



# Research and Graduate School Digest

BE BOLD. Shape the Future.

August 2019

## RESEARCH

### Please Spend Your Grant Money!

The two key performance indicators (KPIs) for LEADS 2025 Goal 2, **Elevate Research** and **Creative Activity**, are:

1. **Science & Engineering research and development expenditures, and**
2. **Non-Science & Engineering research and development expenditures.**

By 2025, the former must reach \$120 million per year, the latter \$4.5 million per year. It is important to distinguish between awards and expenditures at NMSU. To paraphrase terminology in Grants.gov, awards include grants and other agreements in the form of money or property in lieu of money by a sponsor to NMSU (actually the Board of Regents of NMSU). It is the subsequent expenditure of those research awards, divided into science and engineering and non-science and engineering categories, which constitute Goal 2 KPIs.

In recent years, academic institutions and, in particular, academic research institutions have been singled out by politicians and segments of the public for out-of-control costs. Faculty are often cartooned as lacking business savvy and not using public funds wisely and efficiently.

I am now into my 14<sup>th</sup> year as an associate dean for research, associate vice president for research, or vice president for research. During that time, I can count on both hands the number of PIs who overspent their grant funds. Yet, I still have nightmares over the number of PIs who failed to spend their moneys in a timely fashion. I lose sleep



Dr. Luis Cifuentes, Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate School, New Mexico State University

because not knowing how to spend grant awards is as fundamental an impediment to achieving R1 status and, consequently, many of the objectives of Goal 2, as is not receiving grant awards to begin with.

Why? Because a grant award does not count as an expenditure until it is spent. Furthermore, it is impossible to achieve the objectives of a grant or contract without expending the funds required by the project. Unspent grant funds lead to unmet grant goals, which compromise the chances of receiving future grant awards.

The message for this month, simply put, is to **SPEND your grant funds properly and in a timely fashion**. If you are a new PI without knowledge of how to properly manage an award, reach out to someone in your unit who has experience or to one of our capable Research Administrative Services staff in the office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate School. By doing so you will likely improve the quality of your research project and positively impact Goal 2 KPIs.

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## NMSU's iCREDITS Project Receives \$5 Million Additional NSF CREST Funding

NMSU's **Center of Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST) Smart grid (iCREDITS)** project Phase II was recently awarded \$5 million by the National Science Foundation to research scalable approaches to realizing microgrids that are secure, reliable, and resilient. CREST's PIs Enrico Pontelli, Huiping Cao, Satyajayant Misra, Satishkumar Randade, and Loui Reyes will strive to become a leader in the creation of sustainable, integrated and comprehensive learning pathways in customer-centric distribution microgrid and critical cyberphysical systems. Critical to the Center's success will be expanding the research and training pipeline for underrepresented minorities by introducing specialized mentoring and retention mechanisms.



Dr. Enrico Pontelli, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, New Mexico State University

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## Engaging with Federal Agencies and Congress: NMSU Collaboration with Lewis-Burke Associates LLC

Over the last year, the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) has identified, invested in, and disseminated resources and opportunities to enhance NMSU's federal impact, including positioning for federal funding and increasing faculty interface with federal agencies through activities like the PI Academy. Together with **Lewis-Burke Associates LLC** (Lewis-Burke), NMSU's Washington, D.C.,-based federal government relations and lobbying firm, we will continue to advance the University's strategic research and federal policy goals by providing resources to individual faculty, centers and colleges, and University-wide efforts.

In that respect, Lewis-Burke provides consistent updates on the federal funding landscape, including analyses on federal budget and appropriations that ultimately impact our researchers and inform best practices for engaging federal program officers. With this week's news of a potential budget agreement and ongoing fiscal year (FY) 2020 appropriations debates, Lewis-Burke recommends that investigators communicate with their program officers now to prepare for the end of the fiscal year on September 30. These conversations can include both the best and worst case scenarios: opportunities for supplemental funding, preparation for a continuing resolution or shutdown, and generally how program officers are considering funding for the coming months and year.

For nearly fifteen years, NMSU has retained Lewis-Burke Associates LLC (Lewis-Burke) to represent the University at the federal level, including Congress and the Administration. The firm's approach couples government relations strategies with research development, supporting both the NMSU Offices of Government Relations and the Vice President for Research. With



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approximately 30 policy professionals, Lewis-Burke's expertise covers the breadth of federal funding agencies.

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## **Rebecca Palacios to Represent NMSU in Mountain West CTR-IN**

Dr. Rebecca Palacios, Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences has been selected to represent NMSU in the Community Engagement and Outreach (CEO) Core of the Mountain West Clinical and Translational Research-Infrastructure Network (CTR-IN).

Funded by the NIH Institutional Development Award program, the CTR-IN program supports faculty members across 13 Mountain West university partners in clinical and translational research. The support includes up to \$60,000 competitive seed funding for single-PI pilot projects; up to \$100,000 for collaborative pilot efforts; and offering resources such as mentors, biostatistics, epidemiology, and research and design consultations.

NMSU is one of the 13 institutions across seven states that are part of the Mountain West CTR-IN and since its inception, a number of our faculty have been successful in garnering funding for their clinical and translational research projects focused on health disparities.

As a member of the CTR-IN's CEO, Dr. Palacios will support NMSU and regions' constituents in advancing community-engagement research along the clinical and translational pathway from concept to results dissemination. What makes Dr. Palacios uniquely qualified for this position is her 20 years of experience in conducting community health research in the southwest border region. Dr. Palacios' research areas are at the intersection of public health and cancer prevention, and promotion of healthy lifestyle. She has been a Co-Principal Investigator on two research projects under the NMSU-Fred Hutch Partnership for the Advancement of Cancer Research, a U54 grant funded by the National Cancer



Dr. Rebecca Palacios, Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences, College of Health and Social Services (photo by Darren Phillips)

Institute. In a pilot project, she conducted a qualitative assessment of the experiences of Hispanic mothers diagnosed with cancer while concurrently parenting a young child. She used the results of this work to tailor an evidence-based cancer intervention for Hispanic mothers diagnosed with cancer. This pilot work led to a clinical trial, which is currently testing the efficacy of the culturally adapted cancer intervention. Her Taking Time to Connect (TTTC) Study is the first clinical trial conducted at NMSU and is testing two cancer education programs called Conexiones and Taking Time to see which is most effective in reducing maternal and child distress related to a mother's cancer diagnosis.

In addition to conducting research, Dr. Palacios is also the Principal Investigator of the Outreach Core for U54 NMSU-Fred Hutch Partnership and hosted its 5th Annual Small Grants Program designed to promote Community-Academic Partnerships in Research on July 29th and 30th. This workshop offered two-days of grant-writing training and brought members of the community and NMSU faculty together to explore health-related collaborations.

The upcoming Mountain West CTR-IN's call for pilot proposals is expected to be released in January 2020. For more information about this funding opportunity, please contact Hamid Mansouri Rad, at [hamid@nmsu.edu](mailto:hamid@nmsu.edu), NMSU's CTR-IN Concierge or Ms. Cindy Ramirez, at [cindyram@nmsu.edu](mailto:cindyram@nmsu.edu) Proposal Development Specialist at Research Administration Services.

#### Mountain West CTR-IN Members

- University of Alaska – Anchorage
- University of Alaska – Fairbanks
- University of Hawaii – Manoa
- Boise State University
- Idaho State University
- University of Idaho
- Montana State University
- University of Montana
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (host)
- University of Nevada Reno, including the
- University of Nevada School of Medicine
- New Mexico State University
- University of New Mexico
- University of Wyoming

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## Funding opportunity: Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (DEPSCoR)

**DEPSCoR program** solicits science and engineering research proposals relevant to the DoD's mission and important national security. DEPSCoR program objectives include:

- enhancing the capabilities of institutions of higher education (IHE) in eligible States and Territories (including New Mexico) to develop, plan, and execute science and S&E research that is relevant to the mission of the DoD and competitive under the peer-review systems used for awarding Federal research assistance;
- increasing the number of university researchers in eligible States/Territories capable of performing S&E research responsive to the needs of the DoD; and
- increasing the probability of long-term growth in the competitively awarded financial assistance that IHE in eligible States/Territories receive from the Federal Government for S&E research.

Proposals responding to this program **require collaboration between a qualified non-previously DoD-funded, full-time faculty (PI) and a co-PI/mentor who has previously been funded by DoD in the past seven years.**

### Deadlines:

- AcquaTrak registration: 11:59 PM ET October 18, 2019
- White Paper and Supporting Documentation: 11:59PM ET October 25, 2019
- Full proposal (by invitation only): 11:59 PM ET March 20, 2020.

For additional information, please contact [Proposal Development Group](#) within the Office of Research Administration.



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## Updating ARGIS in a Timely Manner

The **Academic Research and Grant Information System (ARGIS)** is utilized by NMSU's research community to track Proposal submissions, Awards received and to monitor/archive Deliverable requirements. The Vice President for Research provides various on-going reports to the Board of Regents, Chancellor Arvizu and President Floros based on data derived from ARGIS. It is imperative for PIs and Research Centers to enter all Proposals into ARGIS to ensure accurate reporting data.

In an effort to ensure the correct data is captured, beginning August 1, Research Administration Services (RAS) will allow a one-week grace period for the entry of Proposal data into ARGIS. In cases where a Proposal is submitted and RAS is pending an ARGIS record, upon one week, Grants and Contracts Administrators in RAS will enter Proposal data into ARGIS on behalf of PIs and/or Research Centers. The ARGIS record will be released for routing and it is the responsibility of the PI and/or Research Center to ensure the information in the record is correct.



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## Proposal Fundability: How to Submit More Impactful Proposals

NMSU's Assistant VP for Research Administration, Alisha Giron, presented a talk on "Proposal Fundability" at the Border Water Solutions: Proposal Planning Workshop held on August 1-2 on NMSU campus. The planning workshop was organized by the [New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute](#) in collaboration with the Border Solutions Alliance and the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. Ms. Giron discussed important fundability criteria such as eligibility, project characteristics, institutional and team capabilities, management, compliance and



Ms. Alisha Giron, Assistant VP, Research Administration presenting at the Border Water Solutions conference at NMSU.

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budgets. "NMSU submits approximately 600 proposals a year and it's significant to witness that some of these proposals don't succeed not due to their scientific merits but other issues" says Ms. Giron. "We encourage NMSU faculty and researchers to begin working on their proposals as early as possible and take advantage of our Proposal Development Group (PDG) within the Office of Research Administration Services to improve their chances of success." For more information about the PDG please visit <https://ras.nmsu.edu>.

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## Funding Opportunities for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars

Office of Research Administration Services (RAS) now assists with developing and submitting funding applications for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. Those interested in locating funding opportunities are encouraged to use NMSU's **Pivot** and visit the **list of available opportunities** maintained by RAS staff on a daily basis. For more information about these opportunities, please send email to Ms. Chong-Hwey Fee at [fee@nmsu.edu](mailto:fee@nmsu.edu). To receive periodic announcements on funding opportunities for graduate students or postdoctoral scholars, **please register** with the Proposal Development Group.



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## Limited Submission Funding Opportunities

The Proposal Development Group at RAS lists limited submission funding opportunities at <https://limitedsubmission.nmsu.edu>. We do encourage faculty and staff to take advantage of NMSU's **Pivot** as a tool to locate funding opportunities, however, they are advised to also visit the limited submission website to sign up for opportunities they wish to pursue. For more information send email to [ls-ras@nmsu.edu](mailto:ls-ras@nmsu.edu).



## NMSU/LANL Joint Workshop on Food, Energy, and Water Systems

New Mexico State University and Los Alamos National Laboratories are pleased to host the 2019 Regional Academic Collaboration (ReACT) workshop on Food, Energy, and Water Systems on August 13-14 here on NMSU campus. Registration for the workshop is required, but free. The event is organized around five topics:

- FEWS Infrastructure
- Data Science Application in FEWS
- Resource Monitoring and Prediction
- Advanced Materials Technologies for FEWS
- Societal Impact and Security Threat

To register for this conference, visit [react.nmsu.edu](http://react.nmsu.edu).



## GRADUATE SCHOOL

### SLATE: Graduate Admissions System for NMSU

The Graduate School is working diligently towards creating the smoothest possible transition to the SLATE system with the ultimate goal of implementation by September 1, 2019.

We are busy building admission requirement templates for the 68 NMSU graduate programs, double checking the information for accuracy, beginning the process of preparation for beta testing with the final phase of uploading these instructional templates into the SLATE system. Once this is completed we will be engaging in training our staff and Graduate Program Coordinators, along with those designated by each graduate program as the decision-makers for the admission application process.

This process will result in making the processing of applications easier through such features as



Dr. Luis Vazquez, Associate Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

checklists, emailing students directly from their applications and being able to see when students are engaged as they open and view their emails. It is a user friendly system that through the participation by the Graduate School and the Graduate programs in the 4 Cs: communication, cooperation, collaboration and consistency of information with each graduate program's website will contribute to making NMSU the University of Choice for Graduate Education.

## Graduate Admission Processing Deadlines for Fall 2019

Students planning to be admitted into a degree program for Fall 2019 will need to apply by August 12<sup>th</sup>. Students that are looking to apply for Fall 2019 as either non-degree or using the undeclared status must apply by August 16<sup>th</sup>.

AUGUST 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		<small>July 2019</small> <small>Su M Tu We Th Fr Sa</small> <small>1 2 3 4 5 6</small> <small>7 8 9 10 11 12 13</small> <small>14 15 16 17 18 19 20</small> <small>21 22 23 24 25 26 27</small> <small>28 29 30 31</small>		<small>September 2019</small> <small>Su M Tu We Th Fr Sa</small> <small>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8</small> <small>9 10 11 12 13 14 15</small> <small>16 17 18 19 20 21 22</small> <small>23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30</small>		<small>Calendars by Veritas42.com</small> <small>© 2018 Veritas42 LLC. Free to print.</small>

## Fees for Degree Application | Graduate Certificate and Late Fees Rise

Starting Fall 2019, graduate students will be paying \$45 for a degree | certificate application, and the late fee will be \$50.

Please note that the degree | certificate application cannot be waived, refunded or carried to a future semester.

Students that are admitted into a graduate certificate program will also utilize the degree application system online in order to apply to have the certificate awarded.

The information is hosted on the commencement website from the office that handles the degree | certificate

applications: <https://commencement.nmsu.edu/apply-to-graduate>.



## Graduate Faculty Status Reminder

Is your Graduate Faculty status about to expire? You can check by visiting: <https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/graduate-faculty>

Steps to obtain graduate faculty status or renew membership:

- Submit vitae or resume to department head.
- Department head writes a memo outlining nominees qualifications.
- The memo and vitae/resume are routed through the dean of the College to the dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Council sub-committee for graduate faculty.
- Approved appointments are generally 3-5 years or for the period of the student's committee.



## New Graduate Student Orientation will be held August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

NMSU will be welcoming new graduate students at the New Graduate Student Orientation. The orientation will provide new students information to help them through their time here at NMSU. The Graduate School will be webcasting and recording this event, and will send out more information soon.



## Graduate Deadlines

If you have a graduate student planning to graduate in Fall 2019, please see the deadlines at: [https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/graduate\\_calendar](https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/graduate_calendar)

Date	Action Item
July 8	File your Application for Degree / Certificate at <a href="https://my.nmsu.edu">my.nmsu.edu</a> * Complete the Application for Degree for the current term. If an application for a previous semester was submitted, but the degree was not awarded, a new application is required.
June 21	Deadline to submit dissertation titles to the Graduate School *This is for doctoral degrees only.
June 24	Deadline to turn in the Final Exam Form for thesis, dissertation or Professional/Doctorate exams

**Upcoming Events**

- July 1 (Thu)** Deadline to read your Thesis/ Diss.
- July 12 (Mon)** Deadline to Register for Fall
- July 20 (Tue)** 6:00 pm New Graduate Student Orientation @ Clabett Center Ball Room
- July 21 (Wed)** First day of Fall Classes 2019
- July 22 (Thu)** Last Day to Add a Course without