

# eRA Update

Presented to the Extramural Policy and  
Management Committee (EPMC)

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March 3, 2005



# Agenda

- Paperless mailers
- eSNAP electronic submission required date
- 424 R&R data set update
- Electronic Documents
  - NCI/NIDDK Systems
  - NINDS Approach
  - Receipt of electronic documents
  - How to proceed

# Paperless Mailers

- A decision is required to stop producing and mailing paper notifications to institutions and PI's registered in the NIH/eRA commons (Stanfield, EPMC).
- All paper mailers can be discontinued by January 10, 2007.
- Some specific electronic notifications can replace mailers within 9 months.
- Phase-in and communications plan
  - Increase Commons registrations (now at 65-70% of awardees)

# Requiring eSNAP Submissions

- eRA system can be prepared to accept all SNAPs electronically by October 2006 (need decision)
  - o Through the Commons
  - o Through a system to system option (eRA eXchange)
- Phase-in and communications plan
  - o Increase Commons registrations (now at 65-70% of awardees)
- Does approval for this action begin with EPMC?

# SF 424 R&R UPDATE

Issue remains not to mix 398 & 424 applications in review

Current proposal is to try to convert by mechanism starting with R03, R21

More time needed for more complex mechanisms

NIH "agency-specific" forms are almost final

IT is working closely with policy

# 424 R&R UPDATE

Should we proceed with this conversion whether or not paper or electronic submissions are possible?

- getting ourselves ready
- getting external communities ready

# 424 R&R Project Plan

- Currently developing an issues/recommendations list
  - o Participation by GM focus group
  - o Needs to expand to program and review
- Identify needed resources to implement plan (nobody has enough time)
  - o Select contractor
- Develop task list
- Detailed timeline/milestones
  1. Need a comprehensive application guide (NSF model)
  2. Test use of 424 in the spring/early summer

# Electronic Documents

**Multiple solutions have been developed**

- **NCI– eGrants.**
  - Official grant files reside in a separate electronic database
  - no paper grant files.
  - Portfolios processed 100% electronically
- **NIDDK–mixed model**
  - Uses separate database
  - Official files include paper and electronic data
- **NINDS–mixed model**
  - Uses eRA data systems
  - Official files include paper and electronic data

# Electronic Documents – NCI's eGrants

Features currently **not** available from the eRA Grant Folder.

- **Digital upload and indexing of new documents regardless of source**
- **Documents are indexed and uploaded into the grant file over the Internet in a secure fashion.**
- **Security safeguards include: retention of original copy; maintenance of digital signatures for authentication; authorized users modify files.**
- **Full text data search from individual documents.**

# Electronic Documents – NIDDK's eFile.traks

## Features Currently not available from the eRA Grant Folder (mixed media solution):

- **Manages, tracks, and locates both paper and electronic applications**
- **Barcodes used for folder checkout and checkin, reduces data entry errors, expedites tasks, and minimizes staffing needs.**
- **Includes an internal document viewer that is capable of viewing over 250 file formats including Microsoft Office and scanned images.**
- **Users can scan directly into the system from any TWAIN-compatible scanner.**

# Electronic Documents – NIDDK's eFile.traks

## Additional Features

- Accommodates different business processes
- Use of Microsoft standards makes it familiar and user-friendly.
- Supports an unlimited number of customer defined fields per data view.
- Easy to use search tool to quickly find grant information, whether paper or electronic.

# Electronic Documents – NINDS approach

- Mixed Media solution
- As of October 1, 2004 the official grant file combines existing paper file **and** information and documents stored in the eRA data base.
  - This policy will continue until a complete transition to eRA systems occurs in the future.
- NINDS savings include substantial reductions in space requirements and increased efficiency
- NINDS

[http://intranet.ninds.nih.gov/extramural/gmb/docs/electronic\\_grant\\_file\\_and\\_admin.doc](http://intranet.ninds.nih.gov/extramural/gmb/docs/electronic_grant_file_and_admin.doc)

# Electronic Documents

- **eGrants** has been in use for five years. Six ICs are now using it.
- **eGrants** allows ICs to fully leverage the current NIH central scanning initiatives.
- NIDDK and NINDS models offer a solution for ICs that do not digitize their legacy files

# Electronic Documents – moving forward

- **ERA does not plan to digitize all the data for the grant folder**
  - Plans to capitalize on the use of data stored in the system
  - Standard documents (e.g. JIT mailer) only require a record of an event that happened, and a link
- **Use documents or sections of documents more efficiently**
- **Submit all requests via the commons to eliminate the need for scanning or adding externally generated documents**
- **Take advantage of commonly used external systems through links (iEdison, F & A Agreement Database, Foreign Clearance Module)**
  - eRA's role only needs to be to interact with them to maintain the integrity of our common database