University of Wisconsin-Madison
Plan for NIH IDP Requirement

Background

On July 23, 2013, the NIH released NOT-OD-13-093, encouraging institutions to require graduate students and postdoctoral researchers (including scholars, trainees and fellows, and individuals in other postdoctoral positions) supported by NIH grants to develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs); this applies regardless of the NIH funding type. All progress reports should begin reporting on or after October 1, 2014 using the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). Reports should include an outline of current practices documenting how IDPs are used. It is hoped the use of IDPs will prepare graduate students and postdoctoral researchers for careers in the United States biomedical workforce.

In response to the notice from NIH, a work group was formed (facilitated by the Graduate School) to explore how those affected wanted to guide a campus response. Participants determined guiding principles including: using this opportunity to improve mentoring for graduate students and postdocs, utilizing existing IDP expertise on campus, and developing resources to minimize administrative burden.

Individual Development Plans

IDPs are written plans that give mentees ownership and structure to assess their skills, interests, and values, define clear and actionable goals, explore career options, and facilitate conversations with their mentor(s). IDP forms vary greatly, although many are structured around core competencies or learning outcomes. The onus for writing, maintaining, and implementing the plan is on the mentee, and conversations with and feedback from the mentor(s) are essential.

University of Wisconsin-Madison NIH IDP Policy

UW-Madison recommends all graduate students and postdoctoral researchers utilize Individual Development Plans to set academic and career goals and facilitate conversations with their mentor(s). Beginning October 1, 2014, all graduate students and postdoctoral researchers supported by NIH funding are required to have an IDP.
Tools

The Graduate School will identify individuals who must complete an IDP and will notify them of tools and resources available. The Graduate School will offer graduate students, postdocs, and PIs tools to track IDP progress.

Visit http://www.grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp to find:

- The IDP template for graduate student and postdoc mentees
- Guidelines and other supporting resources for mentors and mentees
- Resources for PIs and grants administrators, including the IDP Tracking Tool

Questions

If you have questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact Bill Barker, Director, Research Policy, 608-262-0558, barker@grad.wisc.edu. Questions or concerns regarding resources or tools should be directed to Alissa Ewer, Assistant Dean, Professional Development and Engagement, at aewer@grad.wisc.edu or call 608-262-9970.

Martin Cadwallader, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

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Date: 7/1/14

Dan Uhlrich, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Policy

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Date: 7/1/2014