eRA Commons Working Group (CWG) Meeting Notes

Meeting Details:

Tuesday, May 13, 2014
1-3 p.m.
Washington Court Hotel
Room: Springwood Hall
525 New Jersey Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202.628.2100

Next Meeting:

Note: The CWG Meeting for September will be Wednesday September 10, 2014 from 1:30-3:30pm at the Keck Center (500 Fifth St., N.W.) Details to follow.

Open remarks:

Megan Columbus started the meeting with updates on some personnel changes:

- Jessie Floura has replaces Scott Rieland as the Customer Relationship Manager CRM for eSubmission.
- Scott Rieland is now the CRM for iEdison as well as other responsibilities.
- Emily Linde, RPPR policy lead, has taken a position as deputy Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) grants management office.
- Stacey Kocher, Branch Chief, Customer Services, has taken a position in grants management in the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Commons Update – Scarlett Gibb

- Multiyear Funding (MYF) RPPR now mandated by policy
- Several corrections and fixes were put into place in the April release

- FCOI Changes
  - Roles now for ASST and VIEW, no longer delegations
  - Timing of notifications to SOs is now 75 days prior to the next budget period start date
  - Link in Status will also appear now 75 days prior to the next budget period start date
- Institutional Profile Form (IPF) will be updated to look and function like the Personal Profile Form (PPF)
  - IPF will now list all DUNS numbers associated with the Institution
  - Primary DUNS will be locked and if change needed helpdesk will be POC
  - Primary DUNS would the DUNS used to submit applications to NIH
  - This is change is the result of the need to accurately report all funding that an Institution is receiving for both grants and contracts
  - HHS/NIH contract awards use a different mechanism and do not come through Grants.gov, but for internal reporting purposes, it is important to show how much funding, regardless of type, an institution is receiving.

o   There will be no information sharing or cross over between recipients of grants vs. recipients of contracts

RPPR Non-SNAP Feedback? Group Discussion
- Feedback on RPPR
  o   Overall working great
  o   Someone mentioned an instance of a PDF appearing upside down when added via upload process
      ▪   Scarlett to test to determine cause
  o   Difficult to get publication issues resolved
      ▪   In July a change to PRAM functionality:
          •   Public Access link will be upload accessible, saving a step when providing documentation
  o   Next CWG, we will invite Public Access people to participate as several issues related to publications were mentioned.
      ▪   Seems that many of the publication issues are a result of growing pains for a new system
      ▪   Previously publications were not electronically enforced, so some sites have a backlog of issues to address
      ▪   Difficult to understand what the problem is with publications
  o   Could use better instructions for completing the overall report
  o   New sub-award component budget data form coming in RPPR
  o   Request for more RPPR email notifications:
      ▪   Include link to PubMed for AORs/SOs
      ▪   Reminders when to submit RPPR
      ▪   Institutions need to remember if SOs change over a multiyear grant, notifications may be going to the wrong address
      ▪   Scarlett to review what notifications go out and to who, wants to confirm that grant contact address is included

eSubmission Update – Jessie Floura
- ASSIST being handled as one more tool in our suite of esubmission related applications/processes.
- Changes in April release include:
  o   Abandoned components are hidden from view
  o   Applicants can change the order of components, within the component type prior to submission
- A more dynamic way of displaying cell lines has been implemented on the PHS Cover Page Supplement form.
- Coming Soon (June Out of Cycle release):
  o   10 year budget form that will be used for particular FOAs for Single Project Submissions
  o   ASSIST budget screen only allows 5 free-form other personnel entries in section B and is being fixed to allow 6 to match the Grants.gov form
  o   Commons user ID should be required in PD/PI Credential field for component leads in multi-project applications, but is currently not properly enforced. Validation will be corrected to ensure appropriate enforcement of the rule
  o   Senior/Key Person biosketch will be accepted at up to 5 pages to accommodate a new biosketch format currently being piloted on an FOA-by-FOA basis

- System will accept without error/warning less than 5 pages
- System will give a warning at 5 pages (standard 4 page limit applies unless FOA specifically allows new format)
- System will give an error for greater than 5 pages
- July Release
  - Implement Delete entire application or component in ASSIST
  - Implement Copy Application functionality
  - For fellowship grants and S2S submissions – Submitting an application with a degree completion date on the PHS Fellowship Supplemental form in any format other than what is expected (MM/YYYY) currently results in a system error. A validation will be implemented to handle the scenario more gracefully.

1. **Next Generation of ASSIST: Single Projects**
   Presenters: Jessie Floura, Sheri Cummins, and Megan Columbus
   - Requirements gather/development underway to offer ASSIST as an option for single project applications.
     Opening ASSIST up to single project submission will allow for pre-validation of application
     - Applicants will have options for submission
       - ASSIST
       - Downloadable Forms
       - S2S
     - Will provide S2S providers with access to validation engine (no time frame determined)
     - QUESTION: From last meeting, what about legacy data in Commons? Will deleting actually delete data?
     - ANSWER: Not at this time.
       - Old Data (unfunded applications, rejected applications) would be hidden from view to clean up environment
       - Data would continue to exist in DB, but would not be accessible by system or user
       - At some point, due to storage limits, data will eventually need to be permanently purged from the DB
       - Policy of retention time not yet established
     - ASSIST is designed to be non-agency specific and NIH remains open to sharing ASSIST in whole or in part with Grants.gov or other agencies
     - Coming soon, a survey of the email notifications
       - How to make them more friendly, better information, more useful
       - What notifications should we add, change and discard
   - QUESTION: ASSIST doesn't provide the same level of validation for leadership plan on other components as is done for the overall component. Are co-leaders on a component allowed?
   - ANSWER: NIH only recognizes multi-PD/PI at the entire application level. There is no policy for or against proposing multiple leaders for a component. Therefore, ASSIST does not do any systematic checks at the component level.
   - QUESTION: Why don't we get notifications for changes in FOA from Grants.gov?
   - ANSWER: NIH has an open Software Change Request with Grants.gov to correct issues with their email notifications. The notifications include misleading information when multiple application packages exist under the same FOA. Consequently, NIH often suppresses the notifications from

Grants.gov and issues targeted communications to the subscription list or notices in the NIH Guide.

- QUESTION: At the last CWG we discussed an issue with indirect costs. What is the status of that fix?
- ANSWER: New indirect budget form going to Grants.gov now for use with new multi-project FOAs. Though RPPR will not use the new form (doesn't go through Grants.gov), eRA will implement a similar enhancement in RPPR to collect the same data.

2. Advances in Federation Login
Presenters: Jim Seach and Scarlett Gibb

- FDP made the request for NIH to move to a Federated Login.
- We needed to investigate the impact on Commons and what security concerns it would create.
- Have to determine what roles are allowed access to the Institution's data
  - Iteration 1: In October 2014, we will pilot federated login with those holding minimal access (basic) roles, such as Scientist, Grad Student, Post-grad Student. These roles can only access their individual Personal Profile Form.
  - Start with roles that provide minimal access to test configuration
  - Iteration 2: After Level 1 is tested. PIs' will be able to access their PPF and all their applications/grants.
- Will need to test for people with different logins, roles and delegations.
- This will be most helpful to the PIs.
- CWG attendees expressed support for moving in this direction

3. iEdison Integration with eRA
Presenter: Megan Columbus

- iEdison has been brought into the fold of eRA. While you won't be seeing changes to the front end of the system in the near future, we are making advances.
- New iEdison web pages close to release [update, the new page has been released. See http://era.nih.gov/iedison/iedison.cfm.
  - Updated documentation
  - Updated policy information
  - Online Help
  - New resources
- iEdison Help Desk is now part of the eRA Help Desk
- Technical integration
  - Tech refresh in January
  - Support ticket tracking via eRA Help Desk
  - CRM assigned to iEdison (Scott Rieland)
  - Dedicated development cycles and resources
  - Business rules in review
  - Currently no dedicated funding for deep improvements, but as part of the standard development cycle improvements can continue to be made
- What would the group see as beneficial points of integration?
  - Integration with Closeout Process
  - Final Invention Report
  - Integration with Change of Institution
  - Transfer of patents rights (or not) from one institution to another
  - Relinquished patent rights by institution, reverted back to PI

- o What does PI need to do?
- o Checking on patent information
- o Work will need to be done to identify duplicate institutions between the two systems
- o Decouple individuals from institutions
- o Identify when an institution is using NIH $ and when it is not when registering
- o The Ability to query for patent application information would be very helpful
    - ▪ That will require an examination of policy / business rules and relationships between information and who is doing the query

4. **Wrap-up & General Discussion**
   Presenters: All
   - QUESTION: With FCOI, how does one handle staff members on a leave of absence or vacation but will be returning to work on a project? Does FCOI need to be completed while they are away? (Institution has a policy not to contact staff while away.)
   - ANSWER: Best to email the FCOI email address (FCOICompliance@mail.nih.gov) to get answer from policy experts as this is a compliance question, not a submission question.
   - QUESTION: xTrack from last CWG, what is happening with that project?
     - o xTrack: A new system to manage training data
   - ANSWER: Still in review based on the feedback on training forms
     - o Anticipating an update in fall 2014
     - o How to best capture complex data for training tables
     - o Determine what data is needed, what is redundant so forms can be simplified
   - Compliments to ASSIST S2S development team… Service providers conducted over 300 submission tests of complex applications, one which was 72 thousand pages and it passed through the system without issue!