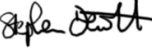


To: NIH Investigators and Research Administrators

From: Steve Dewhurst, Interim Vice President for Research 

Subject: Additional Information on Electronic Signatures Required by NIH

Date: February 10, 2022

As communicated earlier this year, there are significant changes to the [NIH Biosketch and Other Support Format](#) that are effective for select applications, Just in Time submissions and Research Performance Progress Reports due on or after January 25th, 2022.

As emphasized in my correspondence to you on November 24, 2021, a signature block has been added to the NIH Other Support format, for Program Director/Principal Investigator or Other Senior/Key Personnel to certify the accuracy of the information submitted. Each PD/PI and senior/key personnel must personally and electronically sign their respective Other Support form as a flattened PDF prior to submission.

- The signature must be the authorized signature of the PD/PI or Other Senior/Key Personnel. Supporting documentation to reasonably authenticate that the appropriate individual signed the **Other Support** form must be available upon request. You must not delegate your signature or DocuSign password to another individual. NIH policy requires individuals to personally electronically sign their Other Support form and delegation of signature is non-compliant with NIH policy and could be considered a forged document. Scanned “wet” signatures or utilizing .jpeg, .pdf or other images of your signature are not acceptable.
- NIH does not designate the form of electronic signature. We promised additional information on the preferred method of electronic signature in earlier correspondence, and have provided that below.

We originally thought that the University’s license to DocuSign would offer a “single electronic signature” at no cost, but this has proven not to be accurate. While signing up for DocuSign through the [UR Tech Store](#) will centrally archive supporting documentation (as noted above), it will be more cumbersome for the NIH requirement. We recommend that PI’s and other Senior/Key Personnel utilize the free, individual version of DocuSign or Adobe Sign.

- DocuSign: Instructions for signing up for the no-cost version of DocuSign can be found [here](#). We have also provided [instructions](#) for using DocuSign to electronically sign the Other Support form, as well as how to download your audit log if requested by NIH.
- Adobe Sign: Using Adobe’s “Fill & Sign” tool is not secure or certified, so these signatures will not be accepted by NIH. Instead, use the Digital Signature option in the Adobe “Certificates” tool. Adobe’s instructions can be found [here](#).

I emphasize that it will be the responsibility of the PI/Department to ensure their ability to provide supporting documentation (outside of the UR Tech Store), if requested by NIH. Supporting documentation will need to remain available even if the PI or Key Personnel are no longer with the University. IORA, or any other departmental repository can be utilized to archive this information. Should you have any questions on the NIH requirements, please reach out to your ORPA RA. If you

should have questions on the electronic signature process, please reach out to the IT Help Desk at (585) 275-2000.

As we receive other information on mandated certifications of accuracy not only by NIH, but other federal agencies, we will keep you informed.