



National Institutes of Health/Office of Extramural Research



Electronic
Research
Administration



Internet Assisted Review Reviewer User Guide

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Introduction

The eRA Internet-Assisted Review (IAR) system is a Web-based system to manage the process of electronic submission of critiques by reviewers. IAR expedites the scientific review of grant applications by standardizing the current process of critique and initial priority score submissions by reviewers via the Internet. IAR enables reviewers to submit critiques and view each other's reviews before the actual meeting. As a result, review meetings can contain more informed discussions because reviewers are able to read the evaluations entered by others prior to the review meeting (except where there is a conflict of interest).

Summary of Capabilities

IAR allows for:

- critique and preliminary score submission and modification
- acceptance of critiques in Microsoft Word (*.doc) or plain text (*.txt) format
- streamline voting

IAR Phases

The following phases are listed in IAR:

- **Submit phase**—Time period when you submit critiques for your assigned applications. During this phase you only see your assigned applications. The phase end date is the Critique due date.
- **Read phase**—Time period after the Submit phase (the Submit phase end date determines the start of the Read Phase). During the Read phase, except where in conflict or blocked, you can see all applications and may read all critiques. At the end of the Read phase, the actual meeting is usually held.
- **Edit phase**—Your SRA/GTA determines whether or not to hold the optional Edit Phase which follows the Read phase. In this phase, you can correct/resubmit your critiques based on comments in the meeting or can post critiques for unassigned applications. At the end of the phase, the meeting in IAR goes back to Read Phase until assignments are manually purged or the Assignment Purge date is reached (the purge date is set automatically for 15 days after the meeting release date). After assignments are purged, you will lose access to the meeting.

Logging In and Out

Introduction

IAR is accessed through the NIH eRA Commons, a web-based system that allows principal investigators (PIs) and central research administration offices to communicate and send information electronically. To be able to use the NIH eRA Commons you must be registered as a user. Contact your Office of Sponsored Programs or Office of Clinical Research representative for information about registering.

Any registered user with a Web browser (Internet Explorer 5.01 or greater or Netscape 4.7 or greater) and Internet access can log in. Other Web browsers are also supported, but some functionality may be lost.

Special Notes Regarding the Web Browser

You must enable Cookies and JavaScript on your browser and use the navigation buttons and hyperlinks provided on the system pages instead of the browser buttons to move through the pages. Additionally, make sure that the browser is *not* set for automatic password completion. For instructions on making these changes, check your browser's Help text.

Please use the navigation buttons and hyperlinks provided in the IAR interface instead of the browser buttons to move through the module pages.

Session Expiration

Your IAR session expires after 45 minutes of inactivity. Five minutes before expiration, an expiration message is displayed. Click **Keep Session** to resume your work or **Abandon Session** to force your account to log out.

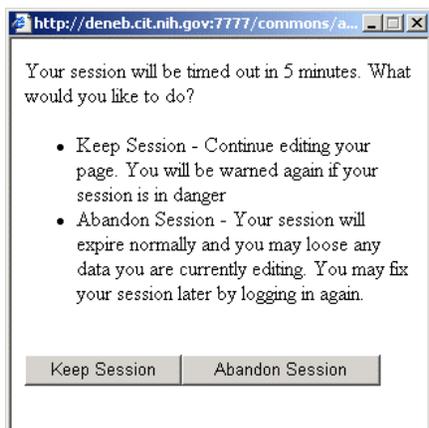


Figure 1 Session Expiration Warning

If you know you won't need to use the system for an extended period of time, you should use the Logout hyperlink located at the top of every page to log out. If your session expires while the NIH eRA Commons is still open (if you don't respond to the expiration message within the allotted five minutes), you will experience errors or lost functionality in the system (such as disappearing buttons, Internal Server Error 500, pages displaying with no data, or prompts to log in again). If any of these problems occur, close your Web browser window and then reopen it to log in and start a new session.

Logging In to IAR



Figure 2 NIH eRA Commons Home Page Before Logging In

1. Launch your Web browser.
2. Enter the following URL in your browser's Address/Location field:
<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/> and press **Enter**.
The eRA Commons Home page opens.
3. In the Username field, type your username and press **Tab** to move to the Password field.

4. Type your password and press **Enter** or click **Login**.
5. If this is the first time you are logging in, the Change Password page (FRW0015) opens:

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
eRA Commons

Welcome Guest
Institution: Not Affiliated
Authority:

[Home](#) [Administration](#) [Institution Profile](#) [Personal Profile](#) [Status](#) [eSNAP](#) [X-Train](#) [Links](#) [Help](#)

Change Password

Your password has expired, you must change your password now in order to log into the system.

* indicates required field

* Old Password:

* New Password:

* Retype New Password:

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Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Department of Health
and Human Services

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Screen Rendered: 05/06/2003 12:02:09 EDT
Screen Id: FRW0015

Figure 3 Change Password Page (FRW0015)

- a. Enter your old password, and then enter and retype a new password.
- b. Click **Submit** to update the new password information.

The system returns you to the Home page with your login information displayed in the upper right corner of the page. A logout hyperlink is located directly beneath your login information.

6. Click the **IAR** tab to open the IAR List of Meetings page (IAR0001). See *Viewing Meeting Information* on page 4 for more information.

Concurrent Log Ins

You may be logged in to the eRA Commons for only one session at a time. If you attempt to log in to another session (using a second browser instance), the system gives you the option of either terminating the first session or canceling the request.

Password Expiration Notification

For security purposes, eRA Commons user passwords expire and must be reset. If your password is about to expire, a "password close to expiration" message is generated when you log in.

If you get this notification, you will be directed to select a new password. When you change your password, you do not need to notify anyone.

Printing Screens

All web pages in IAR can be printed using your browser's standard print feature in order to provide a hard copy report of what you see on the screen.

Logging Out

Logging out of the eRA Commons ends your current session. The top of each page contains a Logout hyperlink.

Creating/Accessing an IAR Account

Your SRA/GTA grants you access to use IAR to submit and view critiques for applications in meetings. When this happens, you receive an email informing you of your ability to access IAR. If you do not yet have an IAR account, the email directs you to create a new IAR account. If you already have an IAR account, you are directed to access the eRA Commons Login page.

To create a new account:

1. Click the hyperlink in the email to open the NIH eRA Commons and the Create New Account page.
2. In the account form, enter the requested information noting the following:
 - If a field name is followed by an asterisk (*), it is a required field.
 - The username has a 6 character minimum and a 20 character maximum.
 - Passwords must contain a minimum of six characters. For additional protection, include a combination of letters and numbers.
3. Click **Submit** to enter the information. After your account information has been reviewed and authorized, you will receive a notification email containing the URL to the NIH eRA Commons Login page.

To access IAR if you already have an IAR account or once you receive the notification email:

1. Click the hyperlink in the email to open the eRA Commons Login page.
2. Log in as described in Logging In to IAR on page 2.
3. Select the **IAR** tab to open the List of Meetings page (IAR0001)

Viewing Meeting Information

The List of Meetings page shows all the meetings where you have assignments and the meeting is in the Read, Submit, or Edit Phase. This is a display-only page; none of the information can be edited.

- Log in as described in Logging In to IAR on page 2.

Table 1 List of Meeting Page Information

| Column | Description |
|------------------------|--|
| Meeting | <p>Includes the meeting identifier and the meeting title.</p> <p>The meeting identifier is made up of seven fields: Council Date (in YYYY/MM format), IRG (SRG) Code, IRG (SRG) Flex Code, SRA Designator Code, SRA Flex Code, Group Code, Group Extension Code, and the Workgroup Number.</p> <p>An example of an SRG Meeting is 2002/10 PC-1 (01)</p> <p>An example of a SEP Meeting is 2002/10 ZRG1 SRG-F (GC) X 001</p> <p>The title indicates the title of the meeting or the panel name if the meeting is a SEP.</p> |
| Meeting Dates/Location | <p>The dates that the actual meeting starts and ends and the hotel name, city, and state where the meeting is being held.</p> |
| SRA Name | <p>The first and last names, the work telephone number, and the work email address of the SRA. The latter is in the form of a hyperlink so that an email can be sent to the SRA.</p> |
| Phase | <p>The current IAR phase for the meeting.</p> |
| Critique Due | <p>The date and time critiques are due. This is also known as the Submit phase end date.</p> |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Read Phase End | The Read phase end date and time. |
| Edit Phase End | The Edit phase end date and time. |
| Action | Area that provides a hyperlink to open the List of Applications page. |

Viewing Application Information

The List of Applications page lets you view information about the applications in your meeting and provides access to actions such as submitting and viewing critiques. The data viewed on the List of Applications page is customized based on the current IAR phase and the type of reviewer you are. By default, the page initially shows only applications assigned to you but it provides access to show all applications in the meeting if your SRA/GTA has opened the meeting for unassigned critiques or comments to be posted.

Note:

Mail reviewers can only see their own assigned applications.

By default, you are blocked from reading application critiques submitted by other reviewers before you submit your own critique. This default may be changed for selected reviewers by the SRA/GTA.

Applications with conflicts are marked COI and have no links available for submitting, deleting, or viewing a critique.

1. From the List of Meetings page, click the **View List of Applications** hyperlink (in the Action column) to open up the List of Applications page (IAR0007) with your assigned applications.

When the meeting is in the Submit phase:

- Each application has a link for submitting a critique. If you have already submitted a critique, there are also links for deleting and viewing the critique.

When the meeting is in the Read phase:

- Based on the whether or not you have been permitted by your SRA/GTA to view the critiques of other reviewers, the list of available applications with either list only assigned applications or will list all reviewed applications.
- If you have not yet submitted a critique on an application and are blocked from reading the critiques of other reviewers, only the Submit option will be available for blocked applications.
- The other applications will each have a link for viewing critiques.

When the meeting is in the Edit phase:

- Each application has a link for submitting a critique. If you have already submitted a critique, there are also links for deleting and viewing the critique.
- If you have not yet submitted a critique on an application and are blocked from reading the critiques of other reviewers, only the Submit option will be available for blocked applications.

List of Applications Page—Meeting Information

Meeting information, listed in Table 2, is displayed on the top of the page and is the same for any of the [IAR phases](#).

Note: All times are listed according to Eastern Standard/Daylight Savings Time.

Table 2 List of Applications Page—Meeting Information

| Column | Description |
|---------------|---|
| Meeting Title | The title of the meeting or the panel name if the meeting is a SEP. |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Meeting Identifier | The meeting identifier is made up of seven fields: Council Date (in YYYY/MM format), IRG (SRG) Code, IRG (SRG) Flex Code, SRA Designator Code, SRA Flex Code, Group Code, Group Extension Code, and the Workgroup Number. An example of an SRG Meeting is 2002/10 PC-1 (01) An example of a SEP Meeting is 2002/10 ZRG1 SRG-F (GC) X 001 |
| Meeting Phase | The current IAR phase for the meeting; Submit, Read, or Edit. |
| Meeting Dates | The dates that the actual meeting starts and ends. |
| Critiques Due | The date and time critiques are due. This is also known as the Submit phase end date. |

List of Applications Page—Link Information

The links at the top of the application list table provide ways to navigate in IAR and various ways to view the application information. The links are described in Table 3.

Table 3 List of Applications Page—Link Information

| Link | Description | Viewed in IAR Phase |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Back to List of Meetings | Returns you to the List of Meetings page. Use this link instead of using the browser's Back button. | All |
| Show All Applications | Shows all applications for the meeting, including those with conflicts. | All |
| Show Assigned Applications | Shows all the applications that are assigned to you. This is the default view when you first access the List of Applications page. | Submit |
| View My Critiques | Opens Adobe Acrobat with a PDF file of all critiques that you have submitted so far. | All |
| List My Assignments Only | Shows the applications that have been assigned to you. | Read, Edit |
| View Score Matrix | Shows the score matrix for applications in the meeting. See <i>Viewing the Score Matrix</i> on page 8 for more information. | Read |
| View All Meeting Critiques | Opens Adobe Acrobat with a PDF file of all critiques for all applications in a meeting. | Read, Edit |
| View all Critiques for Assigned Applications | Opens Adobe Acrobat with a PDF file of all critiques you have submitted for your assigned applications in a meeting. | Read, Edit |
| View All Critiques | Opens Adobe Acrobat with a PDF file of all critiques submitted for a specific application in a meeting. | Read, Edit |

List of Applications Page—Application Information

The information listed in the table of applications is sorted by last name of the PI with a secondary sort by application number (Activity Code/IC/Serial Number). Table 4 describes the information available in the application list.

Table 4 List of Applications Page—Application Information

| Column | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| Application | Lists the full application number. This column also provides a link to view all critiques. During the Submit phase, only a PDF link is available. If the Submit phase end date has passed, a link to a Microsoft Word format pre-summary statement body is listed (if a summary statement exists for the application). |
| PI Name | Lists the last name, first name of the principal investigator. |
| New PI | Indicates (Y/N) if the application is from a new investigator. |
| Title | Lists the project title of the grant application. |
| Reviewer (Role) | Lists the last name, first name of the reviewer and indicates the reviewer's role (primary, secondary, etc.). |
| Score | The preliminary score for the application. If available, an average score for each application is listed. |
| Submitted Date | If a critique has been submitted, indicates the date and time that the critique was submitted. Note: All times are listed according to Eastern Standard/Daylight Savings Time. |
| Action | Lists the various options available for the specific application (Submit, View, Delete) |

Viewing SRA/GTA Contact Information

Contact information is provided as a convenient way to contact your SRA/GTA for discussing issues that may arise. (for example, when there are assignment discrepancies or conflicts of interest with an application viewed in IAR).

1. Click the SRA/GTA hyperlink located at the bottom of the List of Applications page to open the SRA/GTA Name and Contact Information page (IAR0010). The page displays SRA/GTA name, telephone number and email address.
2. The email address is in the form of a hyperlink so that an email can be sent to the SRA/GTA. Click the hyperlink to open your default email program.

Submitting Critiques/Scores

You can submit critiques and scores for your assigned applications during the Submit and Edit phases. During the Read phase, only reviewers who have missed the due date may submit late critiques.

Note:

Only critiques uploaded in Microsoft Word format (with a *.doc extension) or in plain text format (with a *.txt extension) can be submitted.

Critiques cannot be edited online and must be resubmitted if you want to make changes to a previously submitted critique. Critiques cannot be resubmitted during the Read phase.

The WP Greek font family is not supported during the conversion of uploaded critiques to Adobe PDF. In order to include Greek characters (for example, α or β) insert them as symbols within the Microsoft Word document.

Unassigned reviewers can not submit scores for any applications.

1. Log in to IAR as described in Logging In to IAR on page 2.
2. From the List of Meetings page, click the **View List of Applications** hyperlink (in the Action column) to open the List of Applications page (IAR0007).

3. Click the **Submit** hyperlink in the Action column for the desired application to open the Submit Critique and Preliminary Score page (IAR0011).
4. Enter the full path and filename (including extension) of the critique or click **Browse** button to locate the file.
5. If applicable, either a numeric score or a score code can be entered (see *Submit Critique and Preliminary Score Page Information* for more information about the score code). A numeric score must be within a range of 1.0–5.0.
6. Click **Submit** to upload the file. The file is checked for the proper file type and is virus-checked.
7. IAR displays a validation message with an option to cancel or submit critique and score. Click **Submit** to finalize the submission and view a confirmation message that your critique and score were updated.

Special Considerations for Review Criteria

The following special considerations are part of the review criteria:

- protection of human subjects from research risks
- data and safety monitoring
- inclusion of women
- inclusion of minorities
- inclusion of children
- animal welfare
- biohazards

This above list is not inclusive; other criteria may apply for a specific review group. Contact your SRA for guidance.

Submit Critique and Preliminary Score Page Information

Table 5 describes the information included on the Submit Critique and Preliminary Score page.

Table 5 *Submit Critique and Preliminary Score Page Information*

| Field | Description |
|-----------------|--|
| Application | A display-only field that lists the application number (activity code/IC/serial) |
| Title | A display-only field that lists the project title of the grant application. |
| PI Name | A display-only field that lists the last name, first name of the principal investigator. |
| Assignment Role | A display-only field that lists the reviewer's role (primary, secondary, etc.). |
| Critique File | The field where you enter the full path and filename of the critique file on your computer. |
| Score | The field where you enter either the numeric score (from 1.0–5.0) or a score code of NR (not recommended), UN/NC (unscored/not competitive), or DF (deferred). Only one option is permitted. |

Viewing Critiques

Your ability to view critiques depends upon the type of reviewer that you are and the current IAR phase that the meeting is in. Critiques cannot be modified during the Read Phase and you will not be able to view critiques and

scores for applications where you have conflicts of interest. When there is more than one critique to display, the critiques are merged into one file with each critique printed on a new page.

Regular reviewers—During the Read phase, you can usually view critiques posted by other reviewers to help you prepare for review meeting discussions. However, if you have not submitted your critique during the Submit phase, your SRA/GTA can block you from reading other critiques until you have submitted your own. If you are blocked from reading, you must submit your critique before you will be able to read other critiques.

Mail reviewers—You will not be able to view critiques that are submitted by other reviewers.

During the Submit phase, you can view critiques you have submitted from the List of Applications page, one at a time. During the Read Phase, you can view critiques in several ways:

- all critiques for all applications in a specific meeting
- all of your own critiques for a specific meeting
- all critiques for your assigned applications
- all critiques for one application merged into one file

Note: Subprojects are treated like all other applications. For example, if you are assigned to two subprojects and don't submit a critique on time for one of them, if the SRA/GTA blocks you from viewing other critiques you only will be blocked from viewing critiques for the specific subproject that doesn't yet have a critique submitted.

1. From the List of Meetings page, click the **View List of Applications** hyperlink (in the Action column) to open the List of Applications page (IAR0007).
2. To view an individual critique (during all IAR phases):
 - Click the **View** hyperlink in the Action column for the desired application. The critique is usually viewed in Adobe PDF, but may be displayed in the original Word/text format if the conversion hasn't yet occurred.
3. To view critiques for all applications in a meeting (during the IAR Read/Edit phases only):
 - Click the **View All Meeting Critiques** hyperlink. An Adobe PDF document of all critiques for all applications is created. The critiques are listed in order of application number with a secondary sort on the reviewer assignment role. Critiques for applications where there are conflicts of interest are omitted from the document.
4. To view all critiques that you have submitted (during all IAR phases):
 - Click the **View My Critiques** hyperlink. An Adobe PDF document of all your critiques is created.
5. To view all critiques that you have submitted for your assigned applications (during the IAR Read/Edit phases only):
 - Click the **View All Critiques for Assigned Applications** hyperlink. An Adobe PDF document of all your critiques is created.
6. To view all critiques submitted for a specific application (during the IAR Read/Edit phases only):
 - Click the **View All Critiques** hyperlink that appears under the Application column for the desired application. An Adobe PDF document of all critiques for the application is created. The critiques are listed in order of reviewer assignment role.

Viewing the Score Matrix

The Score Matrix page is used by the SRA/GTA during the Submit and Read phases to designate which applications should be categorized as lower half. Your ability to view the Score Matrix page depends upon the type of reviewer that you are and the current IAR phase that the meeting is in. The Score Matrix is available in two views—Show All Applications (the default view) and Show Lower Half Applications Only.

Regular reviewers—The score matrix page is available (display-only) during the Read phase, but only for applications where there is no conflict of interest. If you are blocked by your SRA/GTA from reading critiques for applications where you haven't yet submitted a critique, you are also blocked from seeing scores for those applications.

Telephone reviewers—The score matrix page is available (display-only) during the Read phase, but only for applications where there is no conflict of interest.

Mail reviewers—You do not have access to the Score Matrix page at all.

Note: Subprojects are sorted under the parent application (the applications are grouped by the parent PI name). The subproject itself lists the Core Leader name and not the parent PI name.

To access the Score Matrix page:

1. Log in to IAR as described in Logging In to IAR on page 2.
2. From the List of Meetings page, click the **View List of Applications** hyperlink in the Action column to open up the List of Applications page (IAR0007).
3. Click the **View Score Matrix** hyperlink located below the meeting information at the top of the page. The View Score Matrix page (IAR0008) opens. By default, all applications are listed and sorted PI name.
4. To view lower half applications only:
 - Click the **Show Lower Half Applications Only** hyperlink.

Table 6 describes the information included on the View Score Matrix page.

Table 6 *Score Matrix Page Information*

| Column | Description |
|---------------------|---|
| Application Number | Lists the full application number. This column can be sorted by either activity/IC/serial number or by IC/serial number. |
| PI Name [Conflicts] | Lists the PI last name, first name with an indication if the PI has at least one conflict of interest. This column can be sorted by activity/PI name or by PI name. |
| Lower Half | Indicates (by an X) if the application is marked for inclusion into the lower half. The column can be sorted either by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LH/ACT/PI/AVG (lower half/activity code/PI name/average)—lists applications without lower half designation and without an average score first, then the lower half applications, then average score in descending order.• LH/PI/AVG (lower half/PI name/average)—lists applications without lower half designation and without an average score first, then the lower half applications, then average score in descending order. |
| AVG | Lists the average score for applications that are scored with numeric scores only. The column can be sorted by applications with no average and no lower half designation first, then the average score in ascending order, and then all applications designated as lower half. |
| Scores | Lists the individual preliminary scores submitted for the applications. |