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Logging in to SPARCS

The following illustrates how to log in to the SPARCS IRB system either on campus or from a remote location. If you have issues logging into the system, please contact the SPARCS Help Desk at (412) 268-3485 or sparcs-help@andrew.cmu.edu.

Logging in to on campus

If you are on campus connected via wired connection or the “CMU-SECURE” Wi-Fi network:

2. Click on the “Log in” link in the red box on the right of the screen.
3. Log in using your Andrew ID and password.

Logging in off campus (VPN)

4. To log in from off campus, you will need the campus general VPN client installed on your computer.

   For information on how to download and install the VPN client, please visit: http://www.cmu.edu/computing/network/vpn/

Logging in off campus

5. Open the VPN client and follow the instructions on the VPN web page. You must select “General Use Campus VPN” as shown.
6. Log in using your Andrew ID and password
7. Follow the same steps in the logging in on campus section above.
SPARCS IRB Protocol Conversion Quick Start Guide

SPARCS IRB Conversion

If you followed a link from a system notification email, you will already be in the correct protocol. Otherwise, when you first log in, you will be on the My Inbox page.

Where do I find the study ready for conversion to SPARCS?

From My Inbox, you can find:

1. **Click on the IRB Tab** to enter the SPARCS IRB Module.

2. **You will see Tabs** that filter your IRB protocols. Click on “My Active.” Your converted study will start with “IRBSTUDY2015.” The name of the study will be the same as the paper study.

Open the Protocol to Begin the Conversion

3. From the list of active protocols, click on the link in the name of the study.

4. The protocol opens. This record displays as Approved with the approval date and approval end date from your paper record.

5. To start your conversion, click “Create Modification / CR”
Complete the Continuing Review (Renewal) and Modification

1. Select “Modification and Continuing Review”

2. IMPORTANT: For Modification Scope, choose both “Study team member information” and “Other parts of the study”

   The record that now exists in SPARCS as your study only contains the data elements of Study Title and Principal Investigator. You will need to enter all the other information for your study in SPARCS. Many fields will be a simple copy and paste from your paper documents; however, there will be some new questions to answer. Click “Continue” to continue with the submission.

3. Enter your Continuing Review Information.

4. Enter the Modification information. If you are making no changes to the approved paper protocol, for question 3, please enter “Conversion to SPARCS system.” If you are making changes to the approved study (for example changes in study team members), please summarize these modifications and provide a justification for each change.

5. When you click “Continue” you will be taken to the protocol to start entering information from your paper protocol. On the last page, click on Finish. You will be taken back to the workspace. Click Submit on the left side of the page, under My Current Actions to submit for review. Before you close the browser, verify that the status shown in red on the workspace has changed from “Pre-Submission” to “Pre-Review.”
SPARCS IRB Protocol Conversion Quick Start Guide

Need to allow someone access to help with the Conversion?
If someone other than the PI will be helping to enter the conversion to SPARCS IRB, you can add this individual as the study’s “Primary Contact.” This will grant the individual access to create the CR/Modification and enter the relevant protocol information. Please note: Only the PI will have the “Submit” button in SPARCS.

Other important information
Below are helpful links and a glossary of terms for the SPARCS IRB system

Helpful Links

- Office of Research Integrity and Compliance - http://www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/
- SPARCS website, including more documentation and training – http://sparcs.cmu.edu

Glossary of Terms

- Protocol - A set of questions you will answer within SPARCS, relating to your proposed human research study. This Protocol will be submitted, reviewed, and approved all within SPARCS.
- Modification – Any changes requested by a reviewer or made to the protocol after approval when any aspects of the study has changed. Study Team Members and PIs can make modifications to a protocol after a protocol has been approved.
- Continuing Review (CR) – A review which is conducted after the study has received initial approval from the IRB. According to Federal regulations, continuing review of research must be conducted at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk of human subjects, but not less than once per year.
- Reportable New Information (RNI) – Use the smartform to submit any new information pertaining to the study to the IRB. This form indicates the information items that must be reported to the IRB. Use this form to determine if an information is reportable to the IRB. If you have questions, please contact the IRB office at (412) 268-7166 or irb-review@andrew.cmu.edu
- Funding Organization – The organization to whom the proposal is being submitted.
- Prime Funding Source – The organization where the money is originating. The Funding Organization may not be the Prime Funding Source.
- SPARCS – Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance System
- Workspace – Page in the SPARCS system that houses information regarding your IRB study. This page will show status and other useful data.

How to get additional assistance?

- For IRB specific questions (e.g., what review type to select, questions regarding a study), please contact the IRB Staff at irb-review@andrew.cmu.edu, (412) 268-7166.
- For technical questions (can’t log in, received an error, can’t find protocol, etc.), please contact the SPARCS Help Desk at (412) 268-3485 or sparcs-help@andrew.cmu.edu