Ready, Set, Submit!

GRANT APPLICATION PREPARATION & SUBMISSION

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NIH National Institutes of Health
Office of Extramural Research
Take Home Messages

- PATSA- (think PASTA with a Boston accent) - Plan Ahead To Stay Ahead
- Make sure all your registrations are in place and you know your commons ID and password
- **READ the FOA!** Application instructions guide < FOA < Notices
- Know what submission system your organization uses (ASSIST, workspace, S2S)
- Build your team, establish responsibilities
- Complete the application- NIH recommends submitted early to ensure on time submission - Early is on a calendar NOT a clock
- If you can’t see the grant image, we can’t see the grant image, which means we can’t review it and can’t fund it - correct all errors!
- NIH staff and reviewers also check for compliance to policies
NIH Grants and Funding
https://grants.nih.gov/

How to Apply- Application Guide
How to Apply – Application Guide


General Application Process Information

Form Instructions

Resources
# Understand Key Systems & Roles


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants.gov</th>
<th>eRA Commons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC)</td>
<td>Signing Official (SO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)</td>
<td>Principal Investigator (PI)</td>
</tr>
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Grants.gov

[GRANTS.GOV](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/)

eRA Commons

[eRA Commons](https://era.nih.gov/era-commons/)

A program of the National Institutes of Health
Organization Registration


Your organization must be registered in multiple systems to submit. Start early – can take 6 weeks!

- **DUNS** – provides unique organization identifier *
- **UEI** (Unique Entity Identifier)- DUNS replacement, needed for submissions to NIH for due dates on or after 1/25/2022 ([NOT-OD-21-170](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/prepare-to-apply-and-register/registration/org-representative-registration.htm))
- **SAM** (System for Award Management) – needed to do business with government
  - Requires annual renewal
- **Grants.gov** – required to submit grants
- **eRA Commons** – required to do business with NIH
- **SBA** (Small Business Administration) – required for SBIR/STTR applications
Application Submission Options


- Managed by NIH
- Leverages eRA Commons accounts
- Pre-population from eRA Commons profiles
- Track application status in single system
- Supports all NIH competing applications
- Pull study information from ClinicalTrials.gov
- Integrated NIH messaging (tips, system alerts)

- Managed by Grants.gov
- Requires additional user registrations
- No Pre-population from existing profiles
- Must track application in multiple systems
- Supports all NIH single-project competing applications (no multi-project support)
Your Application will be...

- Subject to the same registration requirements
- Completed with the same data items
- Routed through Grants.gov
- Validated against the same NIH business rules
- Assembled in a consistent format for review consideration
- Tracked in eRA Commons

...regardless of submission option used.
There is NOT a universal set of application forms that can be downloaded from our form library or websites.

You must use the application form package attached to your funding opportunity announcement.

- Each application form package includes the customized subset of forms supported by NIH which are needed for that opportunity.

Application forms are accessed using your chosen submission method.
Now Let’s Talk About the Application Process

STEP 1: FIND

STEP 2: PLAN

STEP 3: INITIATE

STEP 4: BUILD TEAM

STEP 5: ENTER DATA

STEP 6: FINALIZE

STEP 7: SUBMIT

STEP 8: TRACK
Step 1: Find an Opportunity of Interest
Carefully Read the Entire Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

- Part 1- Overview Information
  - Participating Organizations
  - Related Notices
  - Key Dates

- Part 2- Full Text of Announcement
  - Section I. Funding Opportunity Description
  - Section II. Award Information
  - Section III. Eligibility Information
  - Section IV. Application and Submission Information
  - Section V. Application Review Information
  - Section VI. Award Administration Information
  - Section VII. Agency Contacts
  - Section VIII. Other Information
Step 2: Plan for Your Submission

- Identify team members
- Verify registrations are in place and active
- Choose submission method
- Determine application preparation responsibilities
  - Who will – prepare budget, gather data, create attachments, do data entry
- Make sure everyone is aware of process
  - Internal review & approval process
  - Post-submission responsibilities
    - How to deal with errors/warnings
    - Who will verify application in eRA Commons?
Step 3: Initiate Application

- Login to your submission system and initiate your application and access the application forms.
Step 4: Build Your Team

- Provide application access to appropriate team members

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ASSIST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather eRA Commons usernames and use <strong>Manage Access</strong> to give folks access</td>
<td>Gather Grants.gov usernames and use <strong>Participants</strong> tab to give folks access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gather eRA Commons usernames to include in your application for all individuals listed on the Sr Key Personnel form ([NOT-OD-21-109](#)) including:

- Project Director/Principal Investigators (PD/PIs)
- Component leads on a multi-project application
- Sponsor on a fellowship application
- Candidates for diversity and re-entry supplements
- Primary mentor on individual mentored career development application

Can control access to specific sections of the application such as budgets
Step 5: Enter Data


Follow All Guidance

- Notices in NIH Guide for Grants & Contracts including Notices of Special Interest (NOSIs)
- Funding Opportunity Announcement
  - Section IV. Application and Submission Information
- How to Apply - Application Guide

Handy Resource

Annotated form sets

PHS 398 Research Plan

- Introduction
  - Limited to 1-page (except that randomized clinical trials can be 2 pages).
  - Request for Reailiation and Reversion Information.

- Research Plan section
  - Special Note
  - Research Strategy
  - Funding Opportunity Announcement
  - How to Apply - Application Guide

- Other Research Plan sections
  - Outline
  - Other Information
  - Appendices
  - Add Appendix

Important notes:
- Do not use Appendix attachments in subsequent years.
- Direct information to specific NIH components.
- Do not use any attachment or data that are not specifically requested.
- Limit the number of Appendices to 10.
- Appendices are subject to review and are not included in the final grant application.

(Additional guidelines and instructions are provided on the NIH website.)
Application Attachments


- Use simple PDF-formatted files for all attachments. Forms with fillable fields or signatures must be flattened
  - Disable security features such as password protection
- Use new versions of Biosketch and Other Support Templates ([NOT-OD-21-073](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm))
- Keep file names to 50 characters or less
- Filenames must be unique within the application
- Use meaningful filenames, especially for “Other Attachments”
- Do not include headers or footers
  - Section headings as part of the text (e.g., Significance, Innovation, Approach) are encouraged
- Follow specified page limits
- Follow guidelines for fonts and margins
- Follow guidelines for hyperlinks and URLs
### Step 6: Finalize Your Application

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6a. Run a pre-submission validation check</td>
<td>Validate Application</td>
<td>Preview Grantor Validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b. Generate a pre-submission image of your assembled application in the NIH format</td>
<td>Preview Application</td>
<td>Grantor Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6c. Take any additional steps needed to prepare for Submission</td>
<td>Update Submission Status to “Ready to Submit”</td>
<td>Complete and Notify AOR (optional)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 7: Submit Your Application

- Follow steps for your submission method
- Only folks with Grants.gov AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) credentials can submit
- All NIH applications route through Grants.gov
- Your Grants.gov timestamp is used to determine “on-time” submission

Grants.gov Tracking #

Date/Time Stamp – always recorded in Eastern Time
On-time Submission

- **Deadline = 5 p.m. local time of submitting organization on the due date**
  - All registrations and SAM renewal must be completed before the deadline
  - Application must be free of all federal system-identified errors (Grants.gov & eRA)
  - NIH’s late policy does not allow corrections after the deadline
  - **NIH recommends submitting early** to allow time to correct any unexpected errors or submission issues
Step 8: Track Your Application

- eRA Commons Status is an integral part of your submission
  - Applications that pass Grants.gov validations are picked up by eRA Commons and checked against many application guide and opportunity instructions

- Authorized users can check eRA Commons Status for processing results
  - Signing Officials (SOs)
  - Administrative Officials (AOs)
  - Principal Investigators (PIs)
  - Delegated Assistants (ASSTs)

- E-mail notifications sent
  - DO NOT depend solely on email notifications
  - It is YOUR responsibility to proactively check your application status in eRA Commons
Errors & Warnings

Corrective submissions must be made BEFORE the submission deadline and overwrite previous submissions

- Errors stop application processing and must be corrected

- Warnings do not stop application processing and are corrected at your discretion based on your circumstances
To correct *system-identified* errors found after submission:

- Make corrections to local copy of the application
- Update SF424 (R&R) form
  - Check “Changed/Corrected” as “Type of Submission”
  - Enter “Previous Grants.gov Tracking ID” (e.g., GRANT12345678) in field 4c
- Submit the entire Changed/Corrected application back through Grants.gov *before* the deadline
- Track submission through to eRA Commons

**NOTE:** Reviewers do not see applicant warnings, nor can they tell how many submission attempts were needed to complete the submission process
Once an error-free application is received by NIH, the eRA system will:

- Assemble the grant application image
- Insert headers (PI name) and footers (page numbers) on all pages
- Generate Table of Contents and bookmark important sections
- Post the assembled application image in the PD/PI’s eRA Commons account
- Send notifications
Applicants have two (2) business days to view the assembled application image before the application automatically moves forward for further processing.

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<td>View Submission Status Details link</td>
<td>Must login to eRA Commons directly and access the application’s detailed status screen</td>
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SO can Reject application within viewing window to prevent it from moving forward to NIH staff.

- Can submit a Changed/Corrected application before the submission deadline
Submission Complete!

- If you don’t reject within the two business day viewing window, the application automatically moves forward for further processing at NIH.

- Any subsequent application changes are subject to the NIH policy on late submission of grant applications and the NIH policy on post-submission application materials.
# Application Checks (Validations)

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| - Active System for Award Management (SAM) registration  
- Submitter has AOR role for DUNS on application  
- Submission made to active opportunity and application package  
- Virus check  
- Filenames include only appropriate characters | - Fields required by agency, but not required federal-wide  
  - R&R Sr/Key form  
    - Credential for PD/PIs  
    - Organization name for all sr/key  
    - Biosketch for all sr/key  
  - Performance Site form  
    - DUNS for primary site (UEI for due dates on/after Jan 25, 2022)  
- Attachments in PDF format  
- Adherence to page limits in our Table of Page Limits  
- All appropriate attachments included | - Fit with NIH/Institute mission  
- Eligibility  
- “Overstuffing”  
- On-time submission  
- Adherence to funding opportunity announcement specific instructions  
- Font, margin, and hyperlink guidelines  
- Simultaneous review of essentially same application |
Resources
# Help Desks

## eRA Service Desk
- **Web:** [https://grants.nih.gov/support/](https://grants.nih.gov/support/)
- **Phone:** 1-866-504-9552
- **Hours:** Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET

## Grants.gov Contact Center
- **Toll-free:** 1-800-518-4726
- **Hours:** 24x7 (Except Federal Holidays)
- **Email:** [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)
- **Resources:** [https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html)
Online Resources & Websites

• NIH Grants and Funding
  https://grants.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm

• How to Apply – Application Guide

• Annotated form set

• Preparing Your Application Using ASSIST
Stay Connected – Subscribe to Listservs
https://era.nih.gov/about-era/get-connected.htm

- **eRA-Information-L**
  - For administrators, principal investigators and the people that support them
  - Used by NIH to notify the community of information related to eRA Commons, ASSIST and eSubmission

- **NIH_ESUB_SYS2SYS-L**
  - For technical personnel involved in system-to-system solution development and planning
  - Used to exchange information related to the implementation of system-to-system solutions for grant application preparation and submission to NIH

- **ASSIST-Development-L**
  - For ASSIST users willing to share their individual perspectives on proposed ASSIST enhancements and options for addressing identified system issues
Questions?