

SPaRC'Ed 2026-2027 Schedule

Courses	Course Date	Instructors
Overview of Sponsored Projects Administration <i>This course provides a comprehensive introduction to sponsored projects administration across the full project lifecycle—from proposal development and submission through award management and closeout. Participants will gain a high-level understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key university offices involved in supporting and managing sponsored research, as well as an overview of the regulatory framework that governs sponsored programs. The session is designed to build foundational knowledge and context for navigating the research administration environment.</i>	Tuesday, August 18 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Robin Beach , Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation (OVCRI) Dan Harmon , Director, Data and Systems, Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA) Cheryl Howerton , Director, Audit and Compliance, SPA Julie Robinson , Senior Associate Director, Negotiation, SPA Karen Thomas , Director, Post-Award, SPA Kris Williams , Associate Director for Administration, Materials Research Lab
Proposal Basics <i>This course introduces the core elements of the proposal development process, including planning, proposal components, and budget preparation. Participants will explore strategies for effectively coordinating and communicating with principal investigators, interpreting sponsor guidelines, and utilizing resources to prepare application materials. The session also covers the role of Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA) in proposal review and approval, along with best practices for supporting timely and accurate submission of funding applications.</i>	Tuesday, September 1 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Rosalyn Maziarka , Proposal Coordinator, SPA Kelsey Munsterman , Proposal Development Specialist, Institute for Genomic Biology Hannah Stites , Research Program Coordinator, Materials Research Lab

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Budget Components <i>This course provides an overview of the key components of a sponsored project budget and budget justification. Participants will learn how to identify and apply appropriate cost elements, including fringe benefits, tuition remission, and indirect (F&A) costs. Through practical examples, the session will build skills in developing accurate, compliant, and well-justified budgets that align with sponsor and institutional requirements.</i>	Tuesday, September 15 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Katie Bateman, Assistant Director, Proposals, SPA Andrea Vogel, Research Administration Manager, Grants and Contracts, Engineering Business Service Center
SOS – Systems on Systems <i>Researchers and administrators rely on a wide array of electronic systems and tools to support proposal development and submission. This course introduces the foundational systems used in the early stages of the sponsored project lifecycle, including a focused look at the University of Illinois proposal submission and approval process. Through common research administration scenarios, participants will explore best practices for navigating systems efficiently and effectively. The session is designed to demystify complex processes and build confidence in using technology to move projects successfully toward the award stage.</i>	Tuesday, September 29 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Naomi Armstrong, Research Administration Coordinator, Siebel School of Computing and Data Science Maddie Jackson, Advanced Senior Specialist, Processing and Records Management, SPA Kathie Veach, Advanced Senior Proposal Coordinator, SPA

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Research in a Complex World: Security, Integrity, and Responsibility <i>University research operates within an increasingly complex landscape shaped by global collaboration, regulatory requirements, and ethical considerations. This course will explore how university personnel — including you! — shape and manage the ethics of university research on individuals and the broader community. Attendees of this session will learn the basics of export controls, conflicts of commitment and interest, and responsible conduct of research, with a focus on how these areas intersect to protect research, promote transparency, and maintain public trust.</i>	Tuesday, October 13 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Jacquelyn Jancius, Senior Conflict of Interest Officer, Office of Research Security (ORS) Linda Lee Drozt, Director, Office of Research Security (ORS) Chris Lehmann, Research Integrity Officer, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Administration (OVCR)
Labs, Animals, and Humans...Oh My! <i>Ensuring regulatory compliance takes brains, heart, and courage—especially when research involves animals, human subjects, and laboratory safety...oh my! In this course, presenters from DRS, OARC, and OPRS pull back the curtain to highlight key regulatory considerations across these areas. Participants will explore core compliance requirements, common challenges, and best practices to help navigate the path to responsible and compliant research.</i>	Tuesday, October 27 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Tina McGill, Assistant Director, Division of Research Safety (DRS) Cheri Pettet, Director, Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) Jen Thompkins, Director, Office of Animal Research Compliance (OARC)

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Cost Share Savvy: From Basics to Best Practices <i>This course provides an overview of cost sharing in sponsored projects, including definitions, types, allowable costs, and methods for documenting and tracking commitments. Participants will gain an understanding of departmental responsibilities for monitoring cost share and ensuring compliance with sponsor and institutional requirements. The session will also highlight best practices for managing cost-share commitments effectively throughout the project lifecycle.</i>	Tuesday, November 10 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Carrie Blount , Associate Director, Federal Awards, SPA Stephanie Fellmann , Associate Director, Proposals, SPA Holly Pankow , Assistant Director, Grants and Contracts, Prairie Research Institute
Fall Assessment Available: Wednesday, November 11 Due: Monday, November 30		

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Award Negotiation and Execution <i>This session provides a practical overview of award processing from agreement receipt through execution, with a focus on key considerations in agreement negotiation. Through examples and discussion, participants will learn to distinguish between funded and unfunded agreement types, identify high-risk or problematic clauses, and develop strategies to navigate common negotiation challenges and roadblocks.</i>	Tuesday, January 12 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Sarah Hasib , Senior Award Negotiator, SPA Frank Madden , Assistant Director, Negotiations, SPA Jessica Steenbergen , Senior Award Negotiator, SPA
People, Payroll, and Effort: Managing Personnel on Sponsored Projects <i>Personnel management is one of the most important, and most challenging, aspects of sponsored research administration. This session provides a practical overview of personnel-related topics including employee types, proposal budgeting, appointments, payroll oversight, labor distributions, effort commitments, and effort reporting. Participants will learn how personnel decisions affect sponsored projects throughout the award lifecycle and gain strategies for proactively managing common issues related to effort, compliance, and payroll administration.</i>	Tuesday, January 26 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Kevin Frerichs , Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, Non-Federal Awards, SPA Lauren Kuntz , Senior Research Administration Coordinator, College of Veterinary Medicine Brittany Stein , Assistant Head, Business and Strategic Planning, Animal Sciences

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"Give a Little Bit" – Outgoing Subawards <i>My PI wants to collaborate with someone outside of the University of Illinois—now what? This session provides a comprehensive overview of outgoing subawards, including their purpose, importance, and the requirements for issuing and managing them effectively. Using a lifecycle approach, we will walk through key stages from early planning and proposal development to subaward issuance, monitoring, and closeout. Along the way, participants will explore important audit and compliance considerations and gain insight into roles and responsibilities across departmental, pre-award, post-award, and audit & compliance functions.</i>	Tuesday, February 9 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM <u>SPA Training Room</u> Hybrid Meeting	Kristi Anderson, Assistant Director for Finance and Administration, Illinois Center for Transportation Susanne Klein, Senior Award Negotiator, SPA Christina Orange, Senior Coordinator, Audit and Compliance, SPA Kelly Ryan, Award Management Coordinator, Federal Awards, SPA
Award Management and the Lifecycle – Off and Running <i>Your award is executed – the race begins. This course covers early award management from setup through initial monitoring, including award review, account setup, anticipation accounts, and allowable costs. Participants will explore departmental and SPA roles while identifying early risks and best practices. Interactive case scenarios and exercises will help build confidence in managing awards effectively from the start.</i>	Tuesday, February 23 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM <u>SPA Training Room</u> Hybrid Meeting	Tina Owens-Anderson, Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, Non-Federal Awards, SPA Jen Schuster, Senior Award Management Coordinator, Non-Federal Awards, SPA Maryl Wildermuth, Assistant Director of Research Administration, School of Chemical Sciences

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Award Management and the Lifecycle – Staying the Course <i>The award is underway – now it's about maintaining control. This session focuses on active award management, including financial monitoring, cost transfers, and billing considerations. Participants will strengthen compliance knowledge, documentation practices, and risk awareness while learning how to support PIs and manage day-to-day complexities through practical exercises and discussion.</i>	Tuesday, March 9 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Nam Carreon, Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, Non-Federal Awards, SPA Jen Sturm, Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, Federal Awards, SPA Lisa Young, Grants and Contracts Coordinator, Prairie Research Institute
Award Management and the Lifecycle – The Home Stretch <i>The finish line is in sight – but successful award completion depends on strong compliance and oversight along the way. This course explores key compliance responsibilities across the award lifecycle, including equipment, specialized cost categories (travel, human subjects, participant support costs, and program income), semi-annual confirmation, and other revisions such as budget changes and no-cost extensions, alongside closeout preparation. Participants will examine audit triggers, documentation expectations, and internal controls, and build the skills needed to identify issues early, respond effectively to audit inquiries, and support successful award completion.</i>	Tuesday, March 23 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Kierra Fonner, Assistant Director of Budget and Resource Planning, Institute for Genomic Biology Ryan Holmes, Senior Assistant Director, Audit and Compliance, SPA Kristie Lamoreux, Associate Director, Audit and Compliance, SPA Sarah Lorbiecki, Senior Associate Director, NSF Awards, SPA Justine Story, Director for Budget and Resource Planning, Institute for Genomic Biology Shayna Ward, Award Management Coordinator, Federal Awards, SPA

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The End of the Road – Award Closeout <i>Reaching the end of an award is more than just tying up loose ends—so what does a successful closeout really involve? This session provides practical tips and strategies for navigating the award closeout process, with insights from award management, departmental business offices, and audit & compliance perspectives. Using a lifecycle lens, we will explore key closeout activities, the importance of timely action, and common challenges that can delay completion. Participants will also gain practical approaches for resolving issues and a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities across campus to help ensure a smooth and compliant closeout process.</i>	Tuesday, April 6 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM <u>SPA Training Room</u> Hybrid Meeting	Carrie Blount , Associate Director, Federal Awards, SPA Jamie Keeney , Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, Federal Awards, SPA Jerald Kimble , Senior Coordinator, Audit and Compliance, SPA Kim White , Grants and Contracts Coordinator, Fire Service Institute
Spring Assessment Available: Wednesday, April 7 Due: Monday, April 26		
Certification Ceremony and Reception	Thursday, April 29 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM Chancellor Ballroom, Illinois Conference Center	Recognition of SPaRC'Ed Research Administration Certification Series Graduates

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****Electives are open to all UIUC research administrators and are not limited to only SPaRC'Ed Participants. These courses require a separate [registration](#).**

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USDA Lifecycle <i>An introduction to the lifecycle of USDA sponsored projects from both departmental and Sponsored Programs Administration perspectives. Topics include proposal development, budgeting requirements, USDA systems and submission processes, common proposal and award management responsibilities and challenges, and ways department and SPA staff work together to support USDA-funded projects.</i>	Tuesday, November 17 8:30AM – 12:00PM <u>SPA Training Room</u> Hybrid Meeting	Steve Goodreau, Award Negotiator, SPA Hannah Gorrie, Proposal Coordinator, SPA Jessi Katterhenry, Assistant Director for Business and Financial Operations, School of Integrative Biology Rosine Yao, Assistant Director, Federal Awards, SPA

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Travel in Sponsored Projects: Navigating Gray Areas, Pitfalls, and Practical Guidance <i>This session takes a focused look at some of the most common—and often most challenging—travel scenarios in sponsored projects. Rather than covering travel broadly, we'll explore high-impact topics such as Emburse, comparables and business justification, split travel, effort allocation, and personal days. Through real-world examples and scenario-based discussion, participants will strengthen their understanding of policy application, develop practical decision-making strategies, and gain guidance for ensuring compliance and appropriate documentation.</i>	Tuesday, March 30 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Steffany Ballas, Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, NSF Awards, SPA Ben Ryckman, Business Administrative Associate, University Payables Rachel Santarelli, Senior Specialist Payment Operations, University Payables Hollis Wildermuth, Post Award Specialist, Beckman Institute
The End of the Road – Award Closeout <i>Reaching the end of an award is more than just tying up loose ends—so what does a successful closeout really involve? This session provides practical tips and strategies for navigating the award closeout process, with insights from award management, departmental business offices, and audit & compliance perspectives. Using a lifecycle lens, we will explore key closeout activities, the importance of timely action, and common challenges that can delay completion. Participants will also gain practical approaches for resolving issues and a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities across campus to help ensure a smooth and compliant closeout process.</i>	Tuesday, April 6 8:30AM – 12:00PM SPA Training Room Hybrid Meeting	Carrie Blount, Associate Director, Federal Awards, SPA Jamie Keeney, Advanced Senior Award Management Coordinator, Federal Awards, SPA Jerald Kimble, Senior Coordinator, Audit and Compliance, SPA Kim White, Grants and Contracts Coordinator, Fire Service Institute

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DOE Lifecycle <i>An overview of the lifecycle of DOE sponsored projects from proposal development through award closeout. Topics include DOE funding opportunity types, budgeting considerations, proposal preparation and submission systems, conflict of interest and foreign influence requirements, common submission issues and warnings, award management responsibilities, and closeout considerations from both departmental and Sponsored Programs Administration perspectives.</i>	Tuesday, April 13 8:30AM – 12:00PM <u>SPA Training Room</u> Hybrid Meeting	Michelle Barkley, Proposal Coordinator, SPA Justin Blount, Assistant Director, Negotiations, SPA Chris Patton, Assistant Director, Federal Awards, SPA Maryl Wildermuth, Assistant Director of Research Administration, School of Chemical Sciences