

Service Providers Technical Questions for NIH

January 28, 2004

1. I'm concerned about the planned validation rules for PI/PD degrees. In the Oct/Nov Pilot, the use of both Name and Commons Identifier for validation of Key Personnel data with Commons entries resulted in some false negatives which were, to the best of my knowledge, never resolved. Now, I think we're setting ourselves up for a similar problem as regards the PI/PD Degrees.

Two things in specific have my attention:

- No two occurrences of the Degree component can have duplicate values.
- Any degree that cannot be matched against the Commons PPF information will be treated as an error condition.

I think (a) there may very well be applicants with two BS or MS degrees (and perhaps even two PhDs) and (b) such mismatches in degrees are likely to occur. I submit these conditions should result in warnings, not failures.

Answer: Let's first try to clarify the issue. If the applicant indicates one BS with the face page degrees, while having two BS degrees on his/her PPF, this will *not* be treated as a failure (or even a warning for that matter). We are not looking for an exact match between the face page information and PPF, only that the degrees reported on the face page can be matched against (i.e., represent a subset of) the PPF degree information.

It is true that submitting two unqualified "BS" or "PhD" designations on the face page will result in an error. But this is because on the face page they are, by definition, unqualified—there really is no place to indicate anything other than the degree designation itself. This is because it is only the degree designations and their associated academic ranks which matter on the face page, not the quantity per type of degree. The details regarding each earned BS or MS or PhD—including how many, years obtained, from where, and in which disciplines—are appropriate for the Biosketch pages, not the face page.

The reason why we have the rule is that "Any degree that cannot be matched against the Commons PPF information will be treated as an error condition" (which is the second part of the service provider's question). PPF information on the Commons is considered the single point of ownership for personal data about the PI. It is very important that the information in our system about the PI be a subset of what is on the Commons.

On a paper grant application, duplicate degrees can be edited manually, deleting the extra degrees. However, this can't be done electronically.

2. What port and context path being used for <https://valxchg.test.era.nih.gov> and <https://infoxchg.test.era.nih.gov>? Also, ditto the production servers...

Answer: Port number is 7777 for infoxchg, it is then redirected by BIG IP to a https connection. Valxchg is set to 7778.

So the answer is TEST: 7777

PROD: 7778

3. Is there an API for the SOAP validation service? We want to get the Response Message back via Soap through the browser instead of via email. We are a little confused on how to interact with that service.

Answer: No we don't have any API's for val service. This is not a web service, its the same exchange with one limitation that the data is not finally saved to the database after validations.

The URL for exchange is: <https://infoxchg.test.era.nih.gov/exchange/messageIntakeService>

This service is still down and has not been opened to SBIR's yet.

The URL for valexchange is: <https://valxchg.test.era.nih.gov/valexchange/messageIntakeService>

This service has not been configured yet.

Use the designated URL, username/password if needed.

Options are email or SOAP over http.

4. We also want to receive the Status Request Message through the browser instead of through email. Is there a timeline for when this service will be available?

Answer: The status request and response messages are available in the current version of the CGAP exchange. This portion of the exchange software is not undergoing any significant rework, so this feature will be available as soon as the test environment itself is made available to the service providers.

5. We would like to make arrangements to start testing on the new servers when they eventually come online. Is there any additional information we need to provide to make this happen?

Answer: We will provide them with any relevant server info when we bring it online. NIH is still considering postponing the Feb/March pilot. The decision will be made on Jan. 30. NIH would like to move forward regardless of this decision and conduct official testing with the service providers soon after the critical bugs are fixed. This will then depend on how quickly we can make these fixes but be reassured that we will continue to make progress and establish testing coordination with all of the service providers.