



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR FORCE RESEARCH LABORATORY  
AIR FORCE OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (AFOSR)**

18 January 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR GRANTEES AND BILLING OFFICES

FROM: AFOSR/CL  
875 North Randolph St.  
Room 325, Suite 3112  
Arlington, VA 22203-1768

SUBJECT: New Expectations for AFOSR Research Awardees

1. The Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) sincerely values our extraordinary and longstanding working relationship with the world's best universities and researchers. Thus, in the spirit of partnership, we are taking this opportunity to notify all our research partners of important changes that could result in reduced funding for universities and researchers who do not demonstrate good financial or reporting stewardship of Research & Development resources provided by the United States Congress. Additionally, we want to share information on the most recent White House Office of Science and Technology Policy guidance on research security.

2. AFOSR has financial expectations set forth by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to include a 55% expenditure goal set for the end of each fiscal year. When grant expenditure rates lag, AFOSR risks losing future funding; thereby, limiting our ability to award new basic research initiatives and potentially resulting in the termination of existing grants. It is imperative that AFOSR-sponsored universities and research partners expend grant funding in substantial amounts throughout the year with on-time invoicing to meet required expenditure goals.

3. With the above in mind, failure to address and resolve expenditure rates and/or reporting problems could result in limited or no additional funding for grantees to include not fully funding annual award increments or contingent option years. On a case-by-case basis, Universities with excess prior year fund balances will be evaluated to determine grant continuation and/or funding level. For example, if a university has an excess amount of unexpended funds without reasonable justification, instead of awarding an additional twelve months of funding, the next research increment could be reduced to six months to promote better fiscal accountability. To avoid such adjustments, AFOSR encourages universities and researchers to expend as early as possible and consistently invoice throughout the year.

4. AFOSR understands that COVID-19 has seriously affected our partners' ability to conduct research, recruit students, hire researchers, expend resources, and even invoice promptly. If COVID-19 has affected your research grant award negatively, please contact your AFOSR program officer to discuss what adjustments can be made to your award.

5. On 5 January 2022, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)

issued guidance for federal agencies to implement National Security Presidential Memorandum (NSPM)-33. The guidance supports an approach that balances research security with continued scientific innovation, while stressing consistency, transparency, and collective responsibility among researchers, awardee institutions, and Federal funding agencies. The 11 Jan 2022 online publication of the National Law Review stated that the "... NSPM 33 outlines the steps the United States can take to protect intellectual capital, discourage research misappropriation, and ensure responsible management of taxpayer dollars while maintaining an open environment to foster research discoveries, collaborations, and innovation."

6. AFOSR is working closely with the Department of the Defense and the Department of the Air Force (DAF) to move forward on immediate implementation of the NSPM-33 using this recently released guidance. We will rapidly share information with our University partners as it becomes available. In the meantime, I encourage you to review NSPM-33 and the recent implementation guidance, to become familiar with the requirements.

7. Please convey to your business offices and grantees the importance of both the issues detailed above. Our AFOSR program and contract officers are currently reviewing all grants and contracts. We will directly contact institutions who may have issues with timely billing and are not meeting financial expectations. As we work diligently to implement the NSPM-33, as well as other research protection requirements, we will ensure open and consistent communication with our University partners. Thank you in advance for your assistance in supporting research security and good financial stewardship of DAF basic research funding. For any clarification or questions, please contact Mr. Rickey Lawrence, Chief of our AFOSR Finance Division at [rickey.lawrence@us.af.mil](mailto:rickey.lawrence@us.af.mil) or our Chief Scientist Office, at [AFRL.AFOSR.ChiefScientist@us.af.mil](mailto:AFRL.AFOSR.ChiefScientist@us.af.mil).

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Director