PI Certification Business Process

CERTIFY ACTIVITY IN HURON GRANTS

The University of Central Florida Board of Trustees and the University of Central Florida Research Foundation, Inc. (UCF applicant entities) are required to secure and retain written assurances from the Principal Investigator (PI) prior to submitting an application for sponsored funding. For multi-PI submissions, assurances must be retained for the primary PI through the HRS Certify activity. All other named PIs (i.e., co-PIs) will need to provide their assurances separately (e.g., via PDF attachment).

Specifically, the applicant organization must:

- Collect PI certification of assurances for each submitted application.
- Retain the certification and make it available to the sponsoring agency or other Federal officials upon request.

PRE-AWARD BUSINESS PROCESS

The Principal Investigator (PI) assurances will be captured electronically in the HRS Grants Funding Proposal (FP) record. The PI will certify each proposal by completing the Certify activity in the FP record. This ensures tracking, auditing, and compliance with federal regulations.

On the FP Workspace, there is a "Certify" activity 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 FP 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal Investigator (PI) / Unit Research Administrator

Proposal Preparation

- The PI should certify each proposal submitted to the Office of Research (OR) by completing the Certify activity in the HRS Funding Proposal record.
- The Unit Research Administrator will verify during the Department Review stage that the Certify activity has been completed by the PI.
- If the Certify activity has not been completed, the unit administrator should request that the PI complete the certification as soon as possible. While the proposal may proceed to OR for Initial Review, certification must be completed prior to proposal submission.

Office of Research

Initial Review

- The OR Proposal Specialist will check during the Initial Review stage 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 requesting that the PI complete the Certify activity before the proposal is returned for Final Review and submission. The Certify activity is not subject to the 5-Day Rule but must be complete in order to submit a proposal.

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 remains incomplete, the Proposal Specialist will work with the unit administrator to obtain the required certification. Proposal submission may be delayed until certification is received.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

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 that 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 effort should be made to obtain the PI's certification prior to the sponsor deadline and prior to proposal submission. Because the Certify activity is not available once the Funding Proposal transitions to Pending Sponsor Review, late completion may require alternative documentation and could delay proposal submission and/or award setup.

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 compliance requirement.

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

   The PI certification serves as the institution's documented assurance that the investigator accepts responsibility for complying with applicable regulations, sponsor requirements, and institutional policies associated with the proposed project.

   Failure to complete the required certification may create compliance concerns and could delay award acceptance, award setup, or other post-submission activities until the required documentation is obtained.

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

   Completion of the PI's assurances through the HRS Certify activity satisfies the PI endorsement requirement. A separate PI signature or endorsement on the HRS proposal submission form is not required. However, the form may still be useful to collect co-PI certification of assurances.