Non-Competing Continuations

Purpose
Federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) often make awards that are commonly referred to as continuation awards/grants. While there are other agencies that also make continuation awards, these two agencies are the most common and the funding mechanism is typically a grant. While the award/commitment is made in multi-year blocks, i.e., most commonly three to five years, the obligation is often (but not always) made for one year at a time.

The multi-year commitment is known as the project period and the one-year obligation is known as the budget period.

The following verbiage was included in an actual NSF award and is typical of a continuation award:

“This award is effective September 1, 2009 and expires August 31, 2010. This is a continuing grant which has been approved on scientific/technical merit for approximately 3 years. Contingent on the availability of funds and the scientific progress of the project, NSF expects to continue support at approximately the following level”

Administration
The Offices of Sponsored Programs is responsible for maintenance and review of this Process.

Specific Application
Being mindful that continuation awards will be funded in the non-competing cycles (for example, year 2 of a five year continuation award) unless: a) the availability of funds is interrupted by congress, or; b) there is insufficient technical progress on the project; a business decision has been made that automatically extending the end date of the current budget period offers more benefit than financial risk. Accordingly, the following process will be observed, except in cases to be described further within this discussion:

- At any time during the last 30 days\(^1\) of the current budget cycle (except for the last year of the project), the Specialist should extend the expiration date for three months, IF all of the following elements are in place:
  - There is money left in the account – more than $1,000
  - There’s been no indication from the sponsor that there may a congressionally mandated interruption of funding
  - There’s been no indication from the sponsor that the project may be terminated or that a “Stop Work Order” may be issued because of inadequate technical progress
  - Congress is not currently operating under a Continuing Resolution

\(^1\) Under certain circumstances (and with approval from an OSP Senior Manager) the account may be extended within the last 90 days of the project. All other qualifiers apply.
The Specialist may not add additional funds to the project during the last 30 days and if notification isn’t issued by the sponsor of the continuation year’s funding within three months, counsel should be sought from the Director of Faculty Support.