



Deadlines, Just in Time and No Time – What’s a Researcher to do?

At a time when research funding is increasingly scarce and universities and administrators want nothing more than faculty to receive more of it, everyone’s efforts are being stretched thin.

Still, grant proposal deadlines are a priority and faculty members’ efforts to focus on their science are complicated with all the required documentation requested by the funding agency. Once a grant application is submitted, researchers wait for feedback from the agency. In order to expedite the award process, it’s best to submit your IRB or IACUC protocols at the time you receive a favorable ranking or score on your proposal. If you wait until you receive a notice of award, the funds are then contingent on you receiving all your compliance approvals.

There has been a recent increase in agency requests for FAU IRB approval prior to release of funds. The result has been last minute IRB submissions with very tight review times. This puts IRB faculty members in the difficult position of conducting a substantive review in a very short period of time while prioritizing studies over those already in the queue for review. In addition, IRB committee members are balancing their volunteer committee work with their own teaching and research responsibilities.

Through recent communications with other institutions, we have discovered that FAU is not alone. Other universities struggle with similar issues. Funding agencies have chimed in: The consensus is for universities to work with their faculty so researchers submit their compliance protocols in ample time for committees to conduct their reviews.

We encourage you to submit your compliance protocols as far in advance as possible to facilitate as smooth a grant award process as possible.

