

THE TRIBUNE

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Apply Here

TRI Eases Grant Process for Researchers, Reviewers, Staff



TRI's Paul Duguid, MPH, and Carolyn Greene, Ph.D., are leading TRI's acquisition of the Apply software.

Beginning this spring, researchers applying for any of six TRI funding opportunities will use a new software program that vastly improves and simplifies the process for applicants, reviewers and TRI administrators.

The software program, called Apply, will standardize processes across the board, delivering an array of short- and long-term benefits.

It was time for an upgrade, said TRI's Carolyn Greene, Ph.D., associate director of Programmatic and Strategic Planning.

"We want to be a world-class research institution at every level, and this new

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Dear Colleagues,

In this issue of The Tribune, we are excited to announce that TRI will offer a new, more efficient way for researchers to apply for many of our recurring funding opportunities.

We are implementing Apply, a customizable software program that will replace a patchwork of tools now used to generate application forms, track progress and provide post-award reports.

TRI's Carolyn Greene, Ph.D., and Paul Duguid, MPH, have done an outstanding job leading the search for a software program that we can tailor to the specific needs of investigators and the administrators of our grant programs.

We are beta testing the software this fall and will put it into practice starting this spring with our call for applications for Pilot Awards and KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Awards. Use of the Apply software could be expanded beyond the initial six TRI grant programs to

an additional four TRI programs as well as new funding programs that we may offer.

I am also thrilled with the success of Research Expo 2022, which we highlight on page 4. The Sept. 21 event was our first in-person version since 2019. We added a fantastic co-sponsor this year - the UAMS Division of Research and Innovation, led by Shuk-Mei Ho, Ph.D. Forty-seven research services and resources were promoted at the event, and it drew more than 100 attendees from UAMS, Arkansas Children's and the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System.

Sincerely,

Laura James, M.D.
Director, TRI
Associate Vice Chancellor for Clinical and Translational Research, UAMS

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software program is one exciting way to up our game,” she said.

The number of TRI funding opportunities has grown substantially since UAMS became a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program site in 2009. Staff in multiple TRI programs have managed the grant programs with Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap), Excel spreadsheets and Outlook email to coordinate and track applications, reviews and post-award reports. A single application cycle typically involves about 10 applicants and 10 reviewers.

With the Apply program, said Paul Duguid, MPH, assistant director of TRI Funding Programs, TRI will have a tool that not only streamlines processes but also ensures that its funding programs are equitable, fair and transparent.

“This is another example of how TRI uses innovative processes to make our research enterprise better, more efficient,” Duguid said.

Researchers will encounter an application form that quickly determines their eligibility and lets them know what is required to complete their submissions. It allows applicants to add collaborators, to upload a variety of file types, including videos, and to request blinded recommendations. For researchers who apply for more than one funding opportunity, the form will prepopulate their information where appropriate.

“It is going to increase the comfort level of the investigator who is applying for TRI funding,” Duguid said. “No matter what they are applying for, they will have a clear picture of what we’re asking for and what it’s going to look like when they apply.”

Application reviewers will also have a more streamlined experience. They will receive an automated email when applications are submitted. The application materials will appear on the left side of the screen, and scoring and feedback opportunities will be on the right. The form and materials can be downloaded for offline review.

Reviewers will also have the option of using an analytical process to help them strengthen their own critiques. Once a review is complete, the program will send an auto-generated email to a TRI administrator for the next stage in the workflow.

The Apply software provides administrators a customizable, automated way of tracking all parts of the application and review process, as well as post-award reports.

Apply’s data tracking capability is one of the more exciting aspects of the new program, Greene and Duguid said, with an enhanced ability to keep better records and learn over time what makes a project successful and what red flags there may be.

“We can build a history with researchers, understanding what they’re doing and what kind of support they need,” Greene said. “For example, we can find opportunities for people to collaborate because we’ll have an easy way of knowing who is doing what and more ways that we can find commonalities.”

The Apply software was selected through a rigorous process, Greene said.

“There are a lot of similar software packages, and we believe we found the best match for our needs and the needs of researchers,” she said.

TRI will use the Apply software initially for the following funding opportunities: Pilot Awards, Team Science Voucher Awards, KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Awards, STARs Awards, and Translational Research Innovations and Partners (TRIP) summer program awards.

In time, use of the Apply program may expand to the Implementation Science Awards, Health Sciences Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HSIE, TL1) Training Program Awards, Master of Science in Clinical and Translational Science (MS-CTS) Scholarship Awards, and Community Partners Educated As Research Leaders (CPEARL) Awards. Its use could also potentially expand to other organizations at UAMS that want to use it.

TRI, DDEI Name Five STARs Recipients

TRI and the UAMS Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DDEI) have announced five Strategies for Training and Advancing underrepresented Researchers (STARs) Program recipients for 2022. The program offers grant-writing training, mentoring support, and \$10,000 in Equity, Diversity, and Grantsmanship Expertise (EDGE) funding.

The STARs awardees are:



Jaimi “Mimi” Allen, Ph.D., instructor, College of Public Health



Marie Rachele Narcisse, Ph.D., assistant professor, College of Medicine, Office of Community Health and Research



David Church, Ph.D., assistant professor, College of Medicine Department of Geriatrics



Ramona Rhodes, M.D., associate professor, College of Medicine Department of Geriatrics



Elizabeth Garcia, D.P.T., assistant professor, College of Health Professions

KL2 Scholar Receives Prestigious National Award, \$1 Million



Jennifer L. Vincenzo, Ph.D., MPH, PT, recently became the first UAMS researcher to receive the national Paul B. Beeson Emerging Leaders Career Development Award in Aging, which comes with \$1 million over five years.

The award will support Vincenzo's work implementing a falls prevention strategy as a standard of care for all older adults attending outpatient physical therapy clinics. Her work has been supported by a TRI KL2 Mentored Research Career Development Award.

The Beeson award stems from an initiative by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the American Federation for Aging Research, and the John A. Hartford Foundation.

Vincenzo is only the third physical therapist to receive the award, which typically goes to medical doctors.

"I would not be where I am without the support of UAMS, the Translational Research Institute, and especially my colleagues in the Department of Physical Therapy," said Vincenzo, an associate professor in the College of Health Professions. "The Beeson award will allow me to advance my knowledge and skills as an implementation scientist in aging under the mentorship of Geoffrey Curran, Ph.D., and Jeanne Wei, M.D., Ph.D., who also served as mentors on my KL2."

TRI Study of the Month

UAMS Principal Investigator:

Erika Petersen, M.D., professor, College of Medicine Department of Neurosurgery; director, Section of Functional and Restorative Neurosurgery

Summary: Study to evaluate the feasibility of The Adaptive Neural Systems Neural-Enabled Prosthetic Hand (ANS-NEPH), developed by Ranu Jung, professor, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville (UA).

Significance: If successful, the prosthetic device for arm and hand amputees would provide a prosthesis with a sense of touch. It is UAMS' first collaboration with biomedical engineering experts at the UA Institute for Integrative & Innovative Research (I³R). It is also a first-time collaboration between Petersen and hand and upper extremity surgeons in the UAMS College of Medicine Department of Orthopaedics: John Bracey Jr., M.D., and Mark Tait, M.D.



Erika Petersen, M.D., receives budgetary assistance on the study from TRI's Ty Stacey, B.A., CRS, CCRP, research program manager, budgets.

TRI Services: Medicare coverage analysis, study budget development, administration of Clinical Trial Management System, and post-award financial management

Sponsor: University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

New Researchers Find Valuable Resources at Research Expo 2022



Veronica Smith, MBA, who directs the UAMS Rural Research Network, speaks with Ruiqi Cen, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow in the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health.

Research Expo 2022 arrived at a great time for Lisa Jansen, Ph.D., and more than 100 other attendees wanting to learn about and leverage the numerous research resources available at UAMS, Arkansas Children's Research Institute (ACRI) and the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS).

"I am a new researcher, so I came to the Expo today to learn about all the options and possibilities that are out

there," said Jansen, who joined UAMS in January as an assistant professor in the College of Health Professions Department of Dietetics and Nutrition.

Sponsored by the UAMS Translational Research Institute and the Division of Research and Innovation, the Research Expo on Sept. 21 promoted at least 47 research services and resources. The late afternoon event included food, beverages and door prizes.



Lisa Jansen, Ph.D., poses with a selfie frame.

Nadim Nicolas Ghanem, M.D., a first-year fellow in the UAMS/ Arkansas Children's Clinical Informatics Fellowship Program, is new to the United States, so having face-to-face conversations with people at the expo was especially valuable, he said.

"It was a great day to meet new people and to learn more about the different tools I can potentially use in research."

Read the full story at TRI.uams.edu.