



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

June 7, 2018

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Project Notification:  
Review of EPA's Office of Research and Development Grants to Universities  
Project No. OA&E-FY18-0248

**FROM:** Patrick Gilbride, Director /s/  
Environmental Research Programs Directorate  
Office of Audit and Evaluation

**TO:** Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Science  
and EPA Science Advisor  
Office of Research and Development

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to begin preliminary research to assess how the agency's Office of Research and Development (ORD) oversees grants awarded to universities. This project is based on the OIG's internal planning process.

Our objective is to determine whether (1) ORD oversees and monitors grants awarded to universities in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, policies and procedures; and (2) university grantees are completing agreed-upon work that meets the defined purpose of the grant. Applicable generally accepted government auditing standards will be used in conducting our project. The anticipated benefits of this project are to identify best practices and improve any oversight weaknesses.

We will contact you to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss our objectives and the purpose of our project. We would also be particularly interested in any areas of concern that you may have. We will answer any of your questions about the project process, reporting procedures, methods used to gather and analyze data, and what we should expect of each other during the course of the project. Throughout the project, we will provide updates on a regular basis, as agreed upon at the kickoff meeting.

Before or at the kickoff meeting, please provide the following information:

- ORD-specific policies, procedures and standard operating procedures used to oversee grants to universities.
- Total dollar amounts obligated to university grantees by ORD grant programs from fiscal year 2015 through the present.
- A list of project officers who oversee grants to universities.

We respectfully note that the OIG is authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, to have timely access to personnel and all materials necessary to complete its objectives. We will request that you resolve the situation if an agency employee or contractor refuses to provide requested records to the OIG or otherwise fails to cooperate with the OIG. We may report unresolved access matters to the Administrator and include the incident in the *Semiannual Report to Congress*.

I will supervise the project, and the Project Manager will be Allison Dutton. Any information related to the project should be addressed to me at (303) 312-6969 or [gilbride.patrick@epa.gov](mailto:gilbride.patrick@epa.gov), or Allison Dutton at (215) 814-2349 or [dutton.allison@epa.gov](mailto:dutton.allison@epa.gov).

cc: Ryan Jackson, Chief of Staff  
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