

NCI CONNECTS

Committee ON NCI-Extramural Communication Tools and Support

New Grantee Workshop

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Why a Committee on NCI-Extramural Communication?

DCCPS Leadership identified a need to enhance NCI efforts to communicate effectively with our grantees.

In 2020, a working group (WG) was created to prioritize NCI-extramural communication.

The WG has met throughout 2020 and 2021 to create and implement plans for carrying out the group's mission and develop a sustainable plan for the future.



CONNECTS Co-Chairs

Gary Ellison (EGRP)
Susan Czajkowski (BRP)
Scott Rogers* (EGRP)

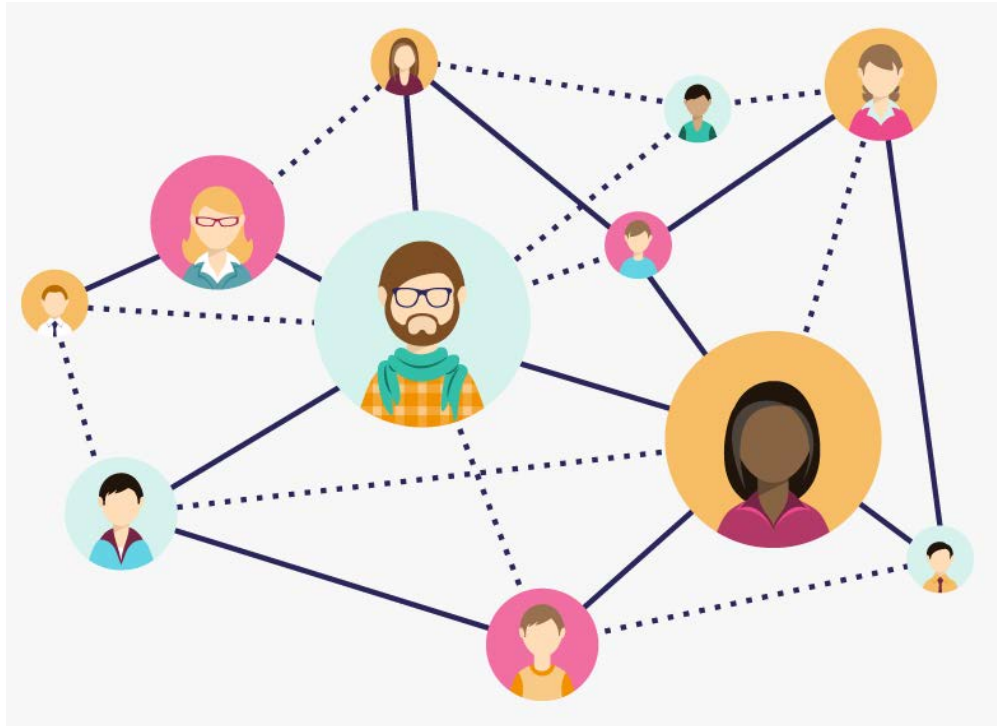
CONNECTS Members

Ali Abazeed (OD)
Janet de Moor (HDRP)
Rose Mills (SRP)
Deborah Greenberg (BRP)
Tommie McKoy (BRP)
Serban Negoita (SRP)
April Oh (IS)
Robin Vanderpool (BRP)

ICF Support

David Vaughan and Cindy Auten

* Interim Co-Chair during Gary Ellison's NIEHS detail



CONNECTS Mission

This WG will develop a ***suite of activities aimed at promoting exceptional levels of staff and investigator engagement, and satisfaction with NCI's grant-related communication and outreach policies, practices, and tools.*** To do this, we will:

1. Develop methods for assessing satisfaction with and ways to improve DCCPS communication practices, grant policy dissemination efforts, and related resources and tools among both the NCI-supported extramural investigator community and Program Directors/Analysts who communicate with grantees.
2. Optimize and/or develop new policies, procedures, tools, and resources that respond to extramural scientists' and Program Directors' feedback.
3. Initiate a system to periodically assess satisfaction, elicit feedback, and respond with changes to promote and maintain exceptional levels of engagement, satisfaction, and customer service that meet the needs of both NCI's investigator community and Program Directors.

Current and Future CONNECTS WG Activities

- A survey for DCCPS Staff about the extramural community's experiences and information needs
- A fact sheet for investigators on communicating with DCCPS staff during the grants process
- A motion graphics video highlighting the key features of the fact sheet
- A suite of additional activities comprising additional fact sheets and diversity outreach to investigator communities, including underrepresented and minority scientists

Survey Purpose

1. Understand how well DCCPS communicates with the extramural community.
2. Understand the needs of the extramural community.
3. Identify valuable tools and resources to communicate more effectively with the extramural community.

Survey Recommendations and Next Steps

- **Encourage and increase the amount of communication and engagement between DCCPS program directors and the extramural community to help**
 1. Improve the understanding of the different grant mechanisms, processes, and roles and responsibilities of those involved.
 2. Increase the transparency around the grants process and what makes for a successful application.
 3. Identify and recognize the different challenges experienced by investigators at various points in their careers.
- **DCCPS can do the following to address the points above:**
 1. Gather information from the extramural community and assess the needs of the community.
 2. Provide training for staff to empower them and build confidence to more successfully engage with the community.
 3. Conduct trainings for the extramural community.
 4. Enhance the websites to make information easier to find and more accessible.
 5. Create more opportunities for engagement between Program Directors and investigators.

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Newly Developed Materials

NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE
Division of Cancer Control & Population Sciences

Whom Should I Contact About the Grant Funding Process?

Here are the best people to contact at different stages of the process. **Time is of the essence!** Start your preparation at least a year from idea conception to application submission.

DCCPS PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Contact a **DCCPS program director** to ask about:

BEFORE APPLYING

- DCCPS funding opportunities, initiatives, and programs
- Resources available from the NIH/NCI
- Eligibility, mechanisms, and requirements for funding
- Information on policies or guidelines
- New scientific directions for an institute or program

AFTER SUBMISSION AND SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

You may also want to talk to a program director about the outcome of the review once the summary statement is available, usually 4–6 weeks after the study section meeting is completed.

eRA HELP DESK

Contact the **electronic Research Administration (eRA) Help Desk** at era.nih.gov to ask about:

- Submitting the online application
- Managing information on the eRA Commons

SCIENTIFIC REVIEW OFFICER

Ask a **Scientific review Officer** for:

- Specific expertise for review of your application
- Ways to avoid reviewer assignment conflicts
- Information about post-submission materials
 - * Revised budget page(s)
 - * Biographical sketches for changes in key personnel
 - * Additional letters of support
 - * News of an article accepted for publication since submission

Before you apply

Learn how NIH approaches grant funding and how your research may fit within DCCPS research and funding priorities. Explore DCCPS funding opportunities, scope, eligibility requirements, and submission deadlines.

Ensure that your research is original, understand your organization's internal grant submission procedures, and prepare to write a competitive application.

Speak with a program director to discuss how your research may align with NCI strategic priorities, clarify questions about funding opportunity announcements, learn about NIH pre-submission policies and procedures, coordinate pre-application meetings, and get general information about current peer review standards as well as appropriate funding mechanisms.

Reaching out

- 📧 Always email the program director first to request information or to schedule a phone call to discuss your research idea (aims), application, or grant.
- 📞 Send him or her a one-page summary of your specific aims or an abstract in advance of the call, and come prepared with specific questions to ask during the call.
- 📞 Calls typically last 15–30 minutes, so line up your questions! Sending your project information ahead of time can help you spend more time asking key questions.

Writing your application

Prepare, write, and **submit your application early!** Start your preparation at least a year from idea conception to application submission.

Search our funding opportunities and visit often to check for new listings. Learn more about our research portfolio at cancercontrol.cancer.gov/current_research.html.

- “How to talk to a Program Director” one-pager
- “How to talk to a Program Director” video
- “Meet the Program Directors” series

“Meet the Program Directors” Pilot Video

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Short- and Long-term goals for CONNECTS

- Collect feedback from investigators about their needs.
- Improve the understanding of the different grant mechanisms, processes, and roles and responsibilities of those involved.
- Increase the transparency around the grants process and what makes for a successful application.
- Advance racial equity and social justice in cancer care and research by supporting the ongoing efforts across DCCPS.
- Conduct trainings for the extramural community and staff and record them for on-demand viewing.
- Enhance the websites to make information easier to find and more accessible.

We welcome your input!

THANK YOU!



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cancer.gov • cancer.gov/espanol • cancer.gov/news-events/nca50