



SRA INTERNATIONAL  
ANNUAL MEETING  
**CHICAGO 2024**  
OCTOBER 26-30

# Everything, Everywhere All at Once: Managing Global Research Projects across Various Sponsors and Diverse Country Contexts

University of California, San Francisco  
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# Introduction

# Meet the Presenters



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# Roll Call

- Department Staff / Administrators?
- Central Office Administrators?
- Principal Investigators?
- Others?



# Learning Objectives

1. Identify major risk areas associated with implementing sponsored research activities in other countries
2. Describe creative solutions for pre- and post-award management of global research activities and be able to evaluate their own institution's readiness to support sponsored research in the global context



# UCSF Overview

# UC San Francisco - Overview

## About

### 4 Professional Schools

- Dentistry
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Pharmacy



University of California  
San Francisco  
*advancing health worldwide*

Faculty: 4,000

Staff: 22,200

Academic Employees: 5,000

Students/Trainees: 6,030

<https://www.ucsf.edu/about>

## Research Portfolio

### Overall

- Over 200 central pre-award, 45 post-award staff
- Over 6,000 proposals submitted per year
- \$2.39B FY23 funding (NIH \$789M)
- #1 Public recipient of NIH funding  
(17 years in a row)

<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/awards-and-proposals>

### Global Health

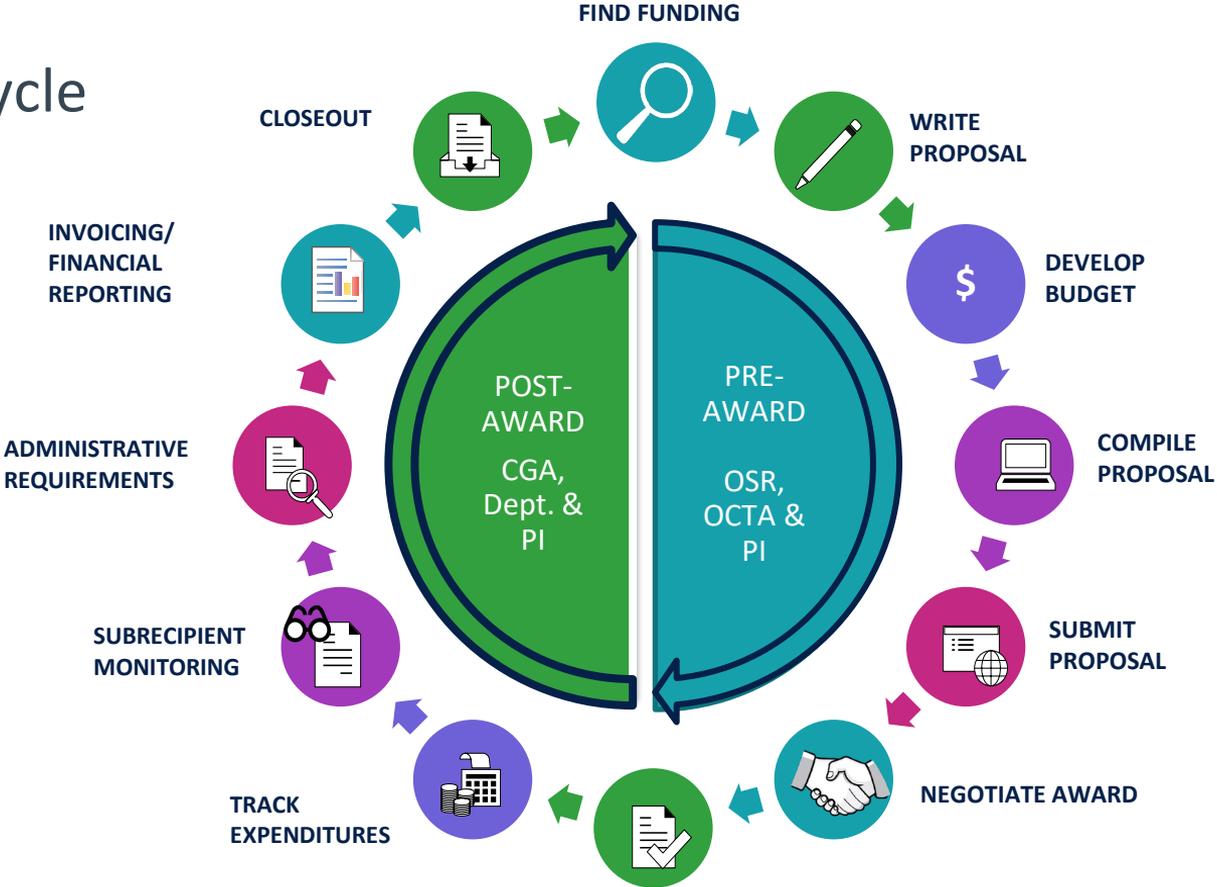
- Approx + \$400 M in active grant awards\*
- 125 principal investigators with active awards
- Most common collaborating countries:  
Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, India

\*Data extracted March 2020

# UCSF Research Administration Support

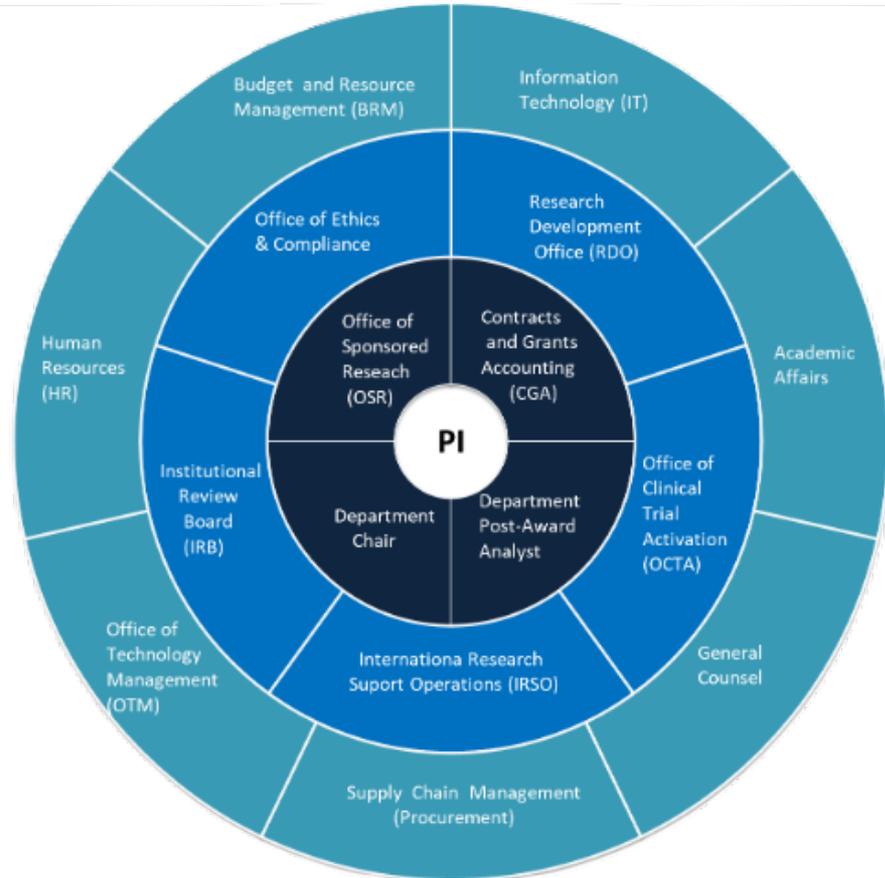
- Unique central proposal development service allows for early discussions regarding foreign collaboration.
- Open communication and active involvement at the proposal stage reduces post award issues.
- Expertise with sponsor policies and procedures allows us to provide collaborators with a deep understanding of requirements and how to comply.
- Connectivity with IRSO and other administrative units facilitates rapid triage and development of creative solutions for any challenges at the proposal or award stage.
- Seamless process to initiate and issue subawards to foreign collaborators for funded projects.

# Project Life Cycle



# UCSF Stakeholders

Internal Partners Supporting the PI (Client)



# UCSF's International Research Portfolio

## *Location by Funding Amount (Over \$7 M only)*

Country Location	# of awards	Total Funding (Direct and Indirect)
Kenya	18	\$ 74,875,756.62
Uganda	46	\$ 57,642,982.69
Zimbabwe	2	\$ 37,673,799.89
Niger	1	\$ 22,744,213.00
India	10	\$ 12,756,578.03
Viet Nam	1	\$ 9,531,629.00
South Africa	9	\$ 8,183,818.00
Ethiopia	7	\$ 7,412,827.18

## *Sponsor by Funding Amount (Over \$15 M only)*

Sponsor	# of awards	Total Funding (Direct and Indirect)
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	12	\$ 116,872,360.03
Centers for Disease Control	8	\$ 104,897,967.47
NIH NIAID	24	\$ 86,412,440.75
NIH NIMH	18	\$ 29,246,839.00
NIH NICHD	11	\$ 17,640,719.28

Data capture: Through March 2020  
 Start date of most recent award: January 2, 2020  
 Latest award end date: September 29, 2024

\*UCSF is currently developing a new integrated database for tracking international activities

# The Spectrum of International Research Support



Support researchers with proposal development including advice and assistance regarding foreign collaborators

Expert assistance with grants and contracts from all funders, including contracts from, and subcontracts to foreign entities and collaborators

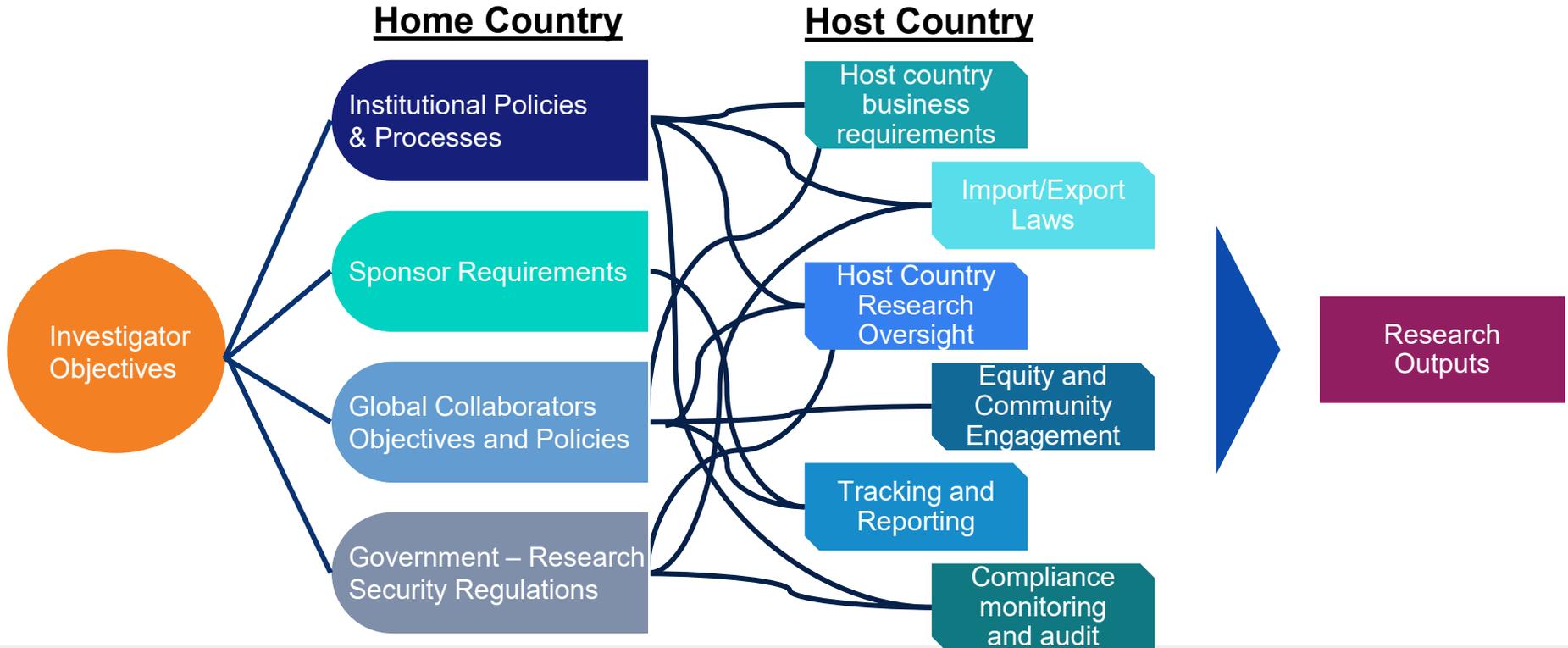
International Support Office advises PIs on implementation in other countries

University-owned NGO allows PIs to *think* and *act* locally

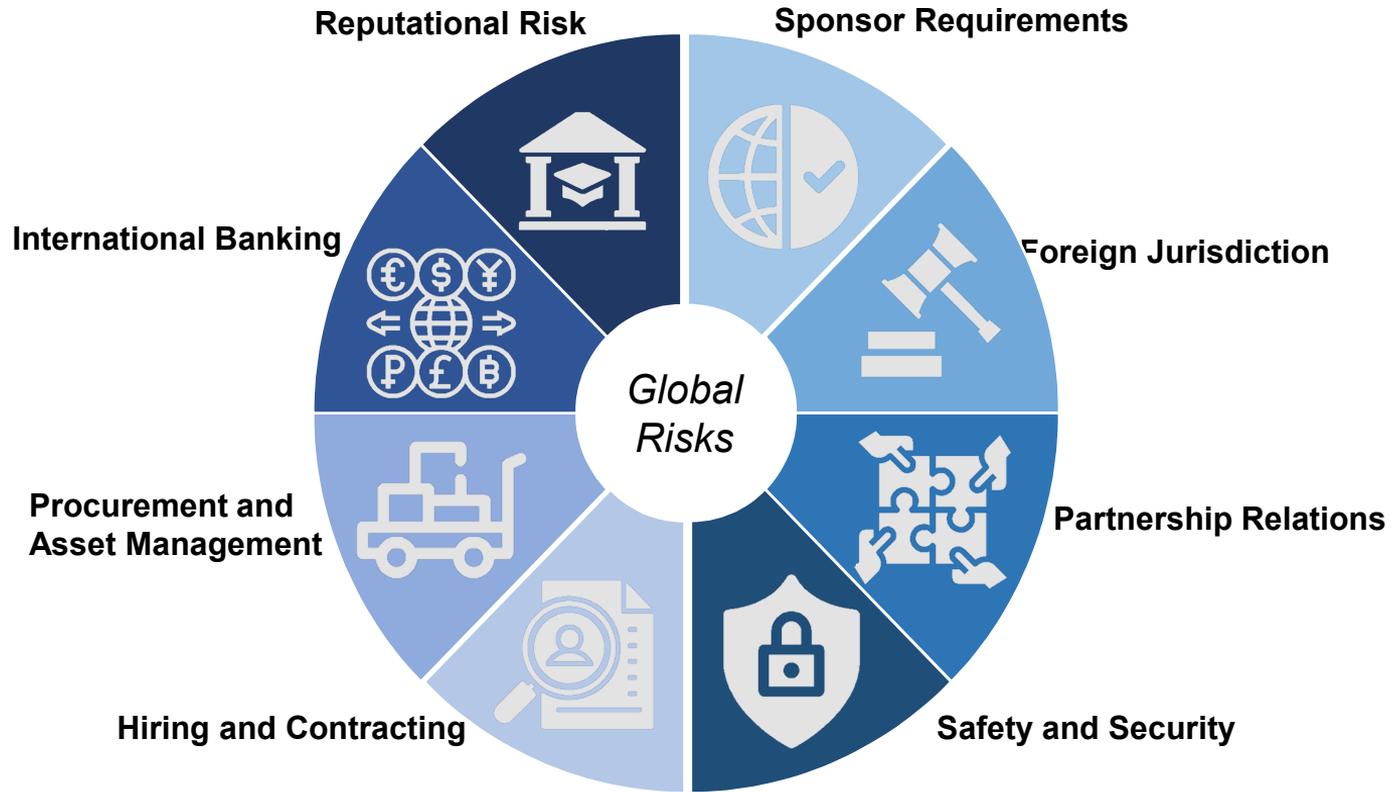
Close collaboration allows University to support partners to strengthen award administration capacity

# The Context

# The Challenge Administering Global Research



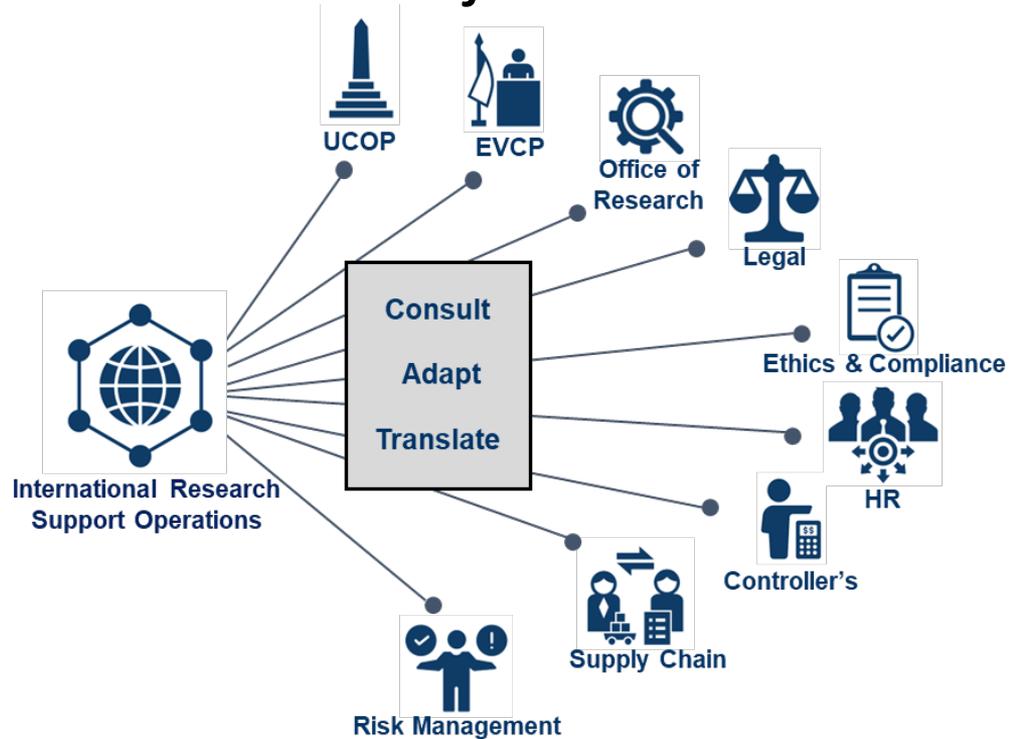
# Risks in Global Research



# Pathway to Managing Global Research Projects

## The Pathway:

- Leverage expertise from existing campus resources
- Develop business processes and structures for conducting business internationally
- Establish effective communication strategies to ensure consistency in the application of institutional and Sponsor policies



# Case Studies

# Case Study #1 – Proposal Stage (1/3)

**Proposal Stage – collaborating with in-country partners and managing compliance with sponsor policies and multi-country legal frameworks**

## Situation/Issue

- **Pre-award, proposal development:** PI completes proposal questionnaire: detailed budget, no consortium/contractual cost; regulatory compliance disclosed no work involving Human Subjects. R01 is funded, no cuts to budget. Hurray!
- **Issue:** Mid-project period, PI informs OSR of new collaboration with a foreign institution, and the project will now involve Human Subjects.
  - Change in original scope → Award modification
  - Identify appropriate agreement and contractual relationship
  - Impact to approved budget (will Department cover additional costs from other sources?)
  - Potential foreign site implements non-compliant IRB protocol, charging fees outside indirect cost

# Case Study #1 – Proposal Stage (2/3)

**Proposal Stage – collaborating with in-country partners and managing compliance with sponsor policies and multi-country legal frameworks**

## Discussion Questions

- How has your pre- or post-award staff responded to administrative modifications involving addition of a foreign collaborator?
- What administrative offices did you work with to bring the grant award to compliance?
- What leadership support is required?

# Case Study #1 – Proposal Stage (3/3)

**Proposal Stage – collaborating with in-country partners and managing compliance with sponsor policies and multi-country legal frameworks**

## UCSF Resolution

- Develop "proposal checklist" to ensure investigator and department consider all potential issues during proposal stage
- Promote detailed planning and budgeting to build in flexibility in case of changes
- Involve regulatory admin units during the pre-award stage

## UCSF Implementation

- Proposal system enhanced to facilitate pre-award stage planning and cross-campus collaboration
- Guidance and tools disseminated campus-wide to all investigators and department administrators

## Lessons Learned

- Preparation matters in global research so involve campus experts during proposal stage
- Consistent dissemination of campus guidance to reach and properly prepare for investigators for international projects

# Case Study #2 – International Collaboration (1/3)

## Ensuring equity in global research partnerships while remaining competitive for global research awards

### Situation/Issue

- International partners have indicated that they don't feel effectively included in the development of the overall budget proposal.
- Partners are receiving direction from investigator that is sometimes incomplete and/or does not reflect an understanding of the local operating context.
- The lack of transparency in the budget preparation leads to miscommunication and inaccurate budgeting at the proposal stage. For example:
  - International partners may have limited experience with Sponsor guidelines, don't have institutional knowledge on how to maximize indirect rates to properly fund their organization.
  - International partners are asked to develop budgets around a specific SOW. When modifying those budgets, there is limited guidance on adapting SOW to meet new budget amounts.
- Poor communication leads to mistrust and feeling that there are inequities in award management, which subsequently lead to weakened partnerships.

# Case Study #2 – International Collaboration (2/3)

Ensuring equity in global research partnerships while remaining competitive for global research awards

## Discussion Questions

- What inequities has your institution identified in transnational collaborations?
- What are the roadblocks to facilitating more equitable collaborations with your international partners?
- Has your institution made changes that strengthens your global research partnerships?
- How has or would your institution respond? What internal or stakeholders must be involved? What leadership support is required?

# Case Study #2 – International Collaboration (3/3)

Ensuring equity in global research partnerships while remaining competitive for global research awards

## UCSF Resolution

- UCSF launched Equitable Global Health Partnerships Initiative in 2022
- Inequities and potential resolving actions were identified by global partners and UCSF stakeholders working in collaboration.
- Focus area: Transparent budgeting and financial management processes

## UCSF Implementation

- Removed hardship letter requirement for those requesting capital advance
- Increased working capital advance from 2 to 3 months or 25% of the annual amount.
- Implementing training for faculty and international partners in budgeting process

## Lessons Learned

- Communication and transparency with international partners helps improve equity
- Leadership buy-in is required to make institutional change addressing inequities

# Case Study #3 – Post-Award Management (1/3)

**Institutional preparedness for international audit requirements, including managing business operations across multiple foreign currencies**

## Situation/Issue

- Transnational collaboration is awarded to your institution involving multiple outgoing subawards with international partner
- Multiple partners and project sites across several countries makes for complex financial tracking and compliance oversight across different jurisdictions
- At the submission of the annual report, the international partner initiates an audit and/or Sponsor requires an audit is to be done by the award recipient annually
- Your institution is required to contribute to an audit that may involve multiple partners, languages, currencies, and jurisdictions.
- Audit principles and allowable direct costs may vary by country

# Case Study #3 – Post-Award Management (2/3)

**Institutional preparedness for international audit requirements, including managing business operations across multiple foreign currencies**

## Discussion Questions

- What can you do to best prepare for an audit of an international project/award?
- What internal or stakeholders must be involved?
- What leadership support is required?
- What documentation and policies are needed to ensure success?

# Case Study #3 – Post-Award Management (3/3)

**Institutional preparedness for international audit requirements, including managing business operations across multiple foreign currencies**

## UCSF Resolution

- Prepare early with clear protocols for financial management
- Created a position that facilitates all audits with a goal of gaining expertise in managing international requirements
- Develop processes for international awards, including requirements for copies and support for all key transactions

## UCSF Implementation

- Set launch meetings to discuss audit parameters, key points of contact, expectations, and deadlines
- Create share folds for file backups and external sharing
- Compile list of links to common questions regarding institutional policies, Sponsor regulations, and local regulations

## Lessons Learned

- Compliance matters - Understand common, potential issues related to international audits
- Preparation matters – clarify roles and responsibilities of your team and establish protocols for transaction tracking and record keeping

# Takeaways for Managing Global Research



**Preparation Matters**



**Communication Matters**



**Compliance Matters**