

31 July 2020

Subject: SPaRC Award Nomination for Tamara Roosevelt

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Bertram Ludäscher, and I am a professor at the School of Information Sciences, Director of the Center for Informatics Research in Science and Scholarship (CIRSS), and faculty affiliate at NCSA and the Department of Computer Science. It is my great pleasure to provide this enthusiastic letter of support for Tamara Roosevelt's nomination for an Outstanding Service award with the Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance (SPaRC)!

I had the pleasure to work closely with Tamara here at the iSchool and in her previous role at NCSA after I joined the University of Illinois in 2014. Prior to joining Illinois, I was a professor at the CS department at UC Davis, and a member of the UC Davis Genome Center. As a PI of multiple collaborative grants, sometimes routed through the Genome Center and sometimes through the CS department at UC Davis, I had 10+ years of experience with pre- and post-award processing before joining Illinois. For a CS faculty, administrative support was moderate at UC Davis, while the Genome Center had considerably more experience with all phases of grant management. However nothing compares to the outstanding support I received from Tamara here at Illinois! Tamara is not only an extraordinarily knowledgeable, responsive and responsible research administration professional, but also an exceptionally personable and effective communicator, and a real joy to work with.

Despite my experience as a PI, it can still become somewhat overwhelming to deal with the complex financial and administrative issues of large, collaborative (and sometimes not so collaborative) sponsored research projects. With her exceptional expertise, experience, and ability to work closely with faculty and personnel in all roles, Tamara has helped us quickly and smoothly navigate these waters, from managing politically sensitive sub-award modifications, to keeping up with shifting grant personnel allocations, to collaborating in the resolution of complex cross-unit cost allowability issues. For example the two NSF sponsored SKOPE (Synthetizing Knowledge of Past Environments) projects required coordination with remote colleagues and entities from ASU and WSU, as well as local institutions (NCSA and iSchool). Even more challenging was the \$5M NSF-funded Whole Tale project that was awarded through a collaborative agreement, with many additional steps and strings attached, and many collaborative institutions (U Chicago, UC Santa Barbara/NCEAS, U Texas/TACC, Notre Dame, and locally again NCSA and iSchool).

Through her many years of deep expertise, Tamara also has built a network of experts on campus and finds answers to every question I encountered – broad and open ended or detailed and highly specialized. She ensures we are current and compliant with the continually evolving requirements and regulations at all levels of the funded research enterprise, from sponsor to

government to campus, while never losing sight of the goal of helping us do our work. During the proposal development phase, she is an invaluable resource for identifying appropriate mechanisms for budgeting our often complex collaborative activities, and for interpreting proposal solicitation guidance. She ensures my time is free as much as possible to focus on the development and characterization of a compelling research plan, and is a welcome, friendly, calm and helpful presence in the flurry of activity leading up to a proposal deadline. She has always kept the boat on course and moving forward efficiently, in the many “storms” I have encountered.

In closing, let me summarize by saying that I’ve not encountered a worthier recipient of an Outstanding Service award for research administration professionals than Tamara Roosevelt, and I wholeheartedly endorse her nomination!

Sincerely,



**Bertram Ludäscher**

Professor, School of Information Sciences ([iSchool@Illinois](mailto:iSchool@Illinois))  
Director, Center for Informatics Research in Science & Scholarship (CIRSS)  
Faculty Affiliate, [NCSA](#) & [Department of Computer Science](#)  
**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**  
[ludaesch@illinois.edu](mailto:ludaesch@illinois.edu)



July 30, 2020

Dear SPaRC committee,

My name is Matthew Turk, and I am an Assistant Professor in the School of Information Sciences. Before I joined the iSchool in late 2016, I was a Research Scientist at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications; I arrived at the University in mid-2014. During my time at the University of Illinois, I have had the pleasure of working with Tamara Roosevelt both at NCSA and at the iSchool, and I am overjoyed and honored to write to strongly, enthusiastically and unreservedly recommend her for an award with Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance (SPaRC).

One of the key functions of the University is securing funding from external sources in order to pursue the mission of enabling and conducting world-class research; these may be governmental, private, or philanthropic. Managing these funds and ensuring that the grants and awards process is both smooth and functional is challenging *and* critical to the functioning of a research unit. I say this as a backdrop, before stating that Tamara is *unquestionably* one of the most skilled and dedicated individuals with whom I have ever worked. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to benefit from her efforts to secure, manage, and steward funding and funding opportunities.

During my time at the University of Illinois, I have worked to prepare numerous grants with Tamara. This has included collaboratively developing budgets (often from a blank slate), preparing facilities statements, finalizing and editing proposals (including for content), and ensuring compliance with funder requirements, whether those were technical (such as CV or proposal formatting) or higher-level, such as suitability of applying funds to different types of work. When I have prepared grants with Tamara, I have found her effective, exceptionally timely, thoughtful, and I have been extremely grateful on countless occasions for her attention to detail (especially in Call for Proposal and Proposal Preparation documents) and willingness to assist with the grant preparing process. She is constantly aware of the context of awards, how they fit into the University's research agenda, and how we can best work with the proposal preparation process at funding agencies to increase success. Beyond the initial proposal preparation stage, however, Tamara is also outstanding at managing grants, applying budgetary estimates, and coordinating to develop requests such as supplements and extensions. I am genuinely honored to have the opportunity to work with Tamara.

I have three specific instances I would like to share from working with Tamara. The first was shortly after I arrived at the University of Illinois; in the fall of 2014, I was awarded a 5 year, \$1.5M Data-Driven Discovery Investigator award from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. This grant was not a traditional grant, and was additionally somewhat outside the usual types of grants fielded by the NCSA business office. Additionally, it was one of my very first grants: as a new research scientist, I had up to that point only been involved in one grant as a PI, which was an NSF Postdoctoral Fellowship. Furthermore, the granting organization had an unfamiliar

procedure (including embargoes) that they wanted us to abide by; Tamara worked closely with me to make sure that my budget was prepared exactly as per their requests, that my submitted documents themselves matched their style guidelines, and she stewarded the connections between the foundation, NCSA, and the University hierarchy during the pre-award and post-award phase. While this was all going on, Tamara was *also* working with me to transfer a grant from a prior organization (Columbia University) and simultaneously switch me to be the Principal Investigator from my prior mentor, all while navigating a change in program officer at the NSF. I was utterly amazed at the degree to which Tamara was able to guide the numerous stakeholders through the process, the enthusiasm she brought to the process, and more than anything else the degree to which she so obviously had things *under control*.

The second instance that I want to highlight is the development of a long-term NSF project on which I was a Co-Investigator, entitled "The Whole Tale." "The Whole Tale" was a multi-institutional proposal (both outside the university *and* within it, as it included iSchool faculty and NCSA staff) for approximately \$5M over the course of 5 years, which was eventually executed not as a grant but as a cooperative agreement. We worked closely with Tamara in developing the budget for the proposal, which spanned at least five institutions (it may have been more) and required a combination of collaborative proposal submission and subawards. Furthermore, the proposal itself had an incredible number of letters of collaboration, senior personnel, and the like; after the discussion with the program officer began and we proceeded toward a cooperative agreement, this number dwindled, but at the submission stage it was overwhelming. Tamara worked with us, up to and including the very last minute, to ensure compliance and to develop our budget in accordance with the other collaborators and their institutions, who often had their own policies that did not entirely align with the policies of the University of Illinois. Through all of this, she was kind, extremely professional and exceptionally efficient. The cooperative agreement was eventually awarded, and we worked with her repeatedly during the rebudgeting process to ensure that the needs of the project and the restrictions and guidelines of the NSF were both adequately met.

The final experience I would like to share is the submission of my NSF CAREER award last summer. I should note up front that I did not receive this grant, but that rests exclusively with me. Tamara, under time crunch (from me and others) worked with me to address issues with the proposal, the postdoc mentoring plan, and the letters of support up to the very last minute. While this may sound pedestrian (preparing a grant against a deadline), I share this because she was extremely supportive in the preparation of this grant, ensuring that we were able to make the deadline, and identifying strategies for task delegation to make that goal. It demonstrated her commitment to helping develop the best possible representation of the work being done at the University, not just on my behalf, but on behalf of the other researchers here as well.

While these three vignettes are perhaps the most memorable of the times I have worked with Tamara, I must stress that they are not the only positive things that I have to share. I have had countless interactions with her where she has dealt with other institutions interpreting grant procedures differently than Illinois, or where we have had to quickly reformat a document, or identify a different tactic for approaching a given funding opportunity. During each of these, she has been a source of enthusiasm, genuine kindness, and – frankly – she is one of the highlights of the iSchool workplace. She seeks out the opportunity to talk to faculty and staff about the grants they are pursuing (or have been awarded), and she goes far beyond the standard level of engagement with PIs and other individuals at the iSchool, and at NCSA before that. Despite the large number of grants that she and the research services team guide through the proposal stage, and more to the point the constant pressure I can only imagine she is under, she is always



cheerful, engaging, and thoughtful. It is inspiring to work with her, not only because of the way in which she engages with other individuals, but the clear pride and skill with which she engages with her work.

I can think of absolutely no one on campus I have more enjoyed working with or who I would *trust* working with on development of projects than Tamara Roosevelt. She is truly an outstanding collaborator and colleague, and she has undeniably contributed to the fulfillment of the mission of the University of Illinois. I cannot recommend her more strongly for recognition by Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share what a positive impact she has had on my time at the University.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew J. Turk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Dr. Matthew J. Turk  
Assistant Professor





## SPONSORED PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION

1901 S. First St., Suite A, MC-685  
Champaign, IL 61820-7406

July 30, 2020

RE: SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee,

I am pleased to provide this letter in support of Tamara Roosevelt's nomination for the 2020 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Tamara and I began our university careers together in March 2008 as Visiting Grants and Contracts Specialists in the Grants and Contracts Office, which is now known as Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA). While Tamara ventured out to campus and I remained in SPA, we have continued to work together over these past twelve years. Tamara is a trusted colleague, a valued collaborator, and a dedicated, knowledgeable, outstanding research administrator.

In our current roles, Tamara and I collaborate on the post-award management of the iSchool's NSF and IMLS award portfolios. Whether we're working through a cost share issue, invoicing challenges, or researching policies surrounding the allowability of specific costs, Tamara tackles problems head-on. She asks great questions, is always open to hearing different perspectives, and puts in the time to research and understand issues on her own.

I am especially grateful for Tamara's willingness to share her knowledge and expertise with colleagues across campus as an instructor in the SPaRC'Ed program. In recent years, Tamara and I, along with others, have collaborated to develop curriculum for, and then to present two courses in the SPaRC'Ed Research Administration Certification Series. Both the NSF Lifecycle course, which was part of the 2018-2019 SPaRC'Ed series, and the Financial Administration I course, which was revised and presented during the 2019-2020 series, were very successful, well-received, and highly rated courses. This was due, in large part, to Tamara's willingness to share the knowledge and experience that she has gained working in SPA and on campus. Tamara is a dynamic, confident, and knowledgeable presenter. The "crowd" loved her energetic, straight-forward presentation style and her willingness to share real-life examples and stories.

I enthusiastically support Tamara's nomination for the 2020 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. She is one of my most trusted colleagues and a highly respected member of the University of Illinois research administration community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah J. Lorbiecki".

Sarah J Lorbiecki  
Assistant Director, Federal Awards

31 July 2020

Dear Committee:

It is with the greatest pleasure and even more enthusiasm that I nominate our extraordinary Senior Grants and Contracts Coordinator, Tamara Roosevelt, for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Ms Roosevelt joined the Research Services team at the School of Information Sciences in January 2018. Prior to joining the iSchool, Ms Roosevelt was delivering outstanding research administration service at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (2014-2018), Engineering (2011-2014) and, UIUC Grants and Contracts (2008-2011). At each unit Tamara has consistently made significant and truly praiseworthy service contributions.

As you can see in the accompanying letters of support written by Professor Bertram Ludaescher, Assistant Professor Matthew Turk, and Assistant Director—NSF Awards, Sara Lorbiccki, Ms Roosevelt's exemplary dedication and high service standards have earned the respect and admiration of colleagues across campus units. That this nomination was initiated by Ms Roosevelt's Research Services co-workers provides compelling evidence of her excellence in leadership and remarkable collegiality.

Ms Roosevelt reports directly to me as Associate Dean for Research. Ms Roosevelt represents all that an administrator could ever want in a colleague: reliability, expertise, professionalism, thoughtfulness, flexibility, vision, and energy. Over the past two years, Ms Roosevelt has become my key partner in planning for, and building out, a Research Services office that actually delivers highest-standard services to our stakeholders, while at the same time ensuring that all compliance rules and administrative policies are met. The iSchool is undergoing a period of unprecedented growth; it is only with the guidance, leadership, and support of Ms Roosevelt that Research Services has been able to successfully manage our ever-expanding portfolio of funded (and some unfunded) projects. Not only is the number of projects expanding, but the iSchool's truly interdisciplinary portfolio is becoming more diverse with respect to funders (e.g., National Science Foundation, Mellon Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Sloan Foundation, etc.) and deliverables. It is Ms Roosevelt that ensures each project receives the necessary attention to detail unique to each project's particular circumstances. It is directly a result of Ms Roosevelt's expert oversight and service-first work ethic that the iSchool can successfully participate in bigger and more complex projects.

Not only has Ms Roosevelt been working diligently to improve all aspects of Research Services at the iSchool, she has also been reaching out to others to share her research administration experiences, expertise, and insights. In March 2019, Ms Roosevelt co-presented a well-received session, *NSF Cooperative Agreements: Post-Award Administration*, at the National Council of Research Administrators (NCURA) annual meeting in Las Vegas. Ms Roosevelt was part of a team that taught the SPaRC'Ed *NSF Lifecycle* course (2018-2019), and then the *Financial Administration* course (2019-2020). For the *Financial Administration* course, a post-course survey showed 96% of respondents ranked the overall quality of the course **above average** or **excellent**. According to Assistant Director, Kamil Tamimie, "That's a very impressive ranking and among some of the highest we have had this year for SPaRC'Ed!"

In summary, Ms Roosevelt is an exceptionally effective Senior Grant and Contracts Coordinator. Ms Roosevelt's commitment to service excellence is nothing short of inspirational. The University and the iSchool are both all the stronger for having Ms Roosevelt as part of our administrative leadership.

Sincerely,



J. Stephen Downie  
Professor and Associate Dean for Research  
School of Information Sciences