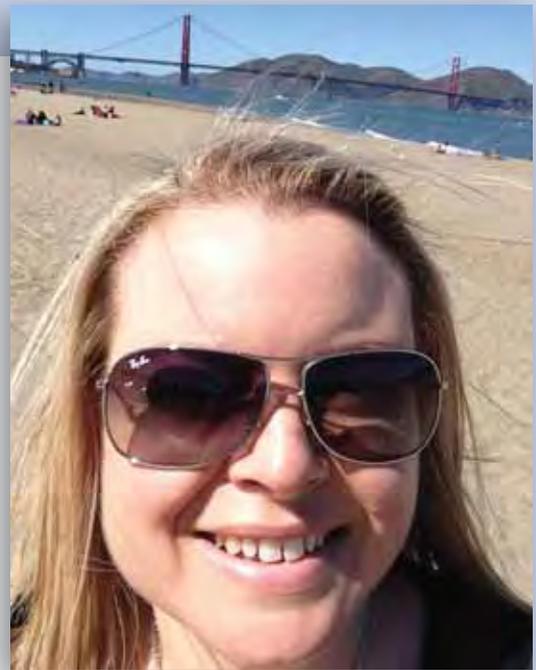


An Aussie in the US...

By Julie Ward



I've always been intrigued by the United State research administration structure and wondered why and how things differ so much from Australian research administration. Lucky for me, I now have the opportunity to answer that question and many, many more...

After meeting Denise Clark (Associate Vice President for Research Administration, University of Maryland, College Park) at the 54th NCURA Annual Meeting in 2012 we were able to work together and arrange for her to present on various US research administration topics at the Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS) annual conference in Adelaide, Australia in 2013. It was in Adelaide that Denise and I started discussing the possibility of a visiting research administrator placement at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP).

The basis of the placement is to figure out how we, as research administrators, can help break down some of the boundaries that exist in relation to international research collaborations. The placement also aligns with our institution's global strategic plan as both the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and UMCP are members of Universitas 21 (U21). One of the outputs of the placement is facilitating the U21 Research Collaboration Group workshop that is being held at UMCP in early April.

After thousands of emails, meetings, proposals and finally the signed agreement (because we all know we can't do anything unless the agreement is signed!) – I was ready to start my US research administration adventure.

After a long flight, the first stop was San Francisco for the Financial Research Administration (FRA) and Pre-Award Research Administration (PRA) Conferences. On the first day of FRA, I attended an all day workshop on the Fundamentals of Post Award Administration which provided the basics for me to learn about compliance, effort reporting, export controls and audits. One of the stand out concurrent sessions for me was on crowdfunding, it really made you think what the future could/will hold for research funding. Then before I knew it FRA was over and we had moved on to PRA. At PRA, I attended a lot of sessions on international grant and contract processes which reinforced that we are all facing the same issues and hopefully we will be able to address some of these issues by the end of my placement at UMCP.

I thoroughly enjoyed both meetings and believe they have provided a great foundation for me to start my US research administration journey. I would like to thank NCURA for supporting my attendance at both FRA and PRA...now all I need to do is get my head around a new set of acronyms!

Keep an eye out for the next "Aussie in the US" update... **N**

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