



# NIH eSubmission Tips



## Prepare to Apply & Register - Start Early!

**Get registered** *\*\*Registration can take 6 or more weeks to complete – even longer for new businesses!\*\**

- Applicant organizations must be registered in [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov).
  - Designate E-Biz Point of Contact (POC) who will approve all Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) requests for “submit” authority within Grants.gov.
- Applicant organizations must be registered in eRA Commons.
  - Designate Signing Official (SO) with overall authority for your business’ Commons account administration and institution profile.
- All Project Directors/Principal Investigators (PD/PIs) need [eRA Commons](http://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 organization. (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 account can be affiliated with multiple institutions. You are responsible for maintaining your account information.
  - Update your Commons profile prior to submitting (e.g., degree 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 needed 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

- All applications must be submitted in response to a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).
- Application packages are specific to individual FOAs (i.e., can’t reuse application forms from one opportunity to another).
- Use “Parent” announcements for your unsolicited, investigator-initiated applications. (See [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/parent\\_announcements.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/parent_announcements.htm).)

## Prepare Application

- Follow ALL instructions in the application guide and within the FOA. If the application guide and FOA instructions conflict – the FOA wins!
- App. guide details NIH requirements that are not marked required on federal-wide forms, for example:
  - Project Performance Site Location(s) – include DUNS number for primary location
  - R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) - 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. Use section headings within attachment text 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.
- PDF format is required by NIH for all text attachments. (For PDF guidelines, see [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/pdf\\_guidelines.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/pdf_guidelines.htm).)

## 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 time stamp (or eRA Help Desk ticket confirming a system issue preventing submission) by 5 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 e-mails 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 electronic processing and are addressed at your discretion. If you choose to address warnings in your application, 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 for assembly issues before it is made available to NIH staff for further processing.
- 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

- Websites:
  - **NIH Office of Extramural Research (About Grants):** <http://grants.nih.gov/>
  - **electronic Research Administration:** <http://era.nih.gov/>
  - **Applying Electronically:** <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/index.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  
 E-mail: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)  
 Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed federal holidays.