Research, Interests, and Activities (RIA)

A Quick Reference Guide

for Business Administrators

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Last Updated August 17, 2023

Scope

This training is designed specifically for Business Administrators (BAs) and is effective July 24, 2023. The current scope of RIA applies only to projects sponsored by the Public Health Service (PHS) and Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). PHS agencies include:

- National Institute for Health (NIH)
- Federal Drug Administration (FDA)
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- Indian Health Service
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Administration on Aging
- Agency for Children and Families
- Office of Global Affairs
- Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response

The requirement for the use of RIA encompasses both prime awards and subawards to Penn. Specifically:

- A new PHS award
- A noncompeting continuation PHS award
- A new PCORI award
- A PCORI extension award

For non-PHS or PCORI projects (e.g. National Science Foundation, Department of Defense, Sponsored Research Agreements, etc.), please follow existing procedures.

Overview

The new Research, Interests, and Activities (RIA) reporting tool is replacing PHS-Financial Interest and Travel Statement (PHS-FITS) effective July 24, 2023. After this date, PHS-FITS will be available as read-only for reference purposes and will not accept new disclosure information. RIA will be replacing FIDES in late fall 2023.

Note: Data from PHS-FITS has *not* been migrated to RIA. Therefore, some data will need to be re-entered upon initial use of the tool.

RIA provides a single location for the disclosure and reporting of:

- Outside and Extramural Activities
- Equity Interests

- Reporting Payments from Outside Activities
- Financial Conflicts of Interest (FCOI)
- Intellectual Property Interests
- Research Relatedness Assessments
- Travel Disclosures
- Prior Approval of Outside Engagements
- External Investigator Disclosures

Additionally, the disclosures included in the tool ensure compliance with Penn policies and meet the requirements of funding agencies.

RIA leverages data from existing Penn systems by integrating with Penn Community, PennERA, HS-ERA, Inteum, and the Research Inventory System (RIS), thereby creating efficiency for Investigators and their support staff.

Process

Step 1: Sponsor Notifies PI

Principal Investigator (PI) receives notification from sponsor.

If NIH, BA assists the PI in collecting and entering required information into the eRA Commons. The Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) reviews the information and submits.

Step 2: BA Updates Personnel List

The BA is responsible for updating the Personnel List at Just In Time (JIT), upon submitting a Research Performance Progress Report (RPRR), or upon receipt of a new or renewal Notice of Award (NOA).

The BA enters and/or updates the Personnel List in PennERA Proposal Tracking (PT). The BA should consult and confirm with the PI to determine who will be working on the project and if those individuals are responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of the research. Responsible individuals are typically the PI, Co-PI, Co-Investigator, Other Investigator, and Key Personnel. Those individuals should be marked as Responsible in the PennERA Personnel screen. The BA is responsible for adjusting the Investigator list throughout the life of the project.

This tool depends on a stage gate process that affects funding. Please do not delay in updating the Personnel List and initiating disclosures.

Note: This information is fed into RIA on a nightly basis but in some circumstances, it could take up to 48 hours for updates to be reflected.

Step 3: BA Initiates Disclosures

Log in to RIA using your PennKey. RIA can be accessed through the following link: https://apps.research.upenn.edu/

After logging in, navigate to the **Research, Interests, and Activities** tab, and scroll down to **Sponsored Projects**. A **Filter Search** page will then be visible. This will be the most frequently used screen for BAs.

Enter the **ORS # / Award ID / Project Title** (also known as Institution Number or PennERA #) and/or the **PI** to search for the project and select the green Search button. Access is based on assigned Organizational Roles in PennERA.

The records will appear in a search results page. Locate the project and select the "**+**" button to the left of the **ORS # / Award ID** to expand the record to display all Personnel associated with the project. For all Key Personnel who are COI Responsible, the checkbox is checked. For any Personnel who are not COI Responsible, those individuals will be highlighted in red.

Note: If the Personnel List is inconsistent with your expectations, please make the necessary adjustments in PennERA.

Navigate to the project level, select the three-dot menu and select **Initiate Disclosures**. The system will request a confirmation of the action and the **COI Status** will change to Assigned on <<DATE>> and the project will move to the **Active Status**.

Once disclosures have been initiated, Investigators will receive an in-system and email task requesting submission of a Research Disclosure for this project.

Step 4: Confirming FCOI Clearance

The BA can check the status of FCOI Clearance at any time.

To check the status of Disclosures, scroll to **Reports** from the dropdown menu and select **Green Light Report**. Search using the ORS #. This report will indicate the status of the project clearance, including the status of all COI Responsible Personnel who are responsible for completing disclosures. Once the record is displayed, select **View Personnel**.

The status of each sub-component of the Disclosure is then visible.

- **Investigator Requirements:** COI Required, FCOI Training, Annual Disclosure within past 12 months, and Research Relatedness Assessment. If any of these items indicate Incomplete, the Investigator has not met one or more of these requirements.

- **Review Requirements:** Financial Interest Status, Management Plan Status, Management Plan Certification, FCOI Reports to Sponsor, HRAC Review (appears for protocols). If any of these items indicate Incomplete and the Investigator requirements indicate Complete, the disclosure is still undergoing review by the Research Integrity Office (RIO).

When each sub-component is Complete, the entire project will receive a green light and the project will be cleared for funding.

Step 5: Notice of Award

The Notice of Award (NOA) is sent to the PI and Office of Research Services (ORS)

Step 6: Receipt of Award

ORS Operations reviews the award. ORS Operations changes the status to "FCOI Pending" in PennERA if the Green Light Report shows FCOI Incomplete.

Once the required disclosures are complete in the RIA system as indicated by the Green Light status for the project, please create an Office of Research Service Support Portal Ticket using the AIS Prob Area of Service to report the completion of the certifications to the Office of Research Services. https://ors.freshservice.com/support/home

Please select the AIS Prob Category: "RIA Status Green Light: Yes"

This ticket will trigger the ORS Operations group to complete the Account setup process for this project in PennERA. An Account Information Sheet (AIS) will then be issued for the project.

ORS will not set up an Advance Account or permit spending on the project until FCOI compliance is confirmed.

Additional Tools

Training Guide

The following training provides specific instructions on how to update the Personnel List in PennERA PT, initiate disclosures, and monitor Green Light status: https://researchservices.upenn.edu/ria-reporting-tool/

FCOI Pending Business Objects Report

A BA may check the FCOI status of any PHS and/or PCORI project which has a status of "FCOI Pending" in PennERA. There is also a Business Objects report available at:

Public Folders/Schools and Centers/Schools/Perelman School of Medicine/ORSS-Office of Research Support Services. The report is titled: **FCOI-Pending.**

Most Common FAQs for BAs

FAQ #1: How do I determine which personnel are FCOI Responsible? How do I add and remove FCOI Responsible personnel to a project?

The BA should consult and confirm with the PI to determine who will be working on the project and if those individuals are responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of the research. Responsible individuals are typically the PI, Co-PI, Co-Investigator, Other Investigator, and Key Personnel. Those individuals should be marked as Responsible in the PennERA Personnel screen. For additional details, click here:

https://upenn.box.com/s/td7br0acu29ecoh6rmlnscfd05d7qljl

The BA is responsible for maintaining an accurate Investigator list throughout the life of the project.

This tool depends on a stage gate process that affects funding. Please do not delay in updating the Personnel List and initiating disclosures.

FAQ #2: Should I initiate disclosures at the project or individual level? What if some of the Investigators have already disclosed in RIA and I don't want to send them another task?

You should *always* be initiating disclosures at the project level, as illustrated below, in order to eventually get a Green Light for the project. If one of the Investigators has already disclosed, they will not receive another task/email. If you accidentally initiate at the individual personnel level, you can then correct this by initiating disclosures again at the project level. Investigators will not receive the same task twice.

FAQ #3: I updated the Personnel List in PennERA PT but it is not immediately reflected in RIA. Is there a lag?

Due to integration timelines, there is a 24-48 hour lag time between when Personnel List are updated in PennERA PT to when this information is reflected in RIA. Please contact support@research.upenn.edu if you are experiencing a delay beyond 48 hours.

FAQ #4: I initiated disclosures at the project level, but one of the Investigators on the project did not receive an email task. What should I do?

You can view the email address to which the task was sent by going to the Research, Interests, and Activities (RIA) dropdown menu, selecting **Sponsored Projects**, and then entering the Personnel Name and/or ORS #. Locate the project and click on the Investigator's name. Once you click on Full Name link you will see the email address to which the task was sent. This is derived from the PennERA profile. If it is outdated, ask the Investigator to make the update in PennERA.

If the Investigator does not have access to that email account, simply direct them to access the application via this link: *apps.research.upenn.edu* and the task will appear on their Tasks landing page.

ORS # (Award ID)	Title	Sponsor (Prime)	PHS ❓	PI	Responsible Org (Code)	Start Date	End Date	Instrume Type
➖ 10081879	Effect of Consumption of Post-harvest UV-B Treated Mushrooms on Vitamin D Status	NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH	☑	Todd S Swavely	Research Services (8760)	05/01/2022	04/30/2024	Grant

Personnel:	Full Name	School	Department/Division (Code)	Role	Key/Non-Key
	Todd S Swavely	Division of Finance Parent	Research Services (8760)	Principal Investigator	Key

Edit User Profile

*indicates required fields

collapse all | expand all

⌃ General Information

	SSO User (idpId=10021294)
Associated Institution*	University of Pennsylvania
Ignore integration updates for User Status	☐
User Status (integrated)	Active
Primary email	tswavely@upenn.edu

FAQ #5: I have a project where some but not all of the Investigators already disclosed in PHS-FITS. Do they need to disclose again?

Yes, if a portion but not all of project's Investigators previously disclosed in PHS-FITS, they will all need to disclose again in RIA in order for the project to obtain a Green Light. We apologize for the inconvenience.

FAQ #6: Should an Investigator be going into RIA before I initiate a disclosure?

Investigators should be going into RIA as a result of the task you assign to them by virtue of them being on a project. They will receive an email notification and a task will be available on their Tasks landing page.

FAQ #7: I know that RIA will be expanded to include all projects and protocols this fall. How do I prepare for this?

To prepare for the broader launch to projects and protocols, please review all of your projects and ensure that personnel are up-to-date in PennERA PT. Make the appropriate adjustments to mark personnel as Responsible, as needed (see FAQ #1 above).

FAQ #8: How do I get live support?

In addition to this Quick Reference Guide and email support (support@research.upenn.edu) there are live support hours offered throughout the week. Click here for the schedule and Zoom link:

https://portal.research.upenn.edu/conflict-of-interest/ria-support/