



September 4, 2007

To: Research Faculty and Staff

From: Randolph W. Hall, Vice Provost for Research Advancement  
Robert V. Johnson, Associate Sr. Vice President, Financial and Business Services

A handwritten signature in blue ink is positioned to the right of the "From:" line. The signature appears to be "R. W. Hall" and "R. V. Johnson" written together.

cc: Laura La Corte, Associate Sr. Vice President, Compliance

Re: SCera Portal Version 1 Release

We are pleased to announce the Version 1 release of the University of Southern California electronic research administration portal. It can be accessed by USC faculty and staff at <https://aisportal.usc.edu/fis/>. The SCera portal provides a gateway to electronic services and applications that support USC's principal investigators with their administrative needs such as:

- The ability to see research account information without technical accounting terminology
- Secure and easy access through a web browser both on and off campus
- USC award and proposal information.

The SCera (pronounced Sara) portal concept received input and support from faculty, research administrators, as well as central administrators. The technical design and support is provided by Administrative Information Services (AIS).

Since the June 12, 2007 beta release, many of you have voluntarily tested the SCera portal and reported any issues you may have encountered with utilizing the features in SCera. This beta test gave us the opportunity to fix the features that were not working as they were designed and intended prior to this Version 1 release.

In addition, we received feedback from beta testers for future versions, including the implementation of Shibboleth authentication, which will provide the ability to login with your USC email login and password. In a future version, we will also enhance the budgeting and forecasting management capabilities. A workgroup of school based research administrators, who work closely with Principal Investigators, has been enlisted to elaborate on and prioritize these suggestions for future SCera version releases.

We will continue to roll out enhancements to the services available in the SCera portal. We have been working towards providing access through SCera to services from the pre-award, IACUC, iSTAR, and on-line effort certification applications.

If you have feedback or questions, please send email to [scera@usc.edu](mailto:scera@usc.edu). If you need immediate technical assistance, call AIS Helpdesk at 213-740-5857.