



# NIH eSubmission Tips for Small Business Applicants



## Prepare to Apply & Register - Start early!

**Get registered** *\*\*Registration can take 4 weeks or more – even longer for new businesses!\*\**

- Small business must be registered in Grants.gov.
  - Designate E-Biz Point of Contact (POC), who will approve all Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) requests for “submit” authority within Grants.gov.
- Small business must be registered in eRA Commons.
  - Designate Signing Official (SO) with overall authority for your business’ Commons account administration and institution profile.
- All Project Director/Principal Investigators (PD/PIs) need eRA Commons accounts with the PI role.
  - If you do not have an account, work with your SO to get an account set up. Otherwise, make sure your existing account is ‘affiliated’ with the applicant small business. (See [http://era.nih.gov/commons/steps\\_commons.cfm#step3](http://era.nih.gov/commons/steps_commons.cfm#step3).)
  - If you are both the PI and SO, you must have two separate accounts (one for each role).
  - Your account will stay with you throughout your career. The same PI account can be affiliated with multiple institutions. You are responsible for maintaining your account information.

## Ensure you have appropriate software

- A version of Adobe Reader that is compatible with Grants.gov forms is needed to download, prepare and submit your application. (See [http://www.grants.gov/help/download\\_software.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp).)
- PDF conversion software is necessary to prepare required attachments. PDF format is required by NIH for all text attachments. (See [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/pdf\\_guidelines.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/pdf_guidelines.htm).)

## Find Opportunity

- Find NIH Small Business research opportunities at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm>.
- **IMPORTANT:** All applications must be submitted in response to a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).
- Application packages are specific to individual FOAs (i.e., applicants can’t reuse application forms from one opportunity to another).
- Use “Parent” announcements for your unsolicited, investigator-initiated applications.
  - SBIR Parent Funding Opportunity Announcement: [PA-11-096](#)
  - STTR Parent Funding Opportunity Announcement: [PA-11-097](#)

## Prepare Application

- Follow ALL instructions in the [application guide](#) and within the FOA. Instructions in the FOA “trump” those found in the application guide.
- See application guide for fields that NIH requires, but are not marked required on federal-wide forms:
  - Project/Performance Site Location(s) – include the DUNS for the Primary Location.
  - R&R Senior/Key Person Profile component - include the eRA Commons username in the ‘Credential’ field for all PD/PIs and complete the Organization field for all Sr./Key entries.
- The NIH system will automatically generate the table of contents, page numbers, headers and footers. We recommend the use of section headings to make sections easy to identify for reviewers.
- Remember to include effort of a value greater than zero in either calendar months or a combination of academic and summer months for all Senior/Key Persons listed in the budget.

## Submit Application to Grants.gov

- Only the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) can submit applications to Grants.gov.
- For your submission to be considered “on-time:”
  - All registrations must be completed **prior** to the submission deadline.
  - You must have a Grants.gov tracking # and timestamp (or eRA Help Desk ticket confirming a system issue preventing submission) by 5:00 p.m. local time on the submission deadline.
  - Any Grants.gov or eRA system-identified errors/warnings must be corrected **by the submission deadline. Submit early for success!**
- When Grants.gov or eRA system issues threaten your on-time submission:
  - Contact the eRA Commons Help Desk before the deadline to try to get resolution; read more at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/support.htm#guidelines>
  - Document your issues and corrective actions, including support ticket numbers, in Cover Letter
- Submission to Grants.gov is *not* the last step...you must follow the application all the way through to viewing the assembled image in eRA Commons. **If you can't VIEW it; we can't REVIEW it!**

### Track Submission Status in eRA Commons

- NIH sends status emails to the contact, AOR and the PD/PI e-mail addresses listed on the SF 424 (R&R). E-mail can be unreliable. Proactively check the status of your application submission in the [eRA Commons](#).
- Errors are fatal – your application will not be accepted until all errors are resolved and the AOR submits a complete “Changed/Corrected” application through Grants.gov. Changed/Corrected applications submitted after the submission deadline will be subject to the [NIH Late Policy](#) and may not be accepted.
- Warnings do not stop the application from processing and are addressed at your discretion. If you choose to address warnings, you must do so by the submission deadline.

### View Assembled Application

- After your error-free application is assembled in the eRA Commons you will have two business days, known as the “application viewing window,” to check it before it is made available to NIH staff for further processing. This is your first chance to view/print the application just as a reviewer will see it – use it!
- SO can reject the application within the viewing window and submit a Changed/Corrected application prior to the submission deadline.
- All submissions made after the deadline are subject to the [NIH Late Policy](#) and may not be accepted.

### Find Help

- For general information on the SBIR/STTR program:
  - **SBIR/STTR Program Office**  
Web: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm> E-mail: [sbir@od.nih.gov](mailto:sbir@od.nih.gov)
- For general information on the NIH Electronic Submission of Grant Applications program:
  - Web: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/>
  - Useful Resources: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/communication.htm>
- For information on eRA Commons registration, eRA errors/warnings, and post-submission functionality:
  - **eRA Commons Help Desk**  
Web: <http://itservicedesk.nih.gov/eRA/> (Preferred method of contact)  
Toll-free: 1-866-504-9552 Phone: 301-402-7469 TTY: 301-451-5939  
Hours: Mon. – Fri., 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET
- For information about Grants.gov registration, form behavior/navigation, or submission issues:
  - **Grants.gov Contact Center**  
Toll-free: 1-800-518-4726  
Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed federal holidays.  
E-mail: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)