Recent Process Improvements

Process Improvements from AY'17-18

- Vision: efficient management and meaningful regulatory oversight in support of the Northeastern University research community
- Future: ePAWS 2.0 will automate routine transaction, to allow NU-RES and the NU research community to focus on the issues that take time and thought to resolve
- In the meantime: working to structure and streamline our email and paper processes to anticipate our future workflow

Forms

- Reviewed most frequently utilized forms:
  - AOS;
  - Subaward Request Form; and
  - Transaction Form.
- Improved documents to:
  - Reduce data points requested when possible and provide clarification on transaction requirements;
  - Group similar data elements together;
  - Reduce text to make the forms easier to read;
  - Update forms to a more recent version of Adobe; and
  - Add information related to Contract review so that the user community is able to anticipate what information is needed to ensure rapid review of the terms.
- Created a how-to guide to assist with completion of Transaction Form.

Emails

- Received feedback from the community:
  - Emails were too numerous
  - Difficult to track emails against what needed to be completed to complete a transaction.

- Improved email communications by:
  - Consolidating emails when possible;
  - Incorporated “to-do’s” into the email as a checklist for the PI and College;
  - Revised and clarified email text; and
  - Reducing the number of “FYI” emails PIs are copied on.

Subaward Invoices

- Received feedback from the community that it was difficult to track subaward invoices and ensure timely payment.

- Added transparency: posted the subaward invoice log to NU-RES tracking log share point (with college view access);
- Enhanced oversight of invoice processing by Subaward Manager;
- Enhanced reporting and created a follow up structure; and
- Generated internal documentation on process and expectations.

Reducing Bottlenecks

- Received feedback from the community that there were bottlenecks in agreement review and final award obligation set-up review.

- Evaluated and re-purposed FTE role (replaced an SGO with a GO);
- Revised organizational structure to create two Associate Director positions;
- Associate Directors expedite transaction processing; and
- Directors have more opportunities to focus on enhancing business operations, especially around transparency and consistency.

Looking Forward

- Your feedback is critical to continuing our work to enhance NU-RES and create valued community resources.
- NU-RES is committed to continuous improvement.

- In AY 2018-2019 we hope to:
  - Create and update SOPs to clarify business processes;
  - Generate guidance and tools for NU-RES and the NU community;
  - Work on the launch of ePAWS 2.0, including training.