PI Certification of Assurances

New "Certify" activity in Huron Grants (to be implemented in the Huron Grants v.10.5 upgrade)

The University of Central Florida and the University of Central Florida Research Foundation, Inc. (applicant organization) are required to secure and retain written assurance at the organization from the Principal Investigator (PI) prior to submitting an application for assistance. ***(Note: For multi-PI submissions, an assurance must be retained for the primary PI through the HRS Certify activity. All other named PIs on the project will need to provide a pdf version of their assurance.)*** This written assurance requires the organization to secure:

- PI certification of assurances for each Funding Proposal record (FP) and submitted application.
- Retain the assurance and make available to the sponsoring agency or other authorized Health and Human Services (HHS) or Federal officials upon request.

Pre-Award Business Process:

To enhance efficiency and streamline our processes, the Principal Investigator (PI) assurance, which has traditionally been documented through a PDF form, is now transitioning into a system-tracked task. This transition is part of an ongoing effort to modernize and improve our business process. The PI will now certify each proposal by completing the Certify activity in the HRS funding proposal record, replacing the previous pdf form submission. This move to a system-tracked task not only aligns with our commitment to innovation but also ensures better tracking, auditing, and compliance with federal regulations.

To meet this requirement, a new "Certify" activity has been implemented in the Huron Grants Suite funding proposal record to allow the PI to certify a proposal in HRS. PIs will be able to complete the certification of assurances throughout the following states in the funding proposal record:

- ➢ DRAFT
- ➢ Department Review
- ➢ Department Review: Pending Changes by PI
- ➢ Specialist Review
- ➢ Specialist Review: Pending Changes by PI
- ➢ Pending Submission to Sponsor

This process ensures that the PI's certification is systematically checked at various stages of proposal preparation and review, with clear procedures for handling incomplete certifications to maintain compliance with requirements and deadlines.

Principal Investigator (PI) /Unit Administrator

Proposal Preparation

- The PI should certify each proposal submitted to the Office of Research by completing the Certify activity in the HRS funding proposal record.
- The unit research administrator will verify during the departmental review that the Certify activity has been completed by the PI. If the Certify activity is not completed during the departmental review, the unit administrator will request the PI to complete the certification before submitting to the Office of Research (OR) for initial review.
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Office of Research

Initial Review

- The OR Proposal Specialist will check during the initial review to confirm that the PI has completed the Certify activity.
- If the PI certification is incomplete, the OR Proposal Specialist will include a note in their initial review comments prior to returning the funding proposal to the department for changes. The Certify activity will not be subject to the 5-day rule compliance if the activity has not been completed at initial review.

Final Review

- The OR Proposal Specialist will confirm that the Certify activity has been completed by the PI.
- If the sponsor deadline approaches and certification is incomplete, the proposal specialist will consult with the unit administrator to determine next steps for compliance. Proposal submission and/or award setup may be delayed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. If the PI does not complete the Certify activity prior to the 5-day rule deadline, should the unit still submit to OR?

   If the proposal is complete and ready for specialist review (other than the PI's certification), the proposal should be routed to OR for initial review. The Proposal Specialist will request the PI complete the Certify activity in their initial review comments.

2. If the PI does not complete the Certify activity before the record routes for Specialist Review, will the funding proposal record be tagged for non-compliance with the 5-day rule?

   No, the funding proposal record will not be flagged/tagged for non-compliance with the 5-day rule (or 2-day) solely because the Certify activity is incomplete.

3. If the Certify activity is not complete by the sponsor deadline, will the proposal still be submitted?

At final review, the Proposal Specialist will work with the unit administrator to secure the PI's certification prior to submitting the proposal. This may cause delays in submission and OR cannot guarantee the successful submission of the proposal if the PI's certification is not received before the deadline.

Every attempt should be made to obtain the PI's certification prior to the sponsor deadline, or in extreme cases, immediately thereafter.

4. If the proposal has been submitted and the record state has changed to "Pending Sponsor Review" can the PI still complete the assurances?

The Certify activity will be available during the DRAFT through Pending Submission to Sponsor states. If the funding proposal record state moves to "Pending Sponsor Review" the Certify activity will no longer be available for the PI to complete. The PI should follow-up with the unit/OR for next steps on fulfilling this requirement.

5. If PI assurances are still missing at award, will the award be setup?

The requirement is in place to ensure that the applicant organization has a documented commitment from the PI. This commitment is obtained at the time of proposal submission and serves specific purposes, including auditing and compliance.

The written assurance from the PI is not only a formality but is crucial for auditing and compliance purposes. The organization must have a clear record of the PI's commitment to meet certain standards, regulations, and ethical considerations associated with the proposed research or project. The process is designed to ensure compliance with federal regulations. This is particularly important when seeking federal assistance, as adherence to established guidelines is mandatory.

Therefore, any non-compliance to completing the Certify activity may result in delays to your award acceptance and setup by the university.

6. If the PI certifies in HRS, will he/she still need to provide an endorsement on the proposal submission form?

Completion of the assurances in HRS eliminates the requirement for OR to have the PI endorsements on the HRS proposal submission form.