NIH Transition to the SF424 (R&R) Application & Electronic Submission Plus A Walk Through The SF424 (R&R)

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NIH’s Electronic Receipt Goal

By the end of September 2007, NIH plans to:
1. Require electronic submission through Grants.gov for all NIH grant applications
2. Transition from the PHS 398 application form to SF424 family of forms data set
   - SF424 Research and Research-Related (SF424 (R&R))
   - SF424 Discretionary (of limited use for NIH)


Why submit electronically?
- Eliminates the burden of paper-based data collection
- Improves data quality
- May allow NIH to shorten the cycle from application receipt to award
  - AREA grants – An early win!
- Reduces scanning, printing, and data-entry costs
- Grant image is consistent, clear and in color

Why Grants.gov?
- The Federal government’s single, online portal for any person, business, or State, Local and Tribal government to electronically:
  - Find Grant Opportunities
  - Apply for Grant
- A cross-agency initiative involving
  - 900 grant programs
  - 26 grant-making agencies
  - Over $350 billion in annual awards

Why transition to SF424 family of forms?
- SF424 consolidates forms currently used by Federal grant-making agencies
  - Applicants can use standard forms regardless of the program or agency to which they are applying.
  - Reduces administrative burden on the Federal grants community.
- SF424 (R&R) is the government-wide data set for research grant applications

Why transition now?
- Public Law (PL) 106-107
  - Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999
    - Improve the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs
    - Simplify Federal financial assistance application and reporting requirements
    - Improve the delivery of services to the public
- President’s Management Agenda (2002)
  - “Agencies to allow applicants for Federal Grants to apply for, and ultimately manage, grant funds online through a common web site, simplifying grants management and eliminating redundancies . . .”
Why transition now?
- OMB has set the following FY 2006 Goal for Agencies: Post 75% of Funding Opportunities in Grants.gov “Find” on “Apply”
- The PHS 398 OMB clearance expires in September 2007

This is a huge transition for all of us!
- The simultaneous transition to electronic application submission and a new set of application forms is a huge initiative for NIH with an aggressive time table
- It involves:
  - Numerous funding mechanisms
  - Tens of thousands of applications ranging widely in size and complexity
- The transition relies upon many pieces for its success:
  - Technical development of eRA and Grants.gov systems
  - Trans-agency resolution of policy and operational issues
  - Lots of communications, training and outreach
  - Acceptance of change by NIH staff
  - Acceptance of change by our research partners in the extramural community.

Requires Systems Working Together
- Grants.gov – the Federal government’s single on-line portal to find and apply for Federal grant funding.
- eRA Commons – the NIH electronic Research Administration system that allows applicants/grantees to electronically receive and transmit application and award information.
  - Used by NIH and other HHS components.

NIH’s Transition Strategy
- NIH will transition by individual research program/funding mechanism
- ALL applications in response to these announcements for transitioned mechanisms will require electronic submission through Grants.gov on the 424 family of forms
- Mechanisms not yet transitioned will continue to require submission on PHS 398 on paper or through service providers
- NIH will announce plan to transition mechanisms in NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts

NIH Planned Transition Dates of Mechanisms for Electronic Submission using the SF424 (R&R)
- Resource (G), Career Development (K), S11, S22 (Jan. 1, 2007)
- Fellowship (F) (Aug. 5, 2007)
- Training (T62), U45, DICER, U66 (Jan. 1, 2007)
- Centers (P), M01, U19, U24 (Oct. 1, 2007)
- Potential R01 Multi-PI Pilot (Oct. 1, 2006)
- R01 (Feb. 1, 2007)
- R36 (Feb. 17, 2006)
- SBIR/STTR (Dec. 1, 2005)

Completed Transitions
- December 1, 2005: Small business (SBIR/STTR)
  - Over 1800 applications received
- December 15, 2005: Conference grants (R13)
  - Over 150 applications received
- February 17, 2006: Dissertation Grants (R36)
- February 25, 2006: AREA grants (R15)
- March 22, 2006: Shared Instrumentation (S10)
Registration Requirements

- Registration in both Grants.gov and eRA Commons is required for electronic submission.
- Separate processes that can be done simultaneously.
- Must be completed prior to application submission.
- Failure to complete required registrations prior to submission may result in delay of review assignment and funding consideration.

It is critical for institutions to begin this registration process at least 2-4 weeks before applications are due!

Registration Requirements: Grants.gov

- Applicant organizations must complete one-time only registration.
- Principal Investigators do not need to register with Grants.gov.
- Good for electronic submission to all Federal agencies.
- Detailed instructions at: http://grants.gov/GetStarted
  - Grants.gov registration requires institutions to:
    - Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.
    - Register in Central Contractor Registry (CCR).
  - New organizations should allow extra time for this step.
- Registration not required to find funding opportunity or download application package, only to submit completed application.

It is critical for institutions to begin this registration process at least 2-4 weeks before applications are due!

Registration Requirements: eRA Commons

- Applicant institutions must complete one-time only registration.
- Principal Investigators (PIs) must work through their institutions to register.
  - The PI must hold a PI account and be affiliated with the applicant organization.
  - PIs currently registered only for Internet Assisted Review (IAR) must work through their institutions for full eRA Commons registration.
- PI and Signing Official (SO) need separate accounts in eRA Commons since both need to verify the application.

It is critical for institutions to begin this registration process at least 2-4 weeks before applications are due!

Registration Requirements: eRA Commons (cont.)

- Organizations must include a DUNS number in their institutional profile that matches the DUNS number on the submitted application.
- NIH will consider starting the eRA Commons registration process at least two weeks in advance of the submission date a “good faith” effort to prepare for electronic submission. Applicants that make a “good faith” effort to register, will not be penalized for any NIH-caused registration processing delay.

It is critical for institutions to begin this registration process at least 2-4 weeks before applications are due!

Submission Methods

Applicant organization can submit applications to NIH through Grants.gov in one of two ways:

1. Direct submission - using PureEdge Viewer
2. System-to-system – using (XML) data stream to communicate with Grants.gov
   - Can be created by institution OR
   - Institution can establish an agreement with a commercial Service Provider http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/sp.htm

Software Requirements

- PureEdge viewer downloaded (free) from Grants.gov site at http://www.grants.gov/DownloadViewer
- PDF generation software
  - Grants.gov lists some available tools and software http://www.grants.gov/assets/PDFConversion.pdf
- MAC users will need to use PC emulation software or download free CITRIX client application to take advantage of the CITRIX service offered by Grants.gov in partnership with NIH. http://www.grants.gov/MacSupport
  - PureEdge has committed to providing a platform independent viewer by November 2006.
New Business Process: Funding Announcements

- Funding Opportunities Announcements (FOAs) will continue to be posted in the NIH Guide and Contracts (http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide)
  - Button added to the NIH Guide announcements allowing applicants to access the Grants.gov application package directly from the NIH Guide
  - NIH will continue to use RFAs and PAs, but all solicitations will also be referred to as FOAs in Grants.gov
  - FOAs will simultaneously be posted to Grants.gov along with the appropriate application package
  - Note that you must search Grants.gov by opportunity number rather than CFDA number for NIH opportunities.

New Business Process: Funding Announcements (cont.)

- Not all components will be used for every FOA
- Agencies “construct” application packages for each FOA
- NIH will use several “standard” packages
- The FOA will indicate which components are required and which are optional
- Each FOA will have the appropriate application package attached
- This specific application package MUST be used to apply for the accompanying solicitation.
  - Some fields of application are pre-filled from announcement

Electronic Submission: How it Works

Applying for Grants at Grants.gov:

Step 1: Search for & identify funding opportunity in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts or on Grants.gov

Step 2: Download the grant application package.

Step 3: Complete the application. Be sure to save a local copy. Route through your own institutional review & approval process.

Step 4: The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) submits application to Grants.gov either directly or through a Service Provider. All required registrations must be completed prior to submission.

Step 5: Grants.gov performs basic form validation and virus check on submitted application.

Step 6: Track the status of the submitted application package at Grants.gov until you are notified via email that NIH has received it.

Step 7: eRA software performs NIH business rule validation on submitted application.

Step 8: NIH notifies Principal Investigator (PI) and Signing Official (SO) by email to check the eRA Commons for results of NIH validations check.

Step 9: The PI and SO find out if the grant application passed or failed the rule check, and:
  - If it passed, PI and SO must verify the application in eRA Commons to complete the application submission process.
  - If it failed, all errors must be corrected and the entire corrected application must be submitted to Grants.gov.

Step 10: After verification, the eRA Commons saves the data and grant image, and NIH begins processing the application.

Step 11: Applicants can track the progress of their application in eRA Commons.
On-Time Submission*

- On-time submission has 2 elements:
  1. Application accepted by Grants.gov by 8:00pm ET on the submission date
  2. Verify application image within 2 days of availability in the NIH Commons

- During initial transition period, NIH validation errors may be corrected within 1 week period after receipt date

* NIH’s late application policy still in effect

Expected Turnaround Times

- Registration – can take several weeks to complete; start 2-4 weeks in advance of submission date
- Grants.gov response to application submission – generally within hours, up to 2 business days
- eRA Commons response to application submission – generally within hours, up to 2 business days
- Principal Investigator (PI) and Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)/Signing Official (SO) Verification of application - within 2 business days of availability in eRA Commons

Guiding Principles:

- NIH will not hold applicants accountable for Grants.gov or NIH system problems

- Applicants are expected to:
  - Complete required registration processes prior to submission
  - Complete both steps of application submission in a timely way
    - Submission to Grants.gov
    - Application verification

Features of the SF424 (R&R)

- The SF424 (R&R) is an application form that is comprised of common data elements developed for use by Federal agencies funding Research and Research-Related programs

- Also provides a consistent electronic submission process through Grants.gov

Features of the SF424 (R&R) (cont.)

- A complete application to NIH will include a combination of (R&R) components & PHS398 components

- The applicant must complete the application using the package attached to that particular FOA (Information is drawn from the specific FOA and used in the forms)

- Applicants cannot use any sample form packages or form packages from other announcements

- The applicant will complete data entry in all necessary components and upload appropriate attachments

Features of the SF424 (R&R) (cont.)

- SF424 (R&R) Components include:
  - SF424 (R&R)—An application cover component
  - Research & Related Project/Performance Site Location(s)
  - Research & Related Other Project Information
  - Research & Related Senior/Key Person
  - Research & Related Budget
  - Research & Related Personal Data (NIH will not use)
  - R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Form
  - SBIR/STTR Information
Features of the SF424 (R&R) (cont.)
- NIH requires additional data collection to accommodate the unique information required for review of its biomedical research portfolio. Therefore, NIH has also developed agency-specific components (titled PHS398):
  - PHS 398 Cover Letter File
  - PHS 398 Cover Page Supplement (supplements the R&R Cover)
  - PHS 398 Modular Budget
  - PHS 398 Research Plan
  - PHS 398 Checklist
- Why call them PHS398?
  - Needed a generic term since other HHS agencies will use
  - It's the OMB-cleared data collection instrument that gives us the authority to request these additional data elements

Features of the SF424 (R&R) (cont.)
- Application components include specific data fields as well as multiple attachments
- Most attachments are text
- NIH will require PDF for text attachments
  - Attachments can be generated using any word processing software but will need to be converted to PDF before they can be attached to the actual application form
  - Do not include headers or footers in the text pages
  - See Tips & Tools page for other PDF Helpful hints

Features of the SF424 (R&R) (cont.)
- After submission, the eRA system will:
  - Generate a Table of Contents
  - Assemble the grant image
  - Include headers (PI name) & footers (page numbers) on all pages
- Applicants (PD/PI & Authorized Organizational Representative) will review and verify this grant image in the eRA Commons

Features of the SF424 (R&R): Application Guide
- NIH has developed 2 Application Guides specific to the SF424 (R&R): 1) General Instructions; 2) General +SBIR/STTR
  - Includes instructions that are imbedded in the actual forms as well agency-specific instructions
  - Agency-specific instructions denoted with the HHS Logo
- Documents have same part structure as PHS 398 Instructions:
  - Part I: Instructions for Preparing and Submitting an Application
  - Part II: Supplemental Instructions for Preparing the Human Subjects Section of the Research Plan
  - Part III: Policies, Assurances, Definitions

SF424 (R&R) Components
- Application Package Header
- SF424 (R&R)—An application cover component
- Research & Related Project/Performance Site Location (s)
- Research & Related Other Project Information
- Research & Related Senior/Key Person
- Research & Related Budget
- R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Form
- SBIR/STTR Information
Features of the SF424 (R&R): Application Package Header

- Header page is attached to every posted application package
- Header data is pre-filled from the actual announcement
- Notes which components are required (mandatory) and which are optional for this particular announcement
- Includes basic instructions
- Includes Application Submission Verification & Signature screen

Features of the SF424 (R&R): Application Package Header (cont)

- Multiple CFDA Issue
  - For FOAs posted before 12/19/2005, the system draws only the first CFDA in the list
  - For FOAs posted after 12/19/2005, the system now leaves this field blank
- For either situation, applicants should just ignore this and not try to enter/change data
- In Grants.gov, use the FOA number for searching and confirming you are responding to the correct announcement
- Or use the link directly from the NIH Guide FOA

Features of the SF424 (R&R): Application Package Header (cont)

- Saving an application package: You will get warning message when you first save a package from the FOA. This is because no data has been entered yet. Users will continue to get this message each time you save until all data is entered. OK to ignore message. Just prior to submission recommend using the "Check Package for Errors"
Component: SF424 (R&R)—A Cover Component
- Similar to the PHS398 Face Page
- Provides general information about the applicant organization, contact information for the PD/PI and Authorized Organizational Representative
- Provides application-specific information (type, title etc)

SF424 (R&R)—A Cover Component: A Few Data Issues
- **Item 1, Type of Submission**
  - Pre-application— instructed not to use unless specifically noted in FOA
  - Changed/Corrected Application—To be used only when correcting an application that failed system validations. This is NOT a resubmission (amendment).

- **Item 5, Applicant Information:** This is for the applicant organization

- **Item 5, Organizational DUNS:**
  - Must match DUNS in eRA Commons profile for Applicant Institution
  - AOR should verify DUNS in Commons profile before submission
  - Use Organizational DUNS (not any DUNS for a specific individual)
  - If Organization has multiple DUNS, pick a single one for grants

- **Item 8, Type of Application—New Terminology**
  - New is the same
  - Resubmission is equivalent to a Revision (a revised or amended application)
  - Renewal is equivalent to a Competing Continuation
  - Continuation is equivalent to a Progress Report. For the purposes of NIH and other PHS agencies, the box for Continuation will not be used and should not be checked.
  - Revision is somewhat equivalent to a Competing Supplement
  - Terminology cross-walk provided in instructions

- **Item 10, CFDA Number & Title**
  - CFDA = Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
  - Fields are pre-filled based on the specific announcement
  - Fields will be blank for applications in response to a FOA that include multiple CFDA
  - When multiple CFDAs are listed in an announcement, a CFDA will be assigned by the eRA system once a specific Institute assignment is made
Component: Research and Related Project/Performance Site Locations
- Equivalent to the PHS398 Form Page 2 Performance Site section
- Collects individual data for up to 8 locations
- > 8 locations information is provided in an attachment (not structured data, just text)
- Format for the >8 attachment available on SF424 (R&R) Forms Page: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm

Component: Research and Related Other Project Information
- Includes information on involvement of Human Subjects, Vertebrate Animals, Environmental Impact, Foreign Involvement
- Includes separate PDF attachments for:
  - Project Summary/Abstract (Description)
  - Project Narrative
    - NIH will use this upload for the “Relevance” section of the Abstract
  - Separate component developed for Research Plan
  - Bibliography & References (previously section G. Literature cited)
  - Facilities & Other Resources
    - Equivalent to PHS 398 Resources Format Page

Component: Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile
- Captures personal profile information on the PD/PI, Key Personnel, and Other Significant Contributors
- Captures structured data for 8 individuals (PI and 7 others)
- > 8 information is provided in an attachment (not structured data, just text)
- Format for the >8 attachment available on SF424 (R&R) Forms Page: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm

Component: Research and Related Senior/Key Person (cont.)
- Credential: Must enter the eRA Commons User Name—For the PD/PI, this is a mandatory field for NIH submissions. (#1 Validation Failure to date)
- Biosketch is attached for each person
  - Same data requirements exist; however, page limits slightly change to just 4 pages
  - Eliminating the 2 page limit for subsections
- Note, Attachment for Current & Pending Support (a.k.a. Other Support) will not be used at time of submission unless specified in FOA. For most applications, this will continue to be a Just-In-Time submission
Component: Research and Related Budget, Sections A & B
- Personnel separated into 2 sections
  - A. Senior/Key Person
    - Allows 8 as named individuals & structured data
    - > 8 information is provided in an attachment (not structured data, just text)
    - Info for PD/PI must be entered even if $ = 0
  - B. Other Personnel
    - Postdocs, Grad Students, Undergrads: captures # only
    - NIH will request more detail in Budget Justification

Component: Research and Related Budget, Sections A & B
- Business Process Change from Percent Effort to Person Months
  - Must enter either Calendar, Academic and/or Summer for all Senior/Key Persons
  - NIH will be incorporating this business process change throughout--Other Support documentation; Interim change to PHS398 & PHS2590 Progress Report in process

Component: Research and Related Budget, Sections C - E
- C. Equipment
  - Allows itemization of up to 10
  - > 10 total dollars are inserted in line 11; however, the details are provided in an attachment
- D. Travel
  - R&R separates out Domestic & Foreign
  - This will not change any NIH policy/practice. We will continue to award as a single category
- E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs
  - Will not be used by NIH unless specifically noted in an announcement
  - Tuition Remission will continue to include in section F. Other Direct Costs

Component: Research and Related Budget, Sections C - E
- R&R Budget

Component: Research and Related Budget, Sections C - E
- R&R Budget
Component: Research and Related Budget, Sections F - K

- F. Other Direct Costs
  - Itemizes Supplies, Publication Costs, Consultants, ADP/Computer Services, Consortium Costs, Equipment or Facility Rental/User Fees, Alterations & Renovations
  - Have included agency-specific instructions to use this section to also account for patient care costs & tuition remission
- G. Total Direct Costs (A – F)
- H. Indirect Costs
- I. Total Costs
- J. Fee
- K. Budget Justification—a PDF text attachment
- Next Period Button: At the top of the last budget page. All required data fields in this component must be entered before this button is available. This includes the Budget Justification.

Component: Research and Related Budget, General Notes

- Applicant prepares a detailed budget for every budget period
- There is no summary budget page like the PHS398 Form Page 5
- A detailed Cumulative budget is system-generated

R&R SUBAWARD BUDGET ATTACHMENT(S) FORM

Instructions: On this form, you will attach the R&R Subaward Budget text for your grant application. Complete this subaward budget(s) in accordance with the R&R budget instructions. Please remember this step may vary depending on the R&R budget document.

Important: Please attach your subaward budget with the file name of the subaward organization. Each file name must be unique.

G. Total Direct Costs (A – F)

H. Indirect Costs

I. Total Costs

J. Fee

K. Budget Justification—a PDF text attachment

Next Period Button: At the top of the last budget page. All required data fields in this component must be entered before this button is available. This includes the Budget Justification.

Component: R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Form

- Used for detailed budget from any consortium grantee
- Consortium grantee(s) must have PureEdge installed
- Allows up to 10 separate budget attachments—one for each consortium grantee
- Applicant sends the R&R budget component to the consortium grantee for completion; it is returned to the applicant; applicant attaches it in this component
- Applicant still needs to include the total costs for all consortiums in their own detailed budget, Section F.5

SBIR/STTR Information

Page 1

SBIR/STTR Information

Page 2
Component: SBIR/STTR Information
- Includes eligibility questions answered by both SBIR & STTR applicants as well as separate sections for SBIR & STTR-specific questions
- Includes Commercialization Plan as PDF Attachment

Agency-specific Components (a.k.a. PHS 398 Components)
- PHS398 Cover Letter File
- PSH398 Cover Page Supplement (supplements the R&R Cover)
- PHS 398 Modular Budget
- PHS 398 Research Plan
- PHS 398 Checklist

Component: PHS 398 Cover Letter
- Provides a text attachment for a cover letter
- Instructions to applicant remain the same as in the PHS398
- Is stored separately in the eRA Grant Folder, not as a part of the main application grant image
- Is seen only by appropriate NIH staff; not peer reviewers
- Required when submitting a Changed/Corrected Application after submission date
- If revising the cover letter for a Changed/Corrected application, include all previous submitted letter text
### Component: PHS 398 Cover Page Supplement
- Companion form to the (R&R) Cover Component
- For the PI, includes New Investigator Code & Degree fields (Note, PD/PI info at the top is pre-filled. Provided here for reference only)
- Includes Clinical Trial & Phase-III defined clinical trial indicators
- For the Business Official Contact, includes complete contact information (title & mailing address missing from section 5 of the R&R Cover)
- Includes Human Embryonic Stem Cells section

### Component: PHS 398 Modular Budget
- Provides data entry for each budget period for:
  - A. Direct Costs
    - DC less consortium F&A
    - Consortium F&A
    - Total DC
  - B. Indirect Costs Calculation section
  - C. Total Costs (A + B)
- Cumulative Budget is system-generated
- Budget Justification PDF text attachments for Personnel, Consortium and Other

### Component: PHS 398 Research Plan
- Separate PDF attachments for each section (designed to maximize benefits of system validations & to accommodate bookmarking of the image)
- Same formatting requirements in the PHS398 continue here—margins, page limits, etc
- Appendix Material
  - Allows up to 10 separate attachments
  - Will be stored separately in the eRA Grant Folder, not as a part of the main application grant image
  - Will be accessible to appropriate NIH staff and peer reviewers

### Component: PHS 398 Research Plan—Helpful Hints
- Create as a single document using any word processing software. Separate only at the end before uploading.
- Do not include headers or footers
- Do include a section heading as part of the text; i.e., Specific Aims, Background & Significance
Component: PHS 398 Checklist

- Captures additional information currently captured in the PHS398 Checklist
  - Change of PI
  - Change of Grantee Institution
  - Inventions & Patents
  - Program Income
  - PDF Text Upload for and Assurances/Certifications explanation

What will a completed application look like?

- After submission, the eRA system will:
  - Assemble the grant image
  - Generate a Table of Contents
  - Include headers (PI name) & footers (page numbers) on all pages

“eRA Assembly of Grant Application” is found at:

(A document providing a sample Table of Contents & a chart cross-referencing the location in the forms components for each piece of the grant image)
New Terminology: Type of Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NIH Term</th>
<th>(R&amp;R) Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New (T-1)</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing Continuation (T-2)</td>
<td>Renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision or Amendment</td>
<td>Resubmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing Supplement</td>
<td>Revision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R&R Type of Application also include “Continuation”. This is equivalent to our Progress Report or T-5. NIH will not use the R&R for progress reports.

New Terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NIH Term</th>
<th>(R&amp;R) Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Cited (Part G. of 398 Research Plan)</td>
<td>“Bibliography &amp; References Cited” in R&amp;R Other Project Information Component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium Budget</td>
<td>Subaward Budget</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Terminology

Advice from Experience

- Read and follow all application instructions!
  - Failure to follow instructions has resulted in applicants having to submit corrected applications.
  - Two most common problems with applications to date:
    - There are application fields not marked as mandatory on the federal-wide form but that are required by NIH
      - Example: The credential field of the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile component MUST contain the PI’s assigned eRA Commons User ID for NIH to process the application submission
    - All non-Pure Edge attachments MUST be in PDF format
      - NIH systems cannot accommodate other types of documents

- Tips for creating PDF files
  - Use no special characters in file names
  - Do not write protect the PDF file
  - Turn electronic signature option “off” (in Adobe it is in security settings)

For more information see Tips and Tricks at http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/tips_tools.htm

Advice from Experience

- Register now to be prepared
- Allow time for corrections
- See it through to verification in eRA Commons to complete the application process
- When seeking support, be prepared to provide identifying information for your application and organization
Next Steps: NIH
Areas we are addressing:
- Help desk staffing
- Resolving technical system issues
- Better educating NIH staff
- Reviewing business rules (validations) enforced by the system
- Outreach to the applicant community
- Re-evaluation of verification process
- Examining Registration Process for Improvements

Next Steps: Grantees
- Determine implementation plans for your Institution
  - How will your internal review & approval processes change?
  - How will you share applications in progress?
  - How will you manage last minute queue at Sponsored Programs rather than airport FedEx drop box?
- Assemble a team to tackle this—faculty, administration and technical representative
- Spread the word—The SF424 (R&R) & electronic submission through Grants.gov are here!

Electronic Submission Information:
http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/

Application Guide(s), Sample Application Packages, Additional Format Pages found at:

Training Tools:
http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/training.htm
- Video library
  - Overview of NIH Transition
  - A Walk Through the SF424 (R&R)
- Archive of the January 11, 2006 training session. Available in streaming video and downloadable formats
Training Tools (cont.)
- Registration in the eRA Commons Demo
- Grants.gov’s How to Complete An Application Package Demo
  [http://www.grants.gov/CompleteApplication#demo](http://www.grants.gov/CompleteApplication#demo)
- SF424 (R&R) application guides, sample application packages and related resources

Other Tools
- Demo Facility – By April, we plan to have an end-to-end demo facility for applicants to “practice” the entire process from finding an opportunity in Grants.gov through verifying a submitted application in the eRA Commons.
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Electronic Submission Timeline
- Tips and Tools
- Communications and Outreach resources (brochures, presentations, drop-in newsletter articles)

Finding Help: Grants.gov Registration & Submission
If help is needed with the Grants.gov registration process or with the technical aspects of submitting through the Grants.gov system:
- Check the resources available on the Grants.gov website first ([http://grants.gov/](http://grants.gov/))
- Grants.gov help is also provided by the following office:
  Grants.gov customer support
  Contact Center Phone: 1-800-518-472
  Business Hours M-F 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time
  Email support@grants.gov

Finding Help: eRA Commons Registration & Validations Processes
If help is needed with the eRA Commons registration process for the applicant organization and principal investigators, or with the application validation process in the eRA Commons after submission through Grants.gov, contact:
- eRA Commons help desk
  Phone: 301-402-7469/866-504-9552 (Toll Free)
  301-451-5939 (TTY)
  Business hours M-F 7am-8pm Eastern Standard Time
  Email commons@od.nih.gov
- Also visit:
  eRA Commons website: [https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/index.jsp](https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/index.jsp)
eRA website: [http://era.nih.gov](http://era.nih.gov)

Finding Help: Application Preparation
- Review application instruction guide(s)
- Contact Grants Info:
  Grants Info
  Phone: 301-435-0714
  301-451-0088 (TTY)
  Email GrantsInfo@nih.gov
- All these help resources are found at:
  [http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/support.htm](http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/support.htm)

Collecting User Feedback
- NIH has established an e-mail address to collect comments and/or suggestions from users:
  NIHElectronicSubmiss@mail.nih.gov
- Share your experiences—successes and challenges
- Share specific suggestions for improvement
- What resources are most useful (Targeted e-mails, FAQs, Tips & Tools, Commons Alerts, Training tools)
We’re in this together.  
Help spread the word!