Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators

Candidate Handbook

2022

Application Deadline*	Testing Window
January 12, 2022	February 5 – February 19, 2022
July 13, 2022	August 13 – August 27, 2022

*Applications will not be accepted after 11:59pm Eastern on this date

Administered by:

1350 Broadway, Suite 800 | New York, NY 10018

www.ptcny.com/contact

COVID-19 Precautions

Please note that due to guidelines regarding COVID19, all candidates will be required to bring and wear a face mask or face covering while they are in a Prometric test center at all times, or your exam will be terminated. Both medical masks or cloth face coverings are acceptable. Masks with exhale/one-way valves are prohibited to use at the testing center, due to the lack of viral particle filtration provided by these masks. Masks with wearable technology are also prohibited. Any test taker that comes to the test center without a mask will not be allowed to test, marked as a "no show", and will not be eligible for a free reschedule. **All policies are subject to change.**

For more information, please be sure to check Prometric's website or reach out to PTC.

- Prometric COVID-19 Updates page
- Prometric Test Center Policies page
- What to Expect at the Testing Center page
- Prometric FAQ Portal

Be advised: candidates must comply with all federal, state, and local mandates and guidelines.

Note: if you fall into any of the following categories, you will not be permitted to test until you no longer fit the criteria:

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14-days;
- Have been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14-days;
- Are experiencing flu or cold-like symptoms; OR
- Have returned from travel to a highly infected area in the past 14-days.

Please contact PTC (www.ptcny.com/contact) if you fall into any of the above categories.

Effective September 1, 2021, if you are exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19 or have any other health or medical condition, injury or illness such that you cannot test during your testing window, you will need to follow the transfer policies and fees as stated in the Handbook.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This Handbook contains necessary information about the Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This Handbook is subject to change.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Professional Testing Corporation (PTC) www.ptcny.com (212) 356-0660	• Apply for examination • Obtain general application policy and procedure information • Obtain information about testing policies and procedures • Transfer to a new testing period • Request Special Accommodations • Request Hand Score/Score Transfer • Question about score reports • Miscellaneous inquiries
Prometric www.prometric.com/RACC (800) 741-0934	• Schedule test appointment • Reschedule test appointment (within a testing period) • Cancel test appointment • Find directions to test site • Questions regarding testing sites and appointments
Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC) www.racc-cert.org (303) 433-4446	• Body of Knowledge Review sessions • Eligibility Petition Form • Recertification Information

ATTENTION CANDIDATES

This handbook contains necessary information about the RACC Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators. It is required reading for those applying and taking the examination. All individuals applying for the examination must comply with the policies, procedures, and deadlines in this Handbook and attest to this by signing the Candidate Attestation found on the application. Please retain this handbook for future reference. This handbook is subject to change. See www.ptcny.com for handbook updates.

CERTIFICATION

The Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC) promotes the concept of voluntary certification by examination for all pre-award research and sponsored programs administrators. After passing this examination, an individual earns the Certified Pre-Award Research Administrator (CPRA®) designation. Certification is just one part of a process called "credentialing". It focuses specifically on the individual and is one indication of current competence in this specialized field. Certification in pre-award research and sponsored programs administration is highly valued and provides formal recognition of basic knowledge in this field.

REASONS FOR CERTIFICATION

.1. To provide documented evidence to a current or potential employer that an individual has been examined by an independent professional certifying organization and found to possess a certain level of basic knowledge of pre-award research and sponsored programs administration.

2. To provide personal and professional satisfaction of achievement of meeting established criteria indicating the attainment of a level of basic knowledge that is customary to be a professional in the field of pre-award research and sponsored programs administration.

3. To demonstrate commitment to the profession and to one's peers that an individual has taken the time and effort, beyond job experience, to learn the Pre-Award Body of Knowledge, thus exhibiting a significant responsibility to working in the profession of pre-award research or sponsored programs administration.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Bachelor's or advanced degree and three (3) years of professional experience in pre-award research administration or sponsored programs administration either in a sponsoring or recipient organization or the equivalent in a self-funded organization;
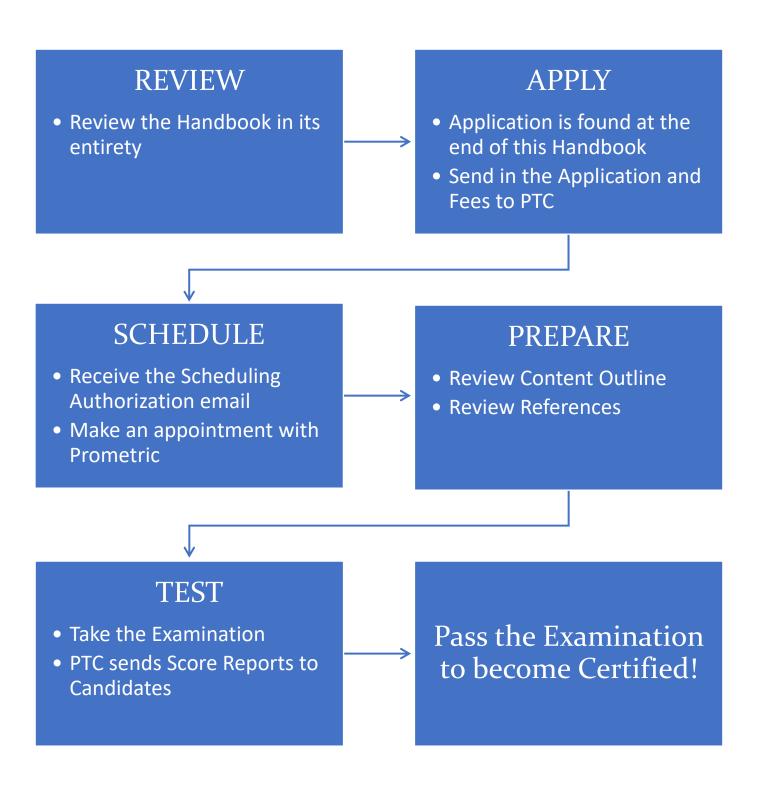<div align="center">OR</div>
2. An Associate's degree and five (5) years of professional experience in pre-award research administration or sponsored programs administration either in a sponsoring or recipient organization or the equivalent in a self-funded organization;
<div align="center">OR</div>
3. No degree and six (6) years of professional experience in the pre-award research administration or sponsored programs administration either in a sponsoring or recipient organization or the equivalent in a self-funded organization. *

*Petitions for approval of this option are available on the RACC website at: http://www.racc-cert.org/CPRA-petition-form/.

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

REVIEW
- Review the Handbook in its entirety

APPLY
- Application is found at the end of this Handbook
- Send in the Application and Fees to PTC

SCHEDULE
- Receive the Scheduling Authorization email
- Make an appointment with Prometric

PREPARE
- Review Content Outline
- Review References

TEST
- Take the Examination
- PTC sends Score Reports to Candidates

Pass the Examination to become Certified!

COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

Step 1 – Complete Application
Go to http://www.ptcny.com/test-sponsors/RACC to view examination testing periods, application deadlines, and link to the online application. You must complete the examination application in full, using your name exactly as it appears on your current government issued photo ID such as a driver's license or a passport. Applications are not considered complete until all information and payment has been provided. The completed application can be submitted and paid for online. Retain the link to the application and your login information.

Please note, for new applications you will be asked to create a PIN number. This PIN will be used when going into your existing application.

Step 2 – Submit Examination Fee and Application for Review
Receive email from PTC stating that your payment and application has been received and under review.

Step 3 – Receive Approval of Application
Receive email from PTC stating that your application has been approved.

Step 4 – Receive Scheduling Authorization and Schedule Testing Appointment
Within eleven (11) weeks prior to the start of the testing period, candidates will receive a Scheduling Authorization from PTC via email from notices@ptcny.com. The Scheduling Authorization includes an eligibility number and information on how to set up your examination location, date, and time through Prometric. Retain this document.

You must present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. Military ID at the testing center at the time of your examination appointment or you will be refused admission. The name on the ID must exactly match the name on the Scheduling Authorization.

Applicants who are not approved to sit for the examination or whose applications are incomplete 21 days prior to the first day of the testing window will receive a refund of their application fee minus the $75 administrative fee. Refunds will be processed approximately 30 days after the end of the testing period.

EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULING

The RACC Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators is administered during an established two-week testing window daily, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by Prometric.

Scheduling Authorization

PTC will send approved candidates an email called the Scheduling Authorization. These emails are sent out about 11 weeks before the first day of the testing window. The emails come from notices@ptcny.com. Candidates cannot make an appointment until they receive a scheduling authorization. If you don't receive your email 3 weeks before the start of your testing window contact PTC.

Scheduling Examination Appointments

The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment with Prometric as well as the dates during which testing is available. Appointment times are first-come, first-served, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization in order to maximize your chance of testing at your preferred location and on your preferred date. **Candidates who wait until the last minute run the risk of missing out on their preferred date, time, and testing center. Candidates unable to schedule an appointment will forfeit their fees.**

After you make your test appointment, Prometric will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time, and location. Contact Prometric at (800) 741-0934 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.
Note: International candidates may also schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment online at www.prometric.com/RACC.

IMPORTANT!

You **MUST** present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. military ID at the test center. Expired, temporary, or paper driver's licenses will **NOT** be accepted.

The first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization **MUST** exactly match the first and last name on your photo ID.

Fees will not be refunded for exams missed because of invalid ID.

Rescheduling Examination Appointments within a Testing Period

Candidates are able to reschedule their examination appointments within the same testing period as long as the request is submitted within the timeframe described below. Reschedule within the permitted time frame by calling or going to the Prometric website: www.prometric.com/RACC.

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted?	Stipulations
Requests submitted 30 days or more before the original appointment	Yes	None
Requests submitted 5 to 29 days before the original appointment	Yes	Candidate must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee of $50.
Requests submitted less than 5 days before the original appointment	**No**	Candidates who do not arrive to test for their appointment will be considered a no-show and all their examinations fees will be forfeited. Candidates will need to reapply and pay full examination fees for a future testing period.

Transferring to a New Testing Period

Candidates unable to take the examination during their scheduled testing period may request a **ONE-TIME** transfer to a future testing period. **There is a transfer fee of $235.00.** After you have transferred once by paying the $235.00 fee, you will need to pay the full examination fee in order to transfer a second time; so, *please plan carefully*.

Please note: requests to transfer to a new testing period must be received within 30 days of your originally scheduled testing period.

Candidates wishing to transfer to a new testing period need to follow the steps below.

1. Go to http://secure.ptcny.com/apply.

2. Click "Start New Application."

3. Choose RACC-CPRA in the first drop-down menu; then choose the new examination period in the second drop down menu and fill out the rest of the information on the page.

4. Fill out the application making sure you answer yes to the question asking if you are transferring.

5. When you have finished the application, click "Submit Transfer Request."

6. PTC Support will send you an email letting you know your transfer application was approved and that you can log back into your application and pay the one-time $235.00 transfer fee.

Call 212-356-0660 if you have any questions regarding the transfer process.

If candidates are unable to attend the examination on the date for which they registered and elect not to transfer to another testing period the application will be closed and all fees will be forfeited. There will be no refund of fees.

The transfer fee is based on costs and is not punitive in nature. The transfer fee must be paid at the time the request is approved. The candidate is responsible for contacting Prometric and canceling the original examination appointment, if one was made.

Exams may only be transferred to a new testing period once; please plan carefully.

Please note: Transferring your Examination only refers to instances when a candidate is unable to take their exam during a testing period for which they have already applied. Candidates who did not pass their examination and are retaking the examination need to pay the full Examination Fee.

Failing to Report for an Examination

If you fail to report for an examination, you will forfeit all fees paid to take the examination. A completed application form and examination fee are required to reapply for the examination.

EXAMINATION FEES

Fee Type	Amount	Details
Application Fee	US $395.00	• Non-refundable[1] • Non-transferable • Includes testing center fees • Includes non-refundable $75 administrative fee
Transfer Fee (Moving to a new testing window; see page 7)	US $235.00	• **Applies to candidates who need to move to a new testing period** • Must submit new application & fee to PTC
Rescheduling Fee (29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment; see page 6)	US $50.00	• **Applies to candidates who need to move their appointment within their current testing period** • Payable directly to Prometric • Reschedule with Prometric online or over the phone

• **There will be no refund of fees unless applicants are ineligible for the examination.**

• **Ineligible candidates will be refunded their fees minus an administrative fee.**

• **No refunds will be issued for applying for the incorrect examination or testing period, for failing to make an examination appointment, or for failing to appear at your scheduled appointment.**

Please be advised: Prometric does not have the authority to grant transfers to another testing period or refunds.

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[1] Applicants who are ineligible to take the examination or whose applications are incomplete by the application deadline will have their examination fees returned minus an administrative fee.

TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

RACC and PTC support the intent of and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTC will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered under the ADA. According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, concentrating, walking) or a major bodily function (such as neurological, endocrine, or digestive system). The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and test accommodations will be held in strict confidence.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted.

Testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Test Accommodations Form, available from www.ptcny.com or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660.

This Form must be uploaded with the online application no later than 8 weeks prior to the start of your chosen testing period. Candidates who do not submit their Test Accommodations Form with their application may not be able to test during their chosen testing period and therefore be subject to rescheduling or transfer fees.

Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Test Accommodations Form will be reviewed.   Letters from doctors and other healthcare professionals must be accompanied by the official Form and will not be accepted without the Form. All requests must be made at the time of application. Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment.

PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

- Check your government issued photo ID (driver's license, passport or U.S. Military ID) when you make your examination appointment. Is it expired? Does the first and last name on your ID match the first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization email? Proctors at the Prometric testing center will refuse admission to candidates with expired IDs, IDs with names that do not match their records, and temporary paper IDs. Candidates will be marked as no-shows and will forfeit their exam fees.

- Check your PTC Scheduling Authorization email and Appointment Confirmation email from Prometric to make sure everything is accurate (i.e. your name, exam name, appointment date, time and location).

- Make yourself familiar with the location of your chosen testing site and any requirements they may have for parking and check the weather and traffic conditions before you leave for the testing center. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to arrive as late arrival may prevent you from testing.

- In the event of inclement weather, check the Prometric website for site closures: https://www.prometric.com/closures.

- Prometric's website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of check in and security procedures: https://www.prometric.com/test-center-security.

- This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination (see appendix). Use these to help you start studying for the examination.

- Review the Rules for the Examination on the next page before your appointment.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE TESTING CENTER

PTC has partnered with Prometric Testing Centers to deliver examinations to candidates. Here is what you can expect when you arrive at your Prometric Testing Center.

- Candidate Check-In

    o Candidates will be asked to present their IDs

    o Candidates will be asked to empty and turn out their pockets

    o Candidates will be "wanded" or asked to walk through a metal detector

    o Inspection of eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories will be conducted. Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings is prohibited.

    o Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room; however, it may be subject to inspection by a testing center administrator before entry into the testing room is permitted.

    o Prometric provides lockers for candidates to store their purses, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks and medical supplies.

- During the Exam

    o No breaks are scheduled during the exam. Candidates who must leave the testing room to take a break will not be given extra time on the exam

    o Candidates who take an unscheduled break are subject to additional security screenings before being permitted to reenter the testing room

    o Accessing mobile phones or study materials during the examination is prohibited

    o Smoking is prohibited at the testing center

    o All examinations are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format

Please keep in mind: other exams will be administered at the same time as your examination. Therefore, examinees may hear ambient noises such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided. Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment. However, headphones may be requested to minimize impact.

Please see Prometric's website for more information about what to expect on testing day.

RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

Please read the information below carefully. You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

⇨ You must present your current driver's license, passport, or US Military ID at the testing center. Candidates without valid ID will NOT be permitted to test. Temporary or paper copies of your ID will not be accepted.

⇨ No Electronic devices that can be used to record, transmit, receive, or play back audio, photographic, text, or video content, including but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices; wearable technology (e.g., fitness/smart watches), media players, pagers, cameras, and voice recorders are permitted to be used and cannot be taken in the examination room. Prometric provides lockers for your personal items.

⇨ No papers, books, or reference materials may be taken into or removed from the testing room.

⇨ No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.

⇨ Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.

⇨ Bulky clothing, such as sweatshirts (hoodies), jackets, coats, and hats (except hats worn for religious reasons), and most types of jewelry may not be worn while taking the examination. Proctors will ask you to remove such items and place them in your locker. Please see Prometric's statement on Test Center Security for more information.

⇨ All watches, including fitness/smart watches and similar devices, cannot be worn during the examination.

⇨ No food/beverages are permitted inside the testing room. Leave these items in your assigned locker.

Contact PTC at (212) 356-0660 or www.ptcny.com/contact with any questions about the Examination Rules.

> **Violation of any of the rules listed above may lead to forfeiture of fees, dismissal from the testing room, and cancellation of your test scores.**

TESTING CONDITIONS OR EXAMINATION FEEDBACK

Any candidate who feels that the examination effort was negatively impacted by the test center conditions should notify the proctor immediately. The situation should also be reported to PTC at www.ptcny.com/contact within 3 business days of the test appointment. Any comments about the test itself should also be reported to PTC at www.ptcny.com/contact within 3 business days of the test appointment.

REPORT OF RESULTS

Test results are not released at the testing center but will be sent via mail approximately one month following the close of the testing period. This is necessary to allow for the psychometric review and administrative time required to ensure accurate and reliable scores. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be provided. Successful candidates will also receive certificates from the RACC.

Scoring Procedure
The passing score for the CPRA Examination has been reviewed and approved by RACC and has been determined using a criterion-referenced methodology.

REQUESTING A HANDSCORE

Candidates who fail the examination may request a hand scoring of their data file. Hand scoring is a manual check of the data file by the testing service to determine if there have been any errors in scoring. Although the probability of such an error is extremely remote, this service is available. Requests for hand scoring must be received by PTC no later than 90 days after the date of the examination by completing and returning the Request of Handscore form on www.ptcny.com with payment of $25. Candidates who fail the examination will not be permitted to see the examination questions. For reasons of test security, no candidate is allowed to review the examination or any of its items.

To ensure correct reporting of results, PTC automatically performs handscores of examinations of candidates who score within 3 points of passing as a quality control measure. Thus, it is extremely doubtful that any examination results will change from "fail" to "pass" through handscoring.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF EXAMINATION SCORES

RACC/PTC will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to RACC or PTC.

REEXAMINATION

The Certified Pre-Award Research Administrator Examination may be taken as often as desired upon filing of a new application and payment of the applicable fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION & RECERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who pass the examination will be certified for a period of five years, are eligible to use the designation CPRA® after their names and will receive a certificate from the RACC. A registry of Certified Pre-Award Research Administrators is maintained by the RACC and may be reported in its publications. Further information concerning the CPRA® credentialing program and information regarding preparation for the examination may be found at the RACC home page, http://www.racc-cert.org. An annotated list of the CPRA® Body of Knowledge may be found in the CPRA® *Body of Knowledge* section of the website.

The CPRA® designation is awarded for a period of five (5) years. At which time a CPRA® must recertify for an additional five (5) years by one of two methods:

1. Earning 80 contact hours of education credits during the preceding 5 years, 80% of which (64 credits) must be taken in topics related specifically to pre-award activities

2. Re-taking and passing the CPRA® examination

Reminders about recertification will be sent by way of email, beginning approximately three (3) months before the dates of recertification.

CODE OF ETHICS

Certificants are expected to practice and uphold the following principles in the discharge of their professional responsibilities. A candidate is required to sign the following statement as part of his/her application process:

I agree that I shall:

- perform my duties with honesty, diligence, and responsibility

- conduct myself free of personal and professional conflicts or the appearance of impropriety

- remain mindful as a steward of the funds I assist in requesting and managing have been provided fundamentally for the public good

- be prudent in the use and protection of sensitive information/data

- act in good faith promoting ethical integrity in all of our actions

- in public forums, maintain respectful communication about others in the profession

REVOCATION OF REGISTRATION

Certification may be revoked by the RACC for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an application.
2. Misrepresentation of certification status.
3. Breach of existing ethical standards of professional practice.

An appeals mechanism for challenging revocation of certification is available.

CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION

The RACC Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators is a computer-based examination composed of a maximum of 250 multiple-choice, objective questions with a total testing time of four (4) hours. The content for the examination is described in the Body of Knowledge on the next page.

The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in pre-award research administration and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the RACC.

RACC, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.

The RACC Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

I.	Research Partnership and Funding	25%
II.	Project Development and Proposal Submission	30%
III.	Budget Design and Development	30%
IV.	Awards and Pre-Award Compliance Considerations	15%

CPRA BODY OF KNOWLEDGE
Current as of October 1, 2017

I.   RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP AND FUNDING

A.   Settings for research administration

B.   Roles and responsibilities
  1.   Research administrator (facilitator, gatekeeper, resource locator, team builder, motivator)
  2.   Sponsored programs office
  3.   Principal investigator and other key personnel
  4.   Institution
  5.   Sponsor

C.   Perspectives for seeking and awarding sponsored funding (institutions, sponsor's, principal investigator's, interdependency, common goals, relationships)

D.   Collaborations (role, determining criteria, required proposal   documentation)
  1.   Multiple/Collaborating PIs
  2.   Subrecipients
  3.   Independent contractors
  4.   Teaming agreement

E.   Professional skills development for research administrators (customer service, project management, multi-tasking, time management, training for career development)

F.   Funding and research development
  1.   Funding opportunities (characteristics, key features)
    a.   Solicited
    b.   Unsolicited/PI-initiated
    c.   Limited submissions
  2.   Funding information (background, content, best practices)
    a.   Sources (characteristics, key features)
      i.   Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)
      ii.   Federal Register
      iii. FedBizOpps.gov
      iv.   Grants.gov
      v.   FedConnect.net
      vi.   Agency websites
      vii. Foundation directories and reports
      viii. Other
    b.   Use of expertise databases and funding search tools
  3.   Announcements/solicitations
    a.   General components included in funding announcements
    b.   Types and traits of funding announcements/solicitations(RFA/RFP)
    c.   Identification of key points from announcements and communication to investigators
    d.   Communication methods and delivery to appropriate audience (newsletters, electronic tools, listserv)

4. Funding programs (key purposes, characteristics, requirements, restrictions)
   a. Research
   b. Fellowships and training
   c. Equipment/instrumentation
   d. Program project/center
   e. Career development
   f. Internal
   g. Other
G. Overview of grants regulatory framework and legislative process (statutory requirements, program requirements, administrative requirements)
   1. Federal budget process
   2. Congressionally directed funding (distinguishing features, lobbying implications)
   3. OMB circulars (OMB A-133, OMB A-102) (purpose, requirements, Implementation, and Uniform Guidance)
   4. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (2 CFR Part 215, 2 CFR Part 220, 2 CFR Part 230, 2 CFR Part 225)
   5. Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) (purpose, requirements in contracts)
   6. Statutory requirements (NIH salary cap)
   7. America COMPETES Act (requirements, implementation)
   8. Other
H. Sponsors
   1. Types and characteristics of sponsors
      a. Federal government
         i. Structure and agency missions (executive departments, independent agencies)
         ii. Types of funding programs and award mechanisms
      b. State and local government
      c. Private foundations and associations
      d. For profit business and industry
   2. Differentiation between public and private sources of funding
I. Identification of internal capacity
   1. Identification of space needs (survey)
   2. Assessment of institution's facilities, resources, and unique internal/institutional capabilities
      a. Animal research facilities
      b. Specialized facilities
      c. Central services (recharge centers)
      d. Availability of institutional matching funds
J. Public relations
   1. Freedom of information (FOIA)
   2. Public records laws
   3. Media relations and interactions with special interest groups
   4. Environmental concerns/impacts (chemical hazardous waste, Material Safety Data sheets [MSDS], environmental safety,   management of public relations associated with potential hazards)

II.   PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

A.   Proposal writing
1.   Types of proposals (characteristics, key elements)
    a.   Pre-proposal/pre-application/letter of intent
    b.   New, continuation, renewal, resubmission
    c.   Competing, noncompeting
    d.   Seed grant/pilot project/internal

2.   Nonfinancial components of a proposal (purpose, key features, essential information)
    a.   Personnel/key persons
    b.   Title/abstract/executive summary/introduction
    c.   Needs/problem statement
    d.   Goals/objectives/statement of work/implementation plan/ methods/sustainability/evaluation plan/data sharing plan/letters of support
    e.   Other
3.   Characteristics of a successful proposal
4.   Unique characteristics of proposals submitted to industry sponsors
B.   Effective management of proposal teams (timeline, organization)
C.   Understanding and interpretation of agency guidelines (key features, requirements, proposal content, other information)
1.   Broad Agency Announcement (BAA)
2.   Invitation to bid
3.   Request for Applications/Proposals (RFA/RFP)
4.   Request for Quotation (RFQ)
5.   Program announcements (solicited, unsolicited)
D.   Documentation to meet sponsor requirements
1.   Subcontractor/collaborator documentation
2.   Just-in-Time documentation and process
3.   Current and pending support
4.   Required proposal components
E.   Institutional clearances and approvals
1.   Internal proposal review
2.   Approvals and documentation of institutional commitments
3.   Records retention
F.   Electronic research administration
1.   Institutional capability to electronically submit funding applications
2.   Key features of online proposal submission systems
3.   Common electronic proposal submission systems
    a.   Grants.gov
    b.   FastLane
    c.   eRA Commons
    d.   NSPIRES
    e.   FedConnect
    f.   proposalCENTRAL
    g.   Other (system-to-system interfaces)

   4. Other electronic tools related to funding application development and submission
     a. Research.gov
     b. NIH RePORTER
     c. USAspending.gov
     d. Other
   5. System-to-system interfaces
G. Deadlines and target dates
H. Unfunded and revised proposals

III. BUDGET DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Budget preparation
   1. Process for developing budget
   2. Role of budget in proposal and characteristics of an effective budget
   3. Interpretation of sponsor guidelines related to budget limitations and exclusions
   4. Understanding of sustainability of project
   5. Budget categories
   6. Budget justification
   7. Budget forms
   8. Use of budget template and spreadsheets
   9. Budget calculation
B. Project costs
   1. Definitions of direct and indirect costs
   2. Definition of major projects and unlike circumstance
   3. Understanding of total project costs (sponsor and matching costs)
   4. Cost sharing
     a. Allowable and unallowable costs
     b. Types of cost sharing (mandatory, voluntary committed, voluntary uncommitted)
     c. Documentation and institutional approvals
   5. Understanding of general cost principles
     a. Criteria for determining allowable and unallowable costs (2 CFR Part 220, allowable, allocable, reasonable, consistently applied, prudent person test)
     b. Typical allowable and unallowable costs
     c. Cost Accounting Standards (CAS)
   6. Cost price analysis
   7. Program income
C. Direct costs
   1. Personnel
     a. Salaries and wages (application of salary cap)
     b. Time and effort (understanding of concept of 100%)
     c. Fringe benefits (typical components, different types of calculation base pooled, actual)
   2. Travel
   3. Equipment
   4. Other direct costs
   5. Subawards
   6. Consultant

D.   Facilities and Administrative (Indirect) Costs
      1.   Components of indirect costs
      2.   Use of appropriate indirect rate in proposals (purpose code, off/on campus rates, sponsor indirect cost rate limitations)
      3.   Calculation of indirect costs in proposal budgets (modified total direct costs [MTDC])
      4.   Unrecovered indirect costs
      5.   Waivers
      6.   Indirect rates
          a.   General process for developing indirect rate proposal
          b.   Determination of appropriate indirect rate
               i.   On campus/off campus
              ii.   Purpose code (e.g. research, instruction, other)
             iii.   Negotiation of indirect rates
E.   Budget revisions (review, submission, implications to scope of work)

IV.   AWARDS AND PRE-AWARD COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

A.   Sponsor reviews (characteristics, composition of review committee, outcome)
      1.   In-house review
      2.   Peer review
      3.   Modified peer review
      4.   Other
B.   Site visits (definition, preparation steps, responsibilities of parties)
C.   Sponsored project awards (definition, purpose, use, key elements, support mechanisms)
      1.   Grant (assistance)
      2.   Contract (procurement)
      3.   Cooperative agreement
      4.   Subcontract
      5.   Other
D.   Negotiations
      1.   Typical negotiation process and sponsor interface
      2.   Terms and conditions (common preferred positions, implications of restrictive terms)
          a.   Use of name
          b.   Publication
          c.   Warranty
          d.   Indemnification
          e.   Payment
          f.   Other
E.   Intellectual property
      1.   Applicable regulations (e.g. Bayh-Dole Act, 37 CFR 401)
      2.   Types and characteristics (copyright, patent, license)
      3.   Classified research
      4.   Proprietary information
F.   Assurances, certifications, and disclosures (purpose, key requirements)
      1.   Institutional registration and identification
          a.   Representations and Certifications (Reps and Certs)
          b.   System for Award Management
          c.   Employer Identification Number (EIN) and DUNS number

2.   Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
3.   Federal drug-free workplace and drug-free schools
4.   Federal debt delinquency
5.   Federal debarment/suspension
6.   Lobbying
7.   Conflict of interest (COI)
8.   Export controls (ITAR, EAR, OFAC)
9.   Other

G.   Research compliance (institutional committees, regulations, training)
    1.   Human subjects (IRB, CITI training)
    2.   Animal subjects (IACUC, animal laboratory training requirements)
    3.   Other (radiation safety, institutional biosafety, chemical safety committees)
H.   Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
I.   Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) (required institutional policy, relevant regulations, required documentation, agency oversight)

(Note: Information provided in parenthesis is descriptive and not comprehensive.)

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

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1. Which of the following is a requirement of a Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant?

   1. The total amount awarded to the partnering research institution normally may not exceed 33% of the total amount requested
   2. The total amount awarded to the partnering research institution normally may not exceed 50% of the total amount requested
   3. The small business concern must perform at least 40% of the work and a nonprofit research institution must perform at least 30% of the work
   4. The small business concern must perform at least 30% of the work and one or more partnering nonprofit research institutions must perform at least 40% of the work

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2. After a proposal has been submitted via FastLane, and after the NSF deadline has passed, corrections to the proposal can still be submitted for consideration by

   1. submitting a Proposal File Update.
   2. withdrawing proposal and resubmitting.
   3. e-mailing the corrected sections to the NSF program official.
   4. e-mailing the corrected sections to the NSF Policy Office within 48 hours of the original submission.

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3. Which of the following items is **EXCLUDED** when calculating the MTDC?

   1. Materials
   2. Capital equipment
   3. Salary and fringe benefits
   4. Subcontracts less than $25,000

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4. Which of the following activities requires IRB review?

   1. Survey of traffic patterns at street corner
   2. Sleep deprivation experiment in chimpanzees
   3. Retrospective review of deidentified medical charts
   4. Audiotaping of a focus group of teachers examining curriculum

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CORRECT ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. 3;   2. 1;   3. 2;   4, 4

REFERENCES

The following references may be of some help in preparing for the examination. The list does not attempt to include all acceptable references, nor is it suggested that the Certification Examination for Pre-Award Research Administrators is based entirely on these references or that RACC endorses these publications. In some cases, individual experience is the best reference.

BOOKS

Coley, Soraya M. and Scheinberg, Cynthia A. Proposal Writing, Effective Grantsmanship, Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 2008.

Hall, Susan S. and Howlett, Susan. Getting Funded: The Complete Guide to Writing Grant Proposals, Fourth Edition. Portland, Oregon, 2003

Karsh, Ellen and Fox, Arlen Sue. The Only Grant-Writing Book You'll Ever Need, Third Edition. New York: Basic Books, 2009.

Kulakowski, Elliott C. and Chronister, Lynne U. Research Administration and Management. Sudbury, Massachusetts: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2006.

The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing, Fifth Edition, The Foundation Center, 2007. ISBN 1-59542-129-7 http://foundationcenter.org/

PERIODICALS

Journal of Research Administration, Falls Church, VA: Society of Research Administrators International.

Research Management Review, Washington, DC: National Council of University Research Administrators.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Council on Governmental Relations
http://www.cogr.edu/

National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA)
http://www.ncura.edu/

Society of Research Administrators International (SRA)
http://www.srainternational.org/sra03/index.cfm

FEDERAL FUNDING AGENCIES AND OTHER RESOURCES

DHHS: http://www.hhs.gov/

DOE: http://www.energy.gov/

ED: http://www.ed.gov/

Grants.gov: http://grants.gov/

NASA: http://www.nasa.gov/

NIH: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm

NSF: http://nsf.gov/

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (CFR)

2 CFR Part 215: Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations: Uniform Administrative Requirements

2 CFR Part 220: Cost Principles for Educational Institutions

2 CFR Part 225: Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments

2 CFR Part 230: Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations

ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

WHAT IS IT
A practice test consisting of 75 questions with a testing time of 2 hours taken over the Internet

WHY TAKE IT
To experience taking a computerized exam, to review content included in Certification Examination for Research Administrators, and to learn more about question format, style, and level of difficulty

SCORE REPORT
After completing the online practice test, you will receive an instant score report showing test performance in each of the content areas. The score report does not provide correct answers or indicate which questions were answered correctly and incorrectly.

NOTE: The online practice test is an optional tool candidates may use as they prepare for the certification examination. While the practice test may help candidates identify areas of strengths and weakness, it should not be used as the only means to determine candidate preparedness or readiness to test. Since the practice test is NOT intended to be a study guide nor the sole source of preparation for the actual certification examination, candidates are NOT provided with the answer key, rationales for each question, nor notification of which specific items were answered correctly or incorrectly.

Though the specific questions that are on the practice test will not appear on the actual certification examination, it allows candidates to become familiar with the style of questions that may be asked. The instant score report received after practice test submission shows overall test performance as well as performance in each of the content areas. Candidates may find this information useful in determining future study needs. Once the practice test is scored, candidates cannot return to the test to review the questions. Performance on the practice test does not guarantee similar performance on the actual certification examination.

The PTC Online Testing System does not demonstrate the testing software used during the certification examinations. Those who purchase the online practice test should be aware that they will use a different testing platform when they take certification examinations at designated proctored testing centers.

The practice test is not a requirement for certification eligibility nor does it contribute in any way to success on the certification examination. There are many ways candidates should prepare for the certification examination. Candidates should use a variety of resources and consider their own education and experiences. Review the content outline and reference materials listed in the handbook for additional exam-related information.

CONTENT INCLUDED
- I.   Research Partnership and Funding
- II.   Project Development and Proposal Submission
- III.   Budget Design and Development
- IV.   Awards and Pre-Award Compliance Considerations

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