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## Implementation of Phase I Approaching

Implementation for Phase I of PennERA (Electronic Research Administration) is scheduled for the July/August timeframe. As part of Phase I implementation, the Human and Animal Protocol and Proposal Tracking modules of the PennERA system will be released to the Office of Research Services (ORS), the Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA), and to current users of the Protocol Tracking system (PPM). SPIN Plus, a funding opportunities application, will be available to the entire Penn community. A valid PennKey and password and a standard web browser will be required to access these applications.

These release dates are based on a "window of opportunity" that appears to best balance the introduction of changes with the least disruption of critical year-end operational activities. The planning assumption behind a release date is of course predicated on the availability and performance of the software products from the vendors from whom we purchased applications. We have every expectation that all software releases as well as testing and training components of the implementation will support release in that timeframe.

Training will be provided on the Human and Animal Protocol and Proposal Tracking modules for those who will have access as part of this release, including ORS and ORA, and to a limited extent OEHRs, ORSS, OHR, and ULAR. Online reference materials will be available to SPIN Plus users. More details on reference and learning materials will be provided in future updates.

### Other PennERA news

The Reports Working group recently convened and includes representatives from the Schools and Centers. Over the next couple of months, the PennERA team will be working with the Research Reps and BAs to establish System Access Administrators for subsequent phases of PennERA.

### Changes

When the new applications are released, the following complementary changes will be made:

- **BEN Reports**—The only report being revised is the Protocol Status Report, where there will be some changes to the protocol information displayed; currently there is no anticipated need to change any of the other reports available via BEN Reports
- **GRAM**—Minor cosmetic changes to GRAM are anticipated
- **AIS form**—The current AIS form will be redesigned to reflect the newly automated account setup process
- **Proposal Transmittal and Approval Form**—The current Proposal Transmittal will be updated to reflect changes in data elements, as well as to incorporate information for compliance purposes

## PennERA: Implementation of Phase I Approaching *(cont.)*

- **Protocol Tracking and Proposal Tracking applications**—These applications will provide the ability to set up automatic alerts by project to signal when grants and protocol approvals are about to expire
- **BEN Financials**—Minor changes will be made to the Freeze Grant and Fund Attributes screens and certain reports specific to ORS Post-Award accounting to display the sponsor code, which is being converted from a 4- to a 5-digit number
- **Data Warehouse**—In the General Ledger data collection (and in all Business Objects Universes that include the Fund Codes table), the fund sponsor codes will be changed to the new 5-digit number in concert with the conversion of sponsor codes mentioned above. The sponsor type will no longer be derived from the sponsor code, but will be stored in a separate data element, with a new list of values. Federal flow-through funds will not be identified by their sponsor code, but by a new fund attribute. The Data Warehouse will include Legacy Fund Sponsors, a new table that maps old to new sponsor codes for users who will need to continue to refer to the former (4-digit) sponsor code and the associated name and sponsor type.

A new Data Warehouse collection will be created when the new Proposal Tracking system is implemented. All proposal and award data will be converted from the existing Proposal Tracking system to the new collection. Therefore, users will be able to use the new collection to report on proposals and awards regardless of whether they are active or closed. The existing Data Warehouse collection used for research (SPONPROJ) will still be available; however, no updates will be processed to this collection after the implementation date.

In preparation for implementation, ORS and ORA staff will be going through a transitional period as they acclimate to the new systems. We do not anticipate excessive delays with business operations, but we do expect to experience some slowdown during this transitional period. We appreciate your patience as we strive to improve the way we do research administration at Penn.

### More Information about PennERA

Additional updates about PennERA will be provided throughout the project. For the most current information, please visit the PennERA project web site at <http://www.pennera.upenn.edu/>. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please send an e-mail to [pennera@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:pennera@pobox.upenn.edu).

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--Andrew B. Rudczynski, Ph. D.

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--Joseph R. Sherwin, Ph.D.

**Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs**

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## Where can I get more information about administering my grants?

Office of Research Services Web Site:

[www.upenn.edu/researchservices/](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/)

Research Investigator's Handbook:

[www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rih/intro.html](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rih/intro.html)

A Quick Guide for Faculty:

[www.upenn.edu/researchservices/pdfs/newfacbk.pdf](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/pdfs/newfacbk.pdf)

University of Pennsylvania Cost Sharing Policy:

[www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/costshare.html](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/costshare.html)

Contact an Office of Research Services Staff Member:

[www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/contact.html](http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/contact.html)

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## REVISED NIH POLICY ON SUBMISSION OF A REVISED (AMENDED) APPLICATION

RELEASE DATE: May 7, 2003

On June 27, 1997 the NIH issued a notice in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts (see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not97-011.html>) that limited the number of revised or amended applications permitted as well as the time window during which those amended applications would be received. This announcement reiterates the NIH policy on the number of amended applications permitted but eliminates the two-year restriction on the receipt of those applications.

Accordingly, the NIH will not consider any A3 or higher amendment to an application for extramural support. But, beginning on the date of this announcement, there is no longer a time limit for the submission of the first and second revisions (A1 and A2). This policy applies to all NIH extramural funding mechanisms.

In submitting a revised application, it is worth noting that, a lengthy hiatus after the initial submission may be marked by significant advances in the scientific field and the comments of the reviewers may no longer be relevant. Principal Investigators and their institutions need to exercise their best judgment in determining the advisability of submitting a revised application after several years have elapsed.

The policy limiting the number of revisions was established following analysis of data indicating that investigators who receive initial funding for an amended application have a lower success rate in obtaining support for a follow-on competing application. The likelihood of subsequent success decreased with an increasing number of amendments. After three reviews, it was felt that it was time for investigators to take a fresh approach to their research proposals.

Investigators who have submitted three versions of an application and have not been successful often ask NIH staff how different the next application submitted has to be to be considered a new application. It is recognized that investigators are trained in a particular field of science and are not likely to make drastic changes in their research interests, however, a new application following three reviews is expected to be substantially different in content and scope with more significant differences than are normally encountered in a revised application. Simply rewording the title and Specific Aims or incorporating minor changes in response to comments in the previous Summary Statement does not constitute a substantial change in scope or content. Changes to the Research Plan should produce a significant change in direction and approach for the research project. Thus, a new application would include substantial changes in all sections of the Research Plan, particularly the Specific Aims and the Research Design and Methods sections.

In the referral process, NIH staff look at all aspects of the application, not just the title and abstract. Requesting review by a different review committee does not affect the implementation of this policy. When necessary, previous applications are analyzed for similarities to the present one. Thus, identical applications or those with only minor changes will not be accepted for review. If you have any questions, please contact Pam Caudill, Director of Pre Award. Inquiries to NIH can be addressed to the Office of Extramural Programs, Office of the Director at 301-435-2768 or the Division of Receipt and Referral, Center for Scientific Review at 301-435-0715.

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*This announcement reiterates the NIH policy on the number of amended applications permitted while eliminating time restrictions on the submission of those applications.*

## **REMINDER AND CLARIFICATION – DELIVERY OF COMPETING GRANT, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT, AND FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS**

The Division of Receipt and Referral, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, would like to inform investigators submitting grant applications that the Zip Code 20817 specified in the grant application **instructions for "Courier" delivery should not be used for Express Mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS).**

The USPS does not deliver packages directly to the 6701 Rockledge Drive address but instead forwards them to the main mail facility of the NIH.

If the "Courier" zip code is used with USPS, the application may be initially sent to a non-NIH mail facility and later routed to NIH.

Thus, when tracking your package it will be noted that it was forwarded to another zip code (20892). That is normal procedure and the package will be forwarded back to the Rockledge address though there will be a delay.

Consequently, all applications sent via the United States Postal Service for Express or regular mail should use the following address:

Center for Scientific Review  
National Institutes of Health  
Suite 1040  
6701 Rockledge Drive MSC 7710  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7710

All applications sent via a courier delivery service should use this address:

Center for Scientific Review  
National Institutes of Health  
Suite 1040  
6701 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20817

**Applications may not be delivered by individuals to the Center for Scientific Review but must be sent via a courier delivery service or the USPS.**

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## **NSF Publishes Revision to the NSF Grant Proposal Guide**

The National Science Foundation has published a revision to the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) (NSF 03-041) that is effective for proposals submitted on or after June 1, 2003. This revision implements Important Notice 128, dated January 24, 2003, entitled **Revision of the NSF Cost Sharing Policy**. This Important Notice reinforces the concept that, for unsolicited proposals, proposers should not include cost sharing amounts on Line M of the proposal budget. In cases where a program solicitation specifically requires cost sharing, proposers should not exceed the cost sharing level or amount identified in the solicitation. Other areas covered in this revision include:

- The addition of a Proposal Preparation Checklist to aid in the conduct of an administrative review of proposals prior to submission for compliance with NSF proposal preparation guidelines. The appendices section has been rearranged and re-lettered to accommodate the addition of new documents.
- Reminder to proposers that if both merit review criteria are not addressed separately within the one page Project Summary, the proposal will be returned without review.
- Modification of the NSF policy on Group proposals to state that, unless stipulated in a specific program solicitation, PIs who wish to exceed the 15 page Project Description limitation must request and receive a deviation in advance of proposal submission.
- Other sections have been revised, as appropriate, to update the GPG to ensure consistency with current NSF policies, practices or procedures. A summary of significant changes is provided to assist the user in navigating through these changes.

The GPG is available electronically on the NSF Website. <http://www.nsf.GOV/pubsys/ods/getpub.cfm?gpg>.

## Frequently Asked Questions...

### What is the NIH Commons?



The NIH eRA Commons is a web-based system that allows NIH extramural grantee organizations, grantees, and the public to receive and transmit information electronically about the administration of biomedical and behavioral research. To be able to use the NIH eRA Commons you must be registered as a user and be assigned a role within the Commons.

Roles are assigned to an individual based on the function of the individual. Three of the available roles are appropriate to be assigned to personnel outside of Research Services. They are as follows:

**AO** - The Administrative Official (AO) reviews grant applications before the final application is submitted to the NIH by the Signing Official (SO). The role of an SO is reserved for those Research Services personnel who have been granted signature authority on behalf of the Trustees of the University. Depending on the institution workflow process, it is possible for the SO and AO to be the same person (in this case the institution would only need a SO account). An AO can also create additional AO and PI accounts.

**PI** - The Principal Investigator (PI) is an individual designated by the grantee organization to direct the project or activity being supported by the grant. The PI is responsible and accountable for the proper conduct of the project or activity. The role of the PI within the eRA Commons is to complete the electronic grant process.

**ASST** - The Assistant role (ASST) indicates a basic NIH eRA Commons user who can be assigned as a PI delegate for eSNAP/X-Train (see below). Users with this role have no access within the Commons other than updating their Personal Profile. However, it will be possible for the PI to delegate "PI Authority" or "Submit Authority" to the ASST authority to these accounts to aid in administrative tasks.

The NIH eRA Commons is organized into sections. Depending upon the privileges/roles granted to an individual, specific sections may be viewed and accessed. Those sections of interest to the field are listed below:

**Personal Profile** - The Personal Profile (PPF) section lets users maintain their personal information on file at the NIH (including information such as degrees, publications, and contact information). This section is available to all registered users.

**Status** - This section lets Principal Investigators (PIs) review the current status of all their grant applications and review detailed information associated with the grant. Signing Officials (SOs) or Administrative Officials (AOs) associated with the institution are able to see a summary view of grant applications, review Notices of Grant Award, and access Progress Report face pages.

**eSNAP** - The electronic Simplified Non-competing Award Process (eSNAP) section lets extramural grantee institutions submit electronic versions of Type 5 (non-competitive) progress reports to the grants management community. This is currently in pilot status. It will be available to AOs, PIs and SOs in the future.

**IAR** - The Internet Assisted Review (IAR) section lets reviewers submit critiques of grant applications and view each other's reviews before the actual meeting. Scientific Review Administrators (SRAs) and Grants Technical



For more information on  
NIH Commons,  
please visit  
<http://cmmons.era.nih.gov>

## What is the NIH Commons? *(cont.)*

Assistants (GTAs) are able to view all critiques and generate preliminary score reports and pre-summary statement bodies.

**X-Train** - The electronic Trainee Activities System (X- section lets Program Directors (PDs) of grantee institutions create and update trainee appointments. See the X-Train User Guide for more information about this module.

**Links** - This section provides links to websites that provide information related to the NIH eRA Commons and related applications.

**Help** - This section provides online Help for all aspects of using the NIH eRA Commons.

### HOW TO REGISTER:

The Office of Research Services is the only office authorized to submit applications on behalf of The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania. Accordingly those individuals with signature authority within Research Services will be designated as Signing Officials. As detailed above, roles that can be assigned at the school or center level are PI, AO and Asst. The AO role has the authority to create and modify additional AO accounts, as well as to establish PI accounts. Each school within the University must designate a senior administrator to be designated as an AO. Research Services will create the account for that individual who can create additional AO and PI accounts. A memo has been sent to all Senior Business Administrators requesting the names of the individuals who will be the designated AO.

For more information about the NIH eRA Commons, visit <https://commons.era.nih.gov>.

## Training Opportunities:



### ORS Quizzes and FAQ's:

Take a moment to look at our quizzes or FAQ section (coming soon) for more guidance on administering 5-funds here at Penn. Both can be accessed by clicking Training on our home page ( <http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/> ).

### Sponsored Programs at Penn:

This program is designed to assist new employees in gaining the required knowledge necessary for the proper administration of the research resources sought and awarded at the University of Pennsylvania.

The program will be offered in August of 2003. For further information and to register, (after July 1) please go to <http://www.finance.upenn.edu/ftd/> .

### National Conference for University Research Administrator's (NCURA)

This organization offers numerous conferences and training opportunities throughout the year. Please see <http://www.ncura.edu> for more information.

## Pre-Award Administration Staff

The Pre-award staff is responsible for processing proposals, reviewing, negotiating, and accepting awards (except for corporate contracts), as well as, providing post-award non-financial administration for these accounts. Questions concerning issues such as no-cost extensions, carryover requests and other administrative matters should be directed to the appropriate pre-award contact.

Questions concerning **industrial clinical trial agreements and sponsored research agreements** should be addressed to the Corporate Contracts Group. Greg Curley is responsible for Account Information Sheets (AIS's) for all industrial clinical trials and sponsored research agreements.

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- Cancer Center – SOM
- Center for Experimental Therapeutics – SOM
- Institute for Environmental Medicine – SOM
- Institute for Human Gene Therapy – SOM
- Institute for Neurological Sciences – SOM
- Medical Genetics – SOM
- Neurology – SOM
- Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
- Rehabilitative Medicine – SOM

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- Institute on Age – SOM
- Pennsylvania Muscle Institute – SOM
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- Graduate School of Education
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- Emergency Medicine – SOM

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- Clinical Research Center – SOM
- Diabetes – SOM
- Endocrinology –SOM
- Gastrointestinal – SOM
- General Intestinal Medicine – SOM
- Infectious Disease – SOM
- Pulmonary, Allergy & Critical Care – SOM
- Renal – SOM
- Rheumatology – SOM

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- Cerebrovascular Research Center – SOM
- Family Practice – SOM
- Graduate School of Fine Arts
- Obstetrics & Gynecology – SOM
- Surgery – SOM
- Psychiatry – SOM

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- Law School
- Morris Arboretum
- Provost Interdisciplinary Program
- School of Art and Sciences
- School of Social Work
- Student Services
- Van Pelt Library

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- Center for Aids Research – SOM
- Genetics – SOM
- Hematology/Oncology
- Neurosurgery - SOM
- Orthopedic Surgery – SOM
- Pediatrics – SOM
- Physiology – SOM
- School of Medicine, Institute for Medicine & Engineering – SOM
- Radiation Oncology
- Radiology

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- Annenberg Center for Performing Arts
- Annenberg School for Communication
- Cell & Developmental Biology – SOM
- Center for Bioethics – SOM
- Dermatology
- Geriatrics – SOM
- Microbiology – SOM
- Ophthalmology – SOM
- Otorhinolaryngology – SOM
- School of Nursing
- School of Veterinary Medicine

**CORPORATE CONTRACTS GROUP:**
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- Sponsored Research Agreements

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- Account Information Sheets for Corporate Contracts

## Post Award Administration Staff

The main functions handled by these ORS staff members are the preparation of financial invoices and reports, coordination of audits, collection of receivables, cash management functions, and close outs of funds. The Federal Compliance Group handles facilities and administrative costs, employee benefit rates, effort reporting, and compliance issues. Contact Information for all areas is provided below.

### **FEDERAL COMPLIANCE GROUP:**

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  - Muscle Institute
  - Physiology
  - Psychiatry
  - Radiation Oncology
  - Surgery
  - Neurosurgery
- Institute of Contemporary Art
- Vice Provost of University Life

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  - Cell and Developmental Biology
  - Center for Research on Reproduction and Women's Health
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  - Pathology
  - Pediatrics –Neonatology
  - Radiology

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  - Institute for Environmental Medicine
  - Genetics
  - Institute of Neurological Sciences
  - Neurology
  - Neuroscience
  - Medical School
  - Ophthalmology
  - Orthopedic Surgery
  - Otorhinolaryngology: Head and Neck Surgery
  - Pediatrics Admin
  - Pharmacology

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  - Center for Experimental Therapeutics
  - Institute for Human Gene Therapy
  - Institute for Aging
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- School of Arts and Sciences:
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  - Linguistics
  - Physics
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- Graduate School of Education
- Law School
- Morris Arboretum
- University Museum
- School of Medicine Departments:
  - Center for Bioinformatics
  - Institute for Medicine & Engineering

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- The College
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- Wharton School
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## Office of Research Services

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### *About Our Organization...*

#### *Our Mission*

The Office of Research Services oversees the administrative support of the University's externally funded research and is responsible for implementation of University policies established for this purpose. An important part of the ORS mission is service to the research faculty, through the provision of information and advice for the development of applications, and assistance in the administration of awarded grants and contracts.

In this role, Research Services

- Supports the schools and centers in the development of proposals for grants and contracts
- Reviews and approves all proposals before submission to the potential sponsor
- Coordinates negotiations of awards
- Accepts awards for the University, including the signing of contracts
- Provides oversight and guidance to faculty and staff concerning the proper management of sponsored projects
- Prepares all financial reports to sponsors

In addition to these functions, Research Services is responsible for billing of contracts management of letters of credit for payment of grants, preparation of indirect cost and employee benefit rate proposals and rate negotiations, management of the effort reporting system, and oversight of service center rate development. The office reports jointly to the Vice President for Finance and Vice Provost for Research.

## Office of Research Services Quick Contact List:

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