

## Prior Approval 500K Transcript

\*\*\*\*\*DISCLAIMER!!!\*\*\*\*\*

THIS FILE MAY CONTAIN ERRORS. THIS IS NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT AND IS NOT FOR USE IN A COURT OF LAW.

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Welcome to this tutorial on electronically requesting approval to submit a grant application with direct costs of \$500K or more for a single budget year. This is more commonly referred to as a 500K Request. Per NIH policy, any proposal with a budget that includes direct costs equal to or in excess of 500 thousand dollars for any budget year, must first have approval from the funding institute or center before submitting an application.

NIH has developed a way for applicants to submit these requests through eRA Commons electronically. Here is how it works. The Principal Investigator (PI) will reach out to the Program Official (PO) at the Institute/Center (IC) with whom they have been working concerning their proposal and the need to match or exceed the \$500K direct costs limit.

Once the informal conversations are complete, the PO can choose to invite the PI to initiate and submit the prior approval request through eRA Commons. The initiation of the request triggers an email notification to be sent to the PI and to the Notice of Award (NoA) email address on the Institutional Profile. Within the email the PI may find additional instructions from the PO, outlining what information and supporting documentation will be needed for approval of the request.

As a PI, when you receive the email to submit the Request for \$500k or more, you will log into eRA Commons. From the top navigation menu, click on the Prior Approval tab. You will then click the **List my Requests** button and it will present a list of the Prior Approvals you have initiated, or that have been initiated on your behalf. The results screen show

The Request ID (the system identification number generated at the time the request is initiated); Request type, in this case 500K; Status, because you have just received the invitation and will be working on the request, it shows In Progress PI;

Application ID. This will display the IC code for the institute or center of the Program Official that initiated the request.

The Project Title column will be blank until the PI or SO completes the request form.

And finally the Action links are shown. The available actions will depend on where you are in the request process.

Next, click on the Modify link. This will open the Prior Approval Request 500K screen. There are just a few required fields. Project Title, the FOA (Funding Opportunity Announcement) number, and the anticipated Submission Date. The Justification information is also required. This free text field supports up to 500 characters and is used to provide concise reasoning for the request.

The screen also provides the ability to attach up to ten PDF documents in support of the request to match or exceed \$500K in direct costs. Each document cannot exceed 5 MB in size. To upload a file, click the Upload button; navigate to the desired document and select the document. When the upload is

complete, you will see a green box appear above the Upload button to indicate a successful upload. The name of the file will be displayed below, along with the date it was uploaded. You can review the file by clicking the View button, or remove the file by clicking the Delete button.

If there is still more work to be done, the Request can be saved “as is” by clicking the save button. You will see a green confirmation message at the top of the screen when the save is complete. Hitting the Cancel button, after confirming that you agree to lose any unsaved data, will bring you back to the Prior Approval landing page.

If you are done writing the justification and providing any supporting documents, the request can be submitted to NIH by clicking the Submit button, or depending on the business processes of the institution, the PI can route the request to the SO for review by clicking the Route button.

For an SO, the process is not much different. If a PI has routed a request to the SO, the SO can easily find those requests by clicking the List my requests button. Because the request from the Program Official also goes to the Notice of Award address, the SO should login to eRA Commons and go to the Prior Approval tab. They will use the *Search for Requests* button and select the 500K Request under the Request Type drop down.

When the desired record is found, the SO has the ability to view the request by clicking the View button. Or if they choose, they can recall it, thus giving them the ability to modify it. They can then Route it back to the PI, or submit it to NIH.

Once the request is submitted, the PO at the IC will review all the information. If the request is approved, the PI will receive an email from the Program Official. When the error free application is received by NIH, this application will be matched with the \$500k prior approval request from the IC and the application will move through the normal process.

This concludes the tutorial on electronically submitting a prior approval request for more than \$500K through eRA Commons. A number of resources are available to you should you need assistance with this process. Screen help is available by clicking on the question mark on the Prior Approval screens. If you still have questions about submitting requests electronically for \$500K or more in direct costs, contact the eRA Service Desk. Thanks for watching.