scholarship Development Awards (PSDA)** and the **Faculty Research Mentoring (FaRM) Program**. Proposals will be accepted until **October 22, 2025, at 11:59 PM**.

Learn more about the guidelines and application process.

ResearchCAT Magazine: Volume II

The Graduate School & Research has released its annual research magazine. The second volume summarizes the fiscal year 2025 annual report of the Office of Research Administration (ORA), showcasing the pursuit of research, scholarship, and creative activities, as well as extramural sponsorship and initiatives.

Explore the magazine.

Special Programs & More on ResearchCAT

This past spring, the Office of Research Administration (ORA) launched its support site, **Research CAT** (go.wcu.edu/research), to increase ORA's support and impact across campus. We are excited to announce a new addition to the site: **Special Programs & More**. This page is your go-to for upcoming events, workshops, presentations, and special programming opportunities. Explore what's new and stay connected. Check it out today!