

Update from the Vice President for Research - January 2019

Dear Colleagues –

It's my pleasure to update you on our progress in growing SLU's research enterprise. Much of the focus over the past several months has been rolling out the Saint Louis University Research Institute (RI), enabled by the Sinquefield's \$50 million gift. Below are updates on the RI along with progress on other priorities.

BIG IDEAS

The RI's Big Ideas program aims to identify areas that will establish SLU as a leading destination for research, training, and innovation. Last year, we launched the Big Ideas and funded 12 planning grants for faculty-led interdisciplinary teams. Proposals are currently being accepted for the second round of Big Ideas planning grants. Applications are due by 11:59 pm on February 28, 2019. More information can be found on [the Big Ideas Webpage](#). Interested teams are encouraged to discuss their ideas with Jasmin Patel, jasmin.patel@slu.edu.

RESEARCH GROWTH FUND

The first cycle of the RI's Research Growth Fund resulted in 114 applications, with 15 faculty receiving funding. Proposals were reviewed by the Research Councils and SOM Research Planning Committee, and then by SLU's Research Growth Committee which recommended [15 proposals totaling \\$1.8M for funding](#) to the Sinquefield Center for Research Inc. All of the recommended proposals were funded. The next RFP will be announced in the coming weeks, with proposals due in March.

FELLOWS

An [RI Fellows Committee](#) has now been formed to review requests for appointments as Fellows of the Research Institute. The goal of this program is to enable SLU to recruit and retain researchers of the highest caliber, persons whose research productivity will add significantly to the eminence and impact of SLU's scholarship and research portfolios. For new hires, in the course of a faculty search, a dean may propose that a specific candidate who is being recruited would be appointed as an RI Fellow in addition to her or his faculty appointment. Fellows appointments are available for searches currently underway. Please contact Matthew Christian, matthew.christian@slu.edu, for more information.



RESEARCH COMPUTING

As part of SLU's initiative to develop and improve computing infrastructure, technology, services and support for research, CTO David Hakanson and I have appointed David Gohara, Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, to the role of Director of Research Computing. Dave is leading our newly established Research Computing Group (RCG) which is beginning to ramp-up operations. The RCG will occupy space on the 4th floor of DuBourg Hall near my office, and will have a similar space on the south campus. If you have any current or anticipated computing needs related to your research, Dave can be reached at david.gohara@health.slu.edu.

SPRING 2019 WORKSHOPS

This spring we will host a series of proposal development, Big Ideas, and professional development workshops. This month we launched our workshops for faculty planning to submit early career proposals. We will also host our first proposal development workshop for graduate students and postdocs. Future workshops this semester include communications workshops at both the introductory level and intermediate level, an NIH grant writing course, and a "revise and resubmit" workshop. Workshops will be announced via our Weekly Update from SLU Research email (to sign up, email amy.breuer@slu.edu) and under events on the [SLU Research website](#).

FY2018 F&A DISTRIBUTION

In October we distributed F&A from FY18 to faculty accounts. This was the first distribution under the new formula developed by a faculty committee and approved by President Pestello in early 2018. The formula gives PIs a larger percentage of recovered F&A based on annual growth. This year, faculty PIs received about 7.5% of their F&A expenditures - up from 5% the year before. The new formula grows the faculty's share of F&A as SLU's research enterprise grows - to approximately 20% when we hit \$100M in annual research expenditures. This enables faculty to directly invest those funds in students, equipment, and other areas that will enable research growth. F&A accounts show the amount of distribution. If you have specific questions about your F&A distribution, please contact Matthew Christian, matthew.christian@slu.edu.

UPDATE ON PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

SLU is not on track to meet our grant application goals for 2019. Moreover, the current trajectory would put SLU well below FY17 and FY18 totals. Growth in grant awards is directly correlated with the number of grant applications, and those grant awards drive the F&A return to faculty described above. The good news is that overall grant expenditures and awards are up 7% over FY18, which is the result of increased applications in 2016 and 2017.

Every day I hear about ambitious new research projects that SLU faculty want to pursue - projects that will impact the vitality of our region, the educational outcomes of our students, and the well-being of our patients.



Seeking funding for those important initiatives is critical if SLU is to continue to attract outstanding faculty and students and have the positive, life-affirming impact we seek to offer. We are committed to working with you to make the grant proposal process as rewarding as possible. Check out the [resources](#) and [funding](#) we have to help move your project forward. If we are not currently offering something that would be useful in enabling you to submit high-quality grant proposals, please let me know.

IRB - OFFICE TRANSITION AND STAFF ASSIGNMENTS

Reassignment of outgoing IRB director functions was completed in early December 2018. For details on IRB Analyst assignments by department, see [IRB Analyst - Department Assignments](#). On an interim basis, Administrative IRB Chair Oleg Kisseelev will have a deeper functional role in advising IRB staff. Mark Haenchen, Executive Director, Research Integrity and Safety Group, is supervising the overall IRB office operations and individual staff.

IRB - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED COMMON RULE

IRB Staff have worked diligently to assure that the SLU human studies research program is compliant with the revised Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects (the "Common Rule") by the January 21, 2019 effective date. The new rule will change the regulations followed by the IRB, and the requirements and guidance put forth to ensure compliance by investigators and research staff. Learn more about the revised Common Rule and how it impacts your SLU research submissions at the following [link](#).

GRANT OPERATIONS (GO) CENTER

The first GO Center recently celebrated its first year supporting faculty outside of the School of Medicine with grant submissions and management of awards. The pre-award staff have collaborated with faculty on 292 external grant submissions this past year. The pre-award team helped faculty apply for \$73M in external funding - and the post-award team managed more than 154 grant awards worth \$16.6M. During this past year the team has worked collaboratively to streamline the pre-award process and submitted approximately 80% of grants to sponsors within seven days of receiving the proposal in eRS. Furthermore, their collaboration has allowed for efficiencies in processing and executing federal subcontracts and amendments, standard service agreements, progress reports, and no-cost extensions which are all handled internally within the GO Center. We are working with the School of Medicine leadership on what the next GO Centers will look like for SOM.

INFOED

As a reminder, InfoEd will be replacing SLU's current grants management system, eRS. Thank you to those of you who have completed your annual Outside Interest Disclosures in the InfoEd system. We hope to roll out all grant modules of the new InfoEd system to the first GO Center this Spring.



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I am thrilled with the momentum that we are generating in accelerating SLU's growth into a world-class research university, both through the genuinely transformative impact of the Sinquefield's gift and through the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of our researchers. Thank you for all that you are doing to live out our mission.

In gratitude,
Ken

