



NIH eSubmission Tips for Small Business Applicants



Prepare to Apply - Start early!

Get registered ***Registration can take 2-4 weeks to complete – even longer for new businesses!***

- The small business concern must register with Grants.gov and eRA Commons.
- Principal Investigators (PIs) do not register with Grants.gov.
- All Project Director/Principal Investigators (PD/PIs) need [eRA Commons](#) accounts with the PI role.
 - Work with your organization's Signing Official (SO) to get an account set up.
 - If you are both the PI and SO, you must have two separate accounts (one for each role).
 - If you have an account for Internet Assisted Review, make sure your account has the PI role.
 - The PD/PIs listed on an application must be affiliated with the applicant organization. (See http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/faq_special.htm#2)
 - 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.

Ensure you have appropriate software

- Free viewer/reader to manipulate and submit Grants.gov application forms
http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp.
- PDF conversion software to prepare required attachments. PDF format is required by NIH for all text attachments. (See http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/pdf_guidelines.htm#).

Find Opportunity and Download Package

- Find NIH Small Business Research opportunities at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm>.
- **IMPORTANT:** All electronic applications must be 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.
 - SBIR Parent Funding Opportunity Announcement: [PA-08-050](#)
 - STTR Parent Funding Opportunity Announcement: [PA-08-051](#)
 - [Program Descriptions and Research Topics](#)

Prepare Application

- Develop the research plan and other text documents using a word processing program. Once finished, convert the document into PDF format and split into the required separate documents following the instructions in the research plan section of the [Grants.gov SBIR/STTR Application Guide SF424 \(R&R\)](#). Check the PDF files carefully to ensure graphics and legends, etc. are as intended.
- Follow ALL instructions in the application guide and within the FOA. Instructions in the FOA "trump" those found in the application guide.
- Remember to include the PD/PI eRA Commons Username in the "Credential, e.g. agency login" field of the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile component. NIH requires it for application processing.
- 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

- PIs cannot submit the application. Only the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) can submit applications to Grants.gov.
- 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!**

Check Submission Status in eRA Commons

- NIH provides status emails to the AOR and the PI, but email can be unreliable. Proactively check your application status in eRA Commons (<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/>).
- The [NIH Electronic Submission website](#) and the [application guide](#) are excellent resources for resolving any identified errors and warnings.
- 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 (<http://grants.gov/>).
- Warnings do not stop processing and are addressed at the discretion of the applicant.

Check Assembled Application

- No one cares more about your application than you! After your error-free application is assembled in the eRA Commons you will have two weekdays (M-F, excluding holidays) to check it – use it! This is your first chance to view/print the application just as a reviewer will see it.
- Corrections to the application after this viewing period can only be made through and at the discretion of the Scientific Review Administrator (SRA) and will be an addenda (i.e., reviewers will still see your original application submission).

Finding Help

- For general information on the SBIR/STTR program:
 - **SBIR/STTR Program Office**
Web: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm>
Email: sbir@od.nih.gov
- For general information on the NIH Electronic Submission of Grant Applications program:
 - Web: <http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/>
- For information on eRA Commons registration, application validation, and post submission functionality:
 - **eRA Commons Help Desk**
Web: <http://ithelpdesk.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 viewer software (e.g. PureEdge or Adobe) and form navigation contact:
 - **Grants.gov Contact Center**
Toll-free: 1-800-518-4726
Hours : Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET
Email : support@grants.gov
- For NIH funding opportunity, application guidelines and grant-related resources contact:
 - **Grants Info**
Phone: 301-435-0714
TTY : 301-451-5936
Fax : 301-480-0525
Email : GrantsInfo@nih.gov