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To: ERA_PT_INVESTIGATORS@LISTS.UPENN.EDU <ERA_PT_INVESTIGATORS@LISTS.UPENN.EDU>

Subject: Significant updates to the RAMPART tool - a resource to evaluate potential risks in grant proposals

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to announce that RAMPART – the Risk Assessment Model for Proposal and Award Rapid Testing – has been updated in two key ways since its initial release in late April. As a reminder, this tool was developed by faculty in the Perelman School of Medicine (PSOM) and staff from several PSOM and University teams and is available for optional use by all Penn faculty, trainees, and staff interested in understanding the level of risk their grant proposals and awards may face in terms of not being reviewed, not being funded, or having funding withdrawn.

The major updates to the tool, which have now been implemented, are:

1. The risk assessment model is now based on terms that appear significantly more commonly in grants that have been closed than in grants that remain open. This is a far more evidence-based approach than what had been used previously – lists of terms that had been reported in the news as being associated with funded risk. Thus, the model now performs much better in identifying true risk. The team will continue to monitor the national landscape of closed and open grants and update the risk model accordingly, but we anticipate that these future changes will be incremental, using the same general approach that is now in place.
2. An option to receive suggested alternatives to selected blocks of text that, if used, are predicted to reduce the grant's risk. Investigators may select text blocks of up to 200 words with their mouse and receive 5 alternate wordings that strive to preserve the scientific premises and approach. If the user chooses alternate text, the overall risk calculation will update automatically. Users may also edit the alternate text blocks manually to ensure scientific accuracy.

Again, we wish to emphasize that this is a tool that Penn investigators may choose to use or not use entirely at their discretion. The information investigators submit through this tool will not be shared with any entity outside the University. Penn IDs and the text submitted through the tool for evaluation are stored for up to a month to help the RAMPART development team (two PSOM faculty and limited staff in Penn Medicine DnA, ISC, and the Office of the Vice Provost for Research) debug any issues that are encountered and improve the user experience going forward.

Please disseminate these tool updates to your investigators and inform them that there are now several ways to access the tool:

1. Go directly to the [RAMPART tool](#) and log on with their PennKey credentials.
2. Go to [Office of the Vice Provost for Research website](#) and click on the “Research Support Update” to be taken directly to the RAMPART tool after logging in with their PennKey credentials.
3. Access the RAMPART tool via [PennERA](#). We have added this direct link through PennERA to provide investigators an easy method for screening scientific information they enter into PennERA.

