Electronic Research Administration
A program of the National Institutes of Health

eRA Commons Working Group (CWG) Meeting Agenda

Meeting Details:

Tuesday, May 14, 2013
1-3 p.m.
Washington Court Hotel
Room: Springwood Hall
525 New Jersey Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202.628.2100

Agenda Items:

1. eRA Commons/ASSIST Updates

- **eRA Commons**:
  - Big change for July will be the Personal Profile update
  - Profile information requested will be role based
    - Information specific for PI, Trainee, Reviewer, SO, PI, etc.
  - Missing required date will be highlighted
- The PPF update will not require action by Commons registered users for proposal submission
- Upcoming releases
  - eSNAP option will be removed from user interface in July
  - October Release will include the rest of RPPR reporting (budgets, training, and multi-project)
  - Asking for pilot institutions to test non-SNAP RPPRs, particularly Ts
  - Contact Maria Koszalka if you wish to participate
    - NOTE: Because this is a paper to electronic transition process of a proven system (just an expansion of the existing electronic RPPR), no extensions to deadlines can be granted
    - As is our usual practice, should a system issue arise that prevents an on-time submission of a report, eRA will work with the submitting institution to resolve the issue as quickly as possible and provide extensions of submission deadlines when appropriate
- **eSubmission** (handout)
  - Forms update from Adobe B1/B2 to Forms-C
  - Most activity codes will require Forms C for the September 25, 2013 submission date
  - Exceptions
    - FOAs with activity codes of K, F, and T will transition for due dates of January 25, 2014 and beyond.
    - Small Business (SBIR/STTR) will transition after new forms for reauthorization are implemented to avoid 2 forms updates in the same year
  - OMB cleared SF 424 (R&R) and PHS forms available in AT07

    - New forms include new Inclusion data forms and most application packages will have the Inclusion forms listed as “optional” – read the FOA to confirm if it is required
    - Guide Notice will be posted soon to provide details of the forms transition
    - NIH is developing style sheets for the application image generation
        - Will provide application images that are easier to read with bigger fonts and distracting highlights removed
        - Will make images more 508 compliant
        - Will provide more control of image formatting
        - Style sheets will be available on the eRA website by mid-June for S2S
        - NIH is developing the style sheets for all NIH supported forms (SF424 & PHS forms)
    - New validations document will be posted within a week
- **ASSIST**
    - Transition timeline for esubmisison of complex applications has been updated
        - R24 and U24 will be rolled back to single project applications using the downloadable forms
        - U54 and UM1 will be transitioned to May 25, 2014
    - **Q**: Pilot - How has it been going? **A:**
        - Submissions for 3 FOAs have been received
        - About a dozen submitted applications per FOA
        - Many of the updates to the July release address customer feedback from the pilot
        - 2 basic groups of applicants
            - People who have used electronic forms and Grants.gov
                - Fairly easy transition for these users as they are more familiar with procedures
            - People who only have ever submitted via paper
                - Some angst for these users
                - Not familiar with process
                - No used to strict rules of electronic process
                - Nothing that can’t be overcome with experience
    - **Q:** What is the status of the export/import of components functionality?
    - **A:** On wish-list, but currently no budget for development
    - Upcoming release
        - Forms-C Support
        - DUNS+4 Support
        - Tentative: Submission Validation Service (SVS) for external users
            - Validate entire application or single component
            - To be available in Ext-UAT by end of May
    - **Q:** Will SVS be available for single-project applications?
    - **A:** On wish-list, but currently no budget for development. However discussions are active for allocating funds to support this development

Presenters: Sheri Cummins and Scarlett Gibb
Time: 15 minutes

2. Roles and Rights Discussion Continued

- Looking at existing roles and rights in Commons
    - What are we looking for?
        - The desire to assign specific rights (privileges) to specific users
        - The ability to package rights into a customer defined role
        - The need to accommodate varying definitions of what an signing official (SO) should be able to do. For example, some need ability to submit but not to manage accounts.
    - ASSIST – Flexible privilege based approach is easy because ASSIST was engineered with this in mind
    - Commons was not built on assignable rights concept
        - Would require a deep structural change in Commons
        - Not currently budgeted for that kind of change
    - What can be done now: Addition of new roles or add/remove rights to existing roles.
        - No limit on number of roles that can be created (other than time/budget/usability constraints)
        - Need to consider combinations of roles, not to create conflicts
        - Need to consider how institutions/organizations are using current roles, don't want to change current roles and disrupt workflow, better to just create new roles
    - For Next Discussion in September CWG Meeting
        - Need complete matrix of privileges
        - Need workflow of routing process of various submissions
        - Need complete outline of delegation options
        - Need to understand ALL transactions within Commons
- Comment was made that this was a good start and people appreciated having the opportunity to discuss options

Presenters: Scarlett Gibb and Sheri Cummins
Time: 30 minutes

3. Inclusion Project

- Forms for inclusion (of women and minorities) have changed, new look and feel
    - Inclusion data on women and minorities is a federal requirement for federally funded clinical research that involves human subjects if not covered by an E4 IRB exemption
- NIH will start using the structured forms in July as part of the new application packages for Forms-C.
- Post-submission updates in the Commons can be done by the PI
    - If information is required, an Inclusion link will appear on the Status screen
    - SO search screen will include a single checkbox to display grants that have "Pending Inclusion Actions"
- The workflow for making updates after submission (new screens)
    - Need to consider terminology… study vs. form vs. record.
    - Form Inclusion – Manage Inclusion Data Records (IDRs), change link from "Submit new Planned Inclusion Form" to "Submit (or Add) new Inclusion Record"
- May see requests for Inclusion data more frequently than yearly progress reports.
    - Currently, all reports are routed from PI to SO for Submission

    - For interim reporting (not the required yearly RPPR), may need to engineer a delegation option for submit and updating data so interim reports do not need to be routed to SO – this is post award, non-competing information
- Multi-projects will have data rolled up to the parent grant level when viewed in Commons
- at this point because Grants.gov does not support duplication of fields
- May see requests for Inclusion data more frequently then yearly progress reports.
    - Currently, all reports are routed from PI to SO for Submission
    - For interim reporting (not the required yearly RPPR), may need to engineer a delegation option for submit and updating data so interim reports do not need to be routed to SO – this is post award, non-competing information
- Multi-projects will have individual inclusion data for each component
    - Data will be rolled up to the parent grant level when viewed in Commons

Presenters: Daniel Fox
Time: 20 minutes

4. Help Desk: Report to Organizations

- New ticketing system has been in place for 6 months now
- Transition has gone well
- Attempting meet the request for institutions/organizations to have access to data of all tickets submitted from their staff
    - Defining who "owns" the information is an issue that has challenged the attempt to honor the request
    - Data on a specific application and/or grant is easy as it the property of the institution/organization
    - Data concerning a PI and data related to the PI can be problematic
    - PI's keep accounts for lifetime of career
    - PI's can be affiliated with a number of institutions/organizations
    - The benefits of report ticket data is potential high to identify training needs, misconceptions, and recurring mistakes but Help Desk needs clear definition of what data can/should be shared when a requests for aggregate information is made
    - Regardless of the type of request, need to be able to clearly identify the institution/organization from which the request is coming
- The suggestion was made to add a note to Help Desk system with a disclosure statement… may be something like: "Help Desk data will be provided to institution/organization upon request by authorized personnel."

Presenter: Dave Hunter
Time: 10 minutes

5. Support Processes for Public Access Data

- Management of Public Access data deals with three different system, each with their own help desk resources
  - NIH Manuscript Submission (NIHMS) system
  - My NCBI (National Center for Biotechnology Information)
  - eRA Commons
- Who to contact when a publication is not compliant?
  - New coordinated effort between the 3 systems to avoid the Help Desk “pass around” (each help desk referring a customer to the next help desk)
  - Regular meetings between key managers (Scarlett Gibb, Dave Hunter and Neil Thakur) with the objectives of:
    - Stop the pass around process – Help Desk staff (regardless of which desk is contacted) will take ownership of the request and research the solution for the customer.
    - Understand the End-to-End process – staff need additional internal education to understand what is involved in the entire process to better understand what the issues may be
    - Triage the problem better – by knowing the end-to-end processes, staff can better identify which systems may be involved in the issue, this will improve response and solution times
- If needed, escalate requests to PublicAccess@nih.gov

Presenter: Scarlett Gibb
Time: 10 minutes

6. Announcements/Information

- Sheri Cummins’ role is changing: She will be moving from her role as Customer Relations Manager for eSubmission and joining Megan Columbus’s Communications team. She will be heading up the outreach programs for ASSIST and other eSubmission related topics

Presenters: Federal Staff
Time: 20 minutes

7. General Discussion

- **Q:** Why do sub-awards need a physical signature on the documentation? Process becomes printing, signing, scanning, emailing, submitting. Why are electronic signatures not allowed?
- **A:** It is still a “paper” process so physical signatures are required. While the handling of the documents may electronic components, ultimately the intuition/organization must still be able to produce a paper document with the physical signature. It is important to note, with the addition of ASSIST and RPPR soon (within a year) all submissions will be purely electronic and the digital signature process will be used.
- **Q:** Can the routing/forwarding process in xTrain for Termination Notices be changed? It is difficult to get the notifications to the correct person when a trainee has left an institution/organization and did not complete the termination process. This is also true for non-compliant publications.
- **A:** Sounds like a wonderful enhancement. But remember that trainees and PI keep their accounts for life so they can be unaffiliated and re-affiliated with your institution/organization as often as needed for them to complete the work.

Presenters: All
Time: 15 minutes

Next Meeting Details:

Tuesday, September 17, 2013
1-3 p.m.
Washington Court Hotel
Room: **TBA**
525 New Jersey Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202.628.2100