NCI CONNECTS

Committee **ON** **N**CI-**E**xtramural **C**ommunication **T**ools and **S**upport

New Grantee Workshop

Susan Czajkowski
David Vaughan

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NIH **NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE**

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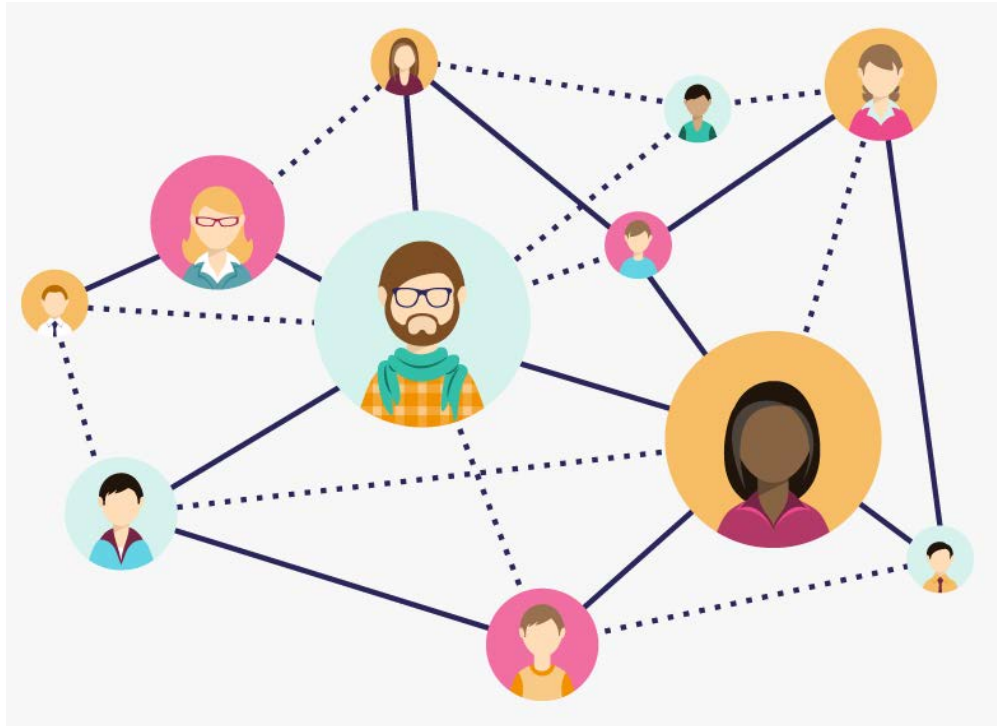Susan Czajkowski (BRP)
Scott Rogers* (EGRP)

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

- "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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