



eRA Commons Working Group (CWG) Meeting Notes

Meeting Details:

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

Agenda Items:

1. eRA Commons Updates

- Recent changes
 - July saw the release of the new Personal Profile user interface
 - Help Desk has been getting positive feedback on the new design
 - Important to note that all required information must be completed before information can be saved
 - Demo video, [Personal Profile Overview](#), available at new [eRA Videos](#) page
- Upcoming releases
 - In October [Research Performance Progress Report \(RPPR\)](#) will enter Phase II Pilot for [Federal Demonstration Partnership](#) members and include:
 - all non-SNAP awards which require detailed budgets
 - and Multi-Year Funding reports

Presenters: Scarlett Gibb

ASSIST/eSubmission Updates

- Forms C Transition
 - Moving forward with transition to new forms for single and multi-project submission
 - SBIR not being transitioned until other changes in program are completed in 2014
 - Ks, Ts and Ds, and Fs activity codes will transition for due dates on or after January 25, 2014.
- Changes in eSubmission application image generation
 - New NIH style sheets control look of application image
 - Provides better control over font, font size, 508 compliancy
 - NIH provides style sheet information for both single and multi project applications at:
http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/system_testing.htm#prep1
- Coming in October, validations for R24 and U24 activity codes
Reminder: These activity codes will be used for single-project applications going forward.
- SBIR Changes
 - Changes as a result of the [Reauthorization Act of 2011](#)
 - New requirements and new validations
 - SBIR registration required - proof in the form of an attachment

- Direct Phase II support (coming in October)
- New Cooperative Agreement activity code support (UH3, U44, UT1, UT2)
- Multi-Project Changes
 - Applications coming in for September 25 deadline
 - 3 applications in early (whoo-hoo!)
 - Some challenges have been discovered, most notable is calculation of composite budget – not an issue for review
 - Waiting until NIH grants managers have an opportunity to work with electronically submitted multi-project applications to determine best solution

NOTE: With the introduction of ASSIST, Help Desk is receiving more policy related questions (which are much tougher) than technical questions. This shift in need means Help Desk staff must sometimes seek information from policy experts, adding an additional step and time for resolution. Please be patient.

Presenters: Sheri Cummins

2. **RPPR Update: Non-SNAP and Multi-Project**

- RPPR Phase II Pilot for FDP institutions starting in October (following the eRA release) for Non-SNAP progress report submission.
- Changes for the current RPPR are fairly minor for Sections A-G. In Phase II, for non-SNAP RPPR submissions, institutions will complete Section H, Budget for Training, Complex, Education and other award mechanisms with budgets.
- Feedback is invaluable, please join the pilot
- Read Guide Notice for more detail: [NOT-OD-13-113](#)
- Webinar coming in October: [Register](#). Note: there is a limit of 1,000 logins.

Presenters: Emily Linde and Maria Koszalka

3. **Changes to Closeout: An Early Discussion**

- Draft policy directive coming from HHS on Closeout, Grants Policy and Administration Manual will address the grants policy requirements for closeout of a HHS discretionary grant or cooperative grant following the completion of an award.
- This is a very early update
- NIH-wide Working group has been formed, to include
 - Grants Management folks
 - Policy folks
 - Compliance folks
 - Closeout staff
 - eRA staff
 - OFM staff
 - And more
- Will review recommendations
- Along with implementing policy changes coming from HHS, group will look to see how Commons Closeout module and other items related to closeout can be improved
- For examples:
 - Making RPPR the final closeout report?
 - Delegation options for submission of closeout reports?
 - Integration of iEdison for invention reporting (Note: iEdison is being integrated into the Commons)
 - Integration of xTrain functions (terminations)
- First working group meeting scheduled for mid-October
- NIH is interested in soliciting a few volunteers from CWG that might be willing to be used as a focus group. Please let us know if you or your institution might be interested.

Presenters: Maria Koszalka and Tony Corio

4. **Roles, Rights, and Delegations: The Discussion Continues**

- Short Term Options – new roles?
- Group reviewed current list of Commons roles with corresponding actions/privileges (see Roles&Privileges.pdf)
- Fruitful discussion with many ideas for changes(see: Roles&PrivilegesChanges.pdf)
 - Create new role - Institutional Profile Editor to control who can update content (many institutions have multiple SOs who should not have access to the profile)
 - Modify AO and remove the ability to create accounts – if user needs to create accounts, give the AA role
 - Modify ASST role to include delegations for JIT, Closeout, and Relinquishing Statements
 - Modify BO role to create accounts only for xTrain functions
 - Modify SO role to include view/edit for xTrain, remove ability to edit institutional profile (view only)
- Suggestion was made for roles that might LOSE rights if changes are implemented, automatically assign the new role with the right to be lost and let the SOs make adjustments to the roles that are assigned.
- Develop better definitions/explanations for all roles, especially new ones used for reporting/tracking purposes that appear to have no rights.

Presenter: Scarlett Gibb

5. **Implications of Requiring Commons Users IDs**

- Coming next year, it will be required for undergraduate and graduate students who participate in NIH-supported projects for at least one person-month of full-time work to have an eRA Commons account.
- What is the burden on institutions to meet this requirement?
 - More administrative work
 - More duplicate account creation (more of an issue for the agency)
 - Difficult to determine if there is an account created already
 - Similar names
 - Use of a common name vs legal name
 - Will the student know they have been assigned an account?
 - If they know, will they remember when the move on to the next level and/or institution?
 - Time pressures for meeting deadlines
 - Creating accounts to meet the progress report requirements means:
 - PI having to send request to SO or AA
 - getting information to/from student
 - getting information back from SO or AA
 - all before being able to complete the progress report
- Will collecting this data actually achieve the goal NIH has set out to achieve?
 - Students come and go
 - They forget account information
 - Duplicate accounts means more work for eRA Help Desk/data quality group
 - Until an effective method to search for and identify a specific account is engineered, administrative load will be high

Presenter: Megan Columbus

6. **Wrap-up & General Discussion**

- Concern over enrollment data when dealing with human subjects

- Previous process to check the Human Subject box and add an attachment
- No attachment resulted in an error
- Now information part of the form, no validation needed for an attachment so system only provides a warning if form not included
- Can it go back to being an error?
- Short term solution: Stay diligent

Presenters: All