

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the America COMPETES Act, also known as the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, and not as part of the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 which comprises this chapter.

AMENDMENTS

2017—Subsecs. (c), (d), Pub. L. 114-329 redesignated subsec. (d) as (c) and struck out former subsec. (c) which related to annual reports to Congress.

§ 6604. Interagency working group on research regulation

(a) Short title

This section may be cited as the “Research and Development Efficiency Act”.

(b) Findings

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Scientific and technological advancement have been the largest drivers of economic growth in the last 50 years, with the Federal Government being the largest investor in basic research.

(2) Substantial and increasing administrative burdens and costs in Federal research administration, particularly in the higher education sector where most federally funded research is performed, are eroding funds available to carry out basic scientific research.

(3) Federally funded grants are increasingly competitive, with the Foundation funding only approximately 1 in every 5 grant proposals.

(4) Progress has been made over the last decade in streamlining the pre-award grant application process through the Federal Government’s Grants.gov website.

(5) Post-award administrative costs have increased as Federal research agencies have continued to impose agency-unique compliance and reporting requirements on researchers and research institutions.

(6) Researchers spend as much as 42 percent of their time complying with Federal regulations, including administrative tasks such as applying for grants or meeting reporting requirements.

(c) Sense of Congress

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) administrative burdens faced by researchers may be reducing the return on investment of federally funded research and development; and

(2) it is a matter of critical importance to United States competitiveness that administrative costs of federally funded research be streamlined so that a higher proportion of federal funding is applied to direct research activities.

(d) Establishment

The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Office of Science and Technology Policy, shall establish an interagency working group (referred to in this section as the “Working Group”) for the purpose of reducing administrative burdens on

federally funded researchers while protecting the public interest through the transparency of and accountability for federally funded activities.

(e) Responsibilities

(1) In general

The Working Group shall—

(A) regularly review relevant, administration-related regulations imposed on federally funded researchers;

(B) recommend those regulations or processes that may be eliminated, streamlined, or otherwise improved for the purpose described in subsection (d);

(C) recommend ways to minimize the regulatory burden on United States institutions of higher education performing federally funded research while maintaining accountability for federal funding; and

(D) recommend ways to identify and update specific regulations to refocus on performance-based goals rather than on process while achieving the outcome described in subparagraph (C).

(2) Grant review

(A) In general

The Working Group shall—

(i) conduct a comprehensive review of Federal science agency grant proposal documents; and

(ii) develop, to the extent practicable, a simplified, uniform grant format to be used by all Federal science agencies.

(B) Considerations

In developing the uniform grant format, the Working Group shall consider whether to implement—

(i) procedures for preliminary project proposals in advance of peer-review selection;

(ii) increased use of “Just-In-Time” procedures for documentation that does not bear directly on the scientific merit of a proposal;

(iii) simplified initial budget proposals in advance of peer review selection; and

(iv) detailed budget proposals for applicants that peer review selection identifies as likely to be funded.

(3) Centralized researcher profile database

(A) Establishment

The Working Group shall establish, to the extent practicable, a secure, centralized database for investigator biosketches, curriculum vitae, licenses, lists of publications, and other documents considered relevant by the Working Group.

(B) Considerations

In establishing the centralized profile database under subparagraph (A), the Working Group shall consider incorporating existing investigator databases.

(C) Grant proposals

To the extent practicable, all grant proposals shall utilize the centralized investigator profile database established under subparagraph (A).

(D) Requirements

Each investigator shall—

(i) be responsible for ensuring the investigator's profile is current and accurate; and

(ii) be assigned a unique identifier linked to the database and accessible to all Federal funding agencies.

(4) Centralized assurances repository

The Working Group shall—

(A) establish a central repository for all of the assurances required for Federal research grants; and

(B) provide guidance to institutions of higher education and Federal science agencies on the use of the centralized assurances repository.

(5) Comprehensive review**(A) In general**

The Working Group shall—

(i) conduct a comprehensive review of the mandated progress reports for federally funded research; and

(ii) develop a strategy to simplify investigator progress reports.

(B) Considerations

In developing the strategy, the Working Group shall consider limiting progress reports to performance outcomes.

(f) Consultation

In carrying out its responsibilities under subsection (e)(1), the Working Group shall consult with academic researchers outside the Federal Government, including—

(1) federally funded researchers;

(2) non-federally funded researchers;

(3) institutions of higher education and their representative associations;

(4) scientific and engineering disciplinary societies and associations;

(5) nonprofit research institutions;

(6) industry, including small businesses;

(7) federally funded research and development centers; and

(8) members of the public with a stake in ensuring effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability in the performance of scientific research.

(g) Reports

Not later than 1 year after January 6, 2017, and annually thereafter for 3 years, the Working Group shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on its responsibilities under this section, including a discussion of the considerations described in paragraphs (2)(B), (3)(B), and (5)(B) of subsection (e) and recommendations made under subsection (e)(1).

(Pub. L. 114-329, title II, §201, Jan. 6, 2017, 130 Stat. 2995.)

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as the Research and Development Efficiency Act and also as part of the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act, and not as part of the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 which comprises this chapter.

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of terms used in this section, see section 2 of Pub. L. 114-329, set out as a note under section 1862s of this title.

SUBCHAPTER II—OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

§ 6611. Establishment of Office

There is established in the Executive Office of the President an Office of Science and Technology Policy (hereinafter referred to in this subchapter as the "Office").

(Pub. L. 94-282, title II, §202, May 11, 1976, 90 Stat. 463.)

SHORT TITLE

For short title of this subchapter as the "Presidential Science and Technology Advisory Organization Act of 1976", see section 201 of Pub. L. 94-282, set out as a Short Title note under section 6601 of this title.

HIGH-RESOLUTION INFORMATION SYSTEM ADVISORY BOARD

Pub. L. 102-245, title V, §501, Feb. 14, 1992, 106 Stat. 22, authorized the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy to establish within that office a High-Resolution Information Systems Advisory Board to monitor and, as appropriate, foster the development and competitiveness of United States-based high-resolution information systems industries, further provided that "high-resolution information systems" means equipment and techniques required to create, store, recover, and play back high-resolution images and accompanying sound, further provided for functions of the Board, including provision of guidance and advice relating to establishment of such industries as well as transfer of Federal technologies to the private sector, further provided for membership and procedures of the Board, including submission of annual report of its activities to the President and Congress, and further provided for limitation on functions of Board and appropriations through fiscal year 1993.

§ 6612. Director; Associate Directors**(a) In general**

There shall be at the head of the Office a Director who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and who shall be compensated at the rate provided for level II of the Executive Schedule in section 5313 of title 5.

(b) Associate Directors

The President is authorized to appoint not more than four Associate Directors, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, who shall be compensated at a rate not to exceed that provided for level III of the Executive Schedule in section 5314 of such title. Associate Directors shall perform such functions as the Director may prescribe.

(c) Chief Technology Officer

Subject to subsection (b), the President is authorized to designate 1 of the Associate Directors under that subsection as a United States Chief Technology Officer.

(Pub. L. 94-282, title II, §203, May 11, 1976, 90 Stat. 463; Pub. L. 114-329, title VI, §604(b), Jan. 6, 2017, 130 Stat. 3037.)

AMENDMENTS

2017—Pub. L. 114-329, §604(b)(1), (2), designated first sentence of existing provisions as subsec. (a) and second