

Welcome to the 2025 SRAISO/ NE Section Meeting



**2025 SRAI SO/NE
SECTION MEETING**
RIO GRANDE, PUERTO RICO
MAY 6 - 9



University
of Puerto Rico



Research Administration in Emerging Research Institutions

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SOCIETY OF
RESEARCH
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INTERNATIONAL

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Overview

Emerging Research Institutions (ERIs)

Definition

In the numbers

Characteristics

Research Growth and Administration at ERIs

Challenges and Opportunities

Partnerships



Emerging Research Institutions

ERIs

- Institution of higher education with established undergraduate or graduate programs that has less than \$50M in Federal research expenditures (42 USC 18901; Chips & Science Act 2022).
- ERIs in the numbers (vary by source)
 - ERIs constitute one third ($1/3 = 33\%$) of Institution of Higher Education (National Academies (2009))
 - Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) for 2023
 - 66% ($2/3$) of surveyed institutions fall below \$50M
 - Dept Energy Office of Scientific and Technical Information (2024)
 - 41% of institutions (n=6378) are defined as ERIs
 - 20% are Minority Serving Institutions

ERIs Contributions

- Play major role in innovation and workforce development
 - Enroll over 30% of student population
 - Enroll largest proportion of underserved populations
 - Impact social mobility, workforce development
 - Promotes knowledge economy, fostering innovation and commercialization, and contributing to regional economic growth



General ERIs Characteristics

- Teaching-Intensive Universities
- Largely focused on undergraduate education with limited graduate population
- Small full-time research personnel (e.g., postdocs)
- Many doing basic research, but limited support for technology transfer and commercialization units
- Aim at expanding research capabilities and infrastructure
- Actively seek partnerships with other institutions and industry
- Many are financially limited (limited endowments, overhead capacity)
- Strong alumni relations, but limited philanthropic network

ERIs Community

Example UPRM

- Students are very good and extremely resourceful
 - Innovative
- Greater proportion of mature students with family responsibilities
- Teaching skilled faculty
- Community is committed and resilient
- Strong social service to communities
- Conservative in financial matters

UPRM Come Colegial



ERIs Challenges

- Branding
 - Hard to attract personnel
- Lack of time for teaching-intensive Universities for faculty to conduct research
 - Faculty teach 3-4 courses per semester (generally 4:4 institutions)
 - 2-3 times higher than research universities
 - No un-interrupted time for research
 - Take research-related responsibilities and service
 - Limited release time
 - Low proportion of faculty in research
 - Often have a high demand for services (reviews, panels, committees)

ERIs Challenges

➤ Insufficient resources

- Limited overhead funds; limited seed funds => makes research administration more critical
- Limited technology transfer resources/knowledge => Need partnerships with industry
- Lacking IT infrastructure and digital resources (e.g., library resources; cloud services)
- Low maintenance of facilities or training of specialized personnel => done by researchers
- Writing and approval processes: pre-award and proposal development units
- Limited business services
 - Procurement (purchasing), human resources (contracting), invoicing
 - Lengthy approval and agreement processes

ERIs Challenges - Research Administration

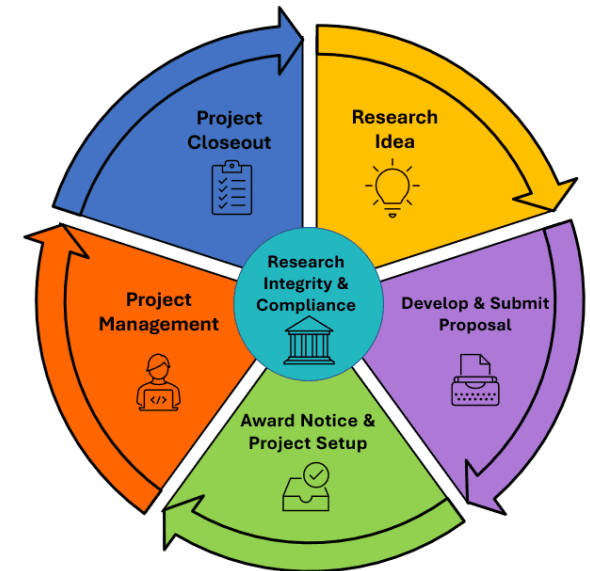
➤ Insufficient administrative infrastructure to support the research enterprise

- Limited staff at Pre- and Post-Awards Units
- Limited Research Administration support (Project administrators)
- Faculty must compensate for lack of administrative support


- Monitor funding opportunities
- Learn federal regulations
- Learn Cost accounting principles

- Compliance
- Conflict of interest
- Export control
- IRB, IACUC

- Invention Disclosure
- Institutional & state requirement



ERIs Challenges – 2009 NAS Report



- Lengthy process for approvals for submitting proposals, hiring personnel, travel, and ordering materials and supplies
 - Lack of or minor research start-up support such as materials and supplies, specialized equipment, travel funds, and reduced workload
 - Lack of incentives and rewards such as release time, laboratory space, technical support for research programs, research awards, and salary enhancement
 - Minimal provision for research program development, such as proposal development assistance, and training in locating funding prospects and proposal writing
 - Lack of trained research facility maintenance staff, lengthy approvals for renovations, and too much reliance on external contracting
 - Inadequate or no core facilities to decrease costs and increase competitiveness for grant awards, and no standard protocols for the use of core facilities
 - Lack of investment in professional development for post-award grants officers, and ineffective post-award communication with principal investigators
 - Inefficient business support processes such as purchasing and receiving and deliveries
 - Inadequate support for library acquisitions

ERIs Partnership Development



- Partnership development is key for ERIs
 - Strengthen partners capabilities – e.g. teaching, culture, resilience
 - Leverage resources with partners
 - Increase networking
 - Pose high demand of research human resources, particularly true for MSIs
 - Great opportunities to partner in research development & administration
 - Extremely important in today's environment (community is less apt to adapt financially)

Questions and Discussion

