



## eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

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**Date:** Tuesday, March 22, 2005  
**Time:** 9:00–10:10 a.m.  
**Location:** Rockledge 1, 5<sup>th</sup> floor conference room  
**Chair:** Izja Lederhendler, Jim Cain

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, April 12, 9:00 a.m., Rockledge 1, 5<sup>th</sup> floor conference room

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### Handouts

- OERRM Services presentation:  
[http://era.nih.gov/docs/OERRM\\_Service\\_Definition\\_v2c.pdf](http://era.nih.gov/docs/OERRM_Service_Definition_v2c.pdf)

### Opening Remarks

*Izja Lederhendler*

Izja welcomed two new IBM requirements analysts— Barbara Piquet and Kashyap Avashia— from the Office of Reports & Analysis (ORA) to the meeting.

### OERRM Services presentation

*Izja Lederhendler*

[http://era.nih.gov/docs/OERRM\\_Service\\_Definition\\_v2c.pdf](http://era.nih.gov/docs/OERRM_Service_Definition_v2c.pdf)

Izja noted that he, along with several senior Office of Electronic Research and Reports Management (OERRM) staff, senior staff from within the Office of Extramural Research (OER) as well as some senior IC staff, recently met with Gartner Inc. to brainstorm on the best way to define services for the newly created OERRM. The goal of the meeting was to delineate the cost of each service so as to better define costing paradigms for ICs, OPDIVs and other customers who may seek the services of OERRM. Izja noted that it is important for OERRM to go to activity based costing because the way eRA does costing right now —assigning costs based on appropriations of each of those agencies — an approach that does not always work well when going across a diverse body of agencies.

***Service driven organization***—Izja said he would like to see services *drive* purposes as opposed to Information Technology (IT) driving services. Customers do not care how an organization gets to a point; all they care about is the end product or service. Izja said he would like OERRM to focus on a small set of customers, with as much direct contact as possible. Izja said that even though OERRM is not a business, the concept of capturing customers from competitors by using IT to provide faster, more efficient services resonated with him. With a larger organization, such an effort would have been more difficult to do.

***OERRM services***—The meeting defined OERRM services as falling into five main categories depicted in a jigsaw, with Electronic Research Administration in the center — a reflection of IT sitting in the center of the organization but not visible to the customer.

- ❑ **Electronic Research Administration**—This would include Planning initiatives; receipt and referral; review; awarding of grants; post grant oversight; data management and digital asset management
- ❑ **Reporting and Analysis**—This would include canned analytical and scientific level reporting; Ad-hoc reporting (which takes up most of the division’s efforts); Queries; the burgeoning field of Knowledge Management (unstructured text mining);
- ❑ **Customer Support**—This would encompass Help Desk services; training customers to use functionality; more one-on-one interactions with customers; Communications and Outreach;
- ❑ **New Capabilities**— This would involve providing new services to customers
- ❑ **Project Specific Services**—This is foreseen as the ability of OERRM to develop expertise to advise NIH on reengineering and other issues. Izja said he hoped OERRM would emerge as a source of expertise for developing software or business processes across NIH.

**Defining cost**—Izja noted that OERRM is looking at three ways of defining its budget framework– basically taking the same dollar amount and reporting it three different ways:

- ❑ **By Services**— Once the services are defined, one can assess the cost and develop a unit cost and do a better job of charging customers.
- ❑ **By Expenses**—Determine the total expenses for organization (management and overhead); expenses (personnel, hardware, software, space); contracts (supported services).
- ❑ **By Office of Management and Budget reporting categories**—OMB requires reporting of finances in these three categories: Development, Modernization and Enhancement (DME); Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Acquisitions.

Izja said that OERRM needs to have a consistent accounting of all its expenses and tag its expenses by different categories. The benefit of doing this well is that the OPDIVs integrating into the organization; the governance body with whom OERRM negotiates; and the customers OERRM supports will all have a clear understanding of OERRM’s financial workings.

**Discussion:** Sandy Karen of HRSA noted that from an OPDIV’s perspective, she welcomed what OERRM was doing.

## **FY 2006 Planning Update**

*Izja Lederhendler*

Izja reported that eRA’s budget request for Fiscal Year 2006 had undergone some changes in the way it was being presented. Therefore, this was not an opportune time to present the budget request to the Project Team without causing some confusion.

Danielle Bielenstein asked about the areas OERRM was seeking funding. Izja noted that this is a downsized budget environment and a majority of funding would be consumed by a series of must-dos ranging from Public Access to implementation of the Co-PI requirement to OPDIV integration.

He urged OPDIVs as a group to talk about their requirements and needs to OERRM and also assign members to work with OERRM employees on the OPDIV integration. Such cooperation would help OERRM staffers maintain their workload and forge ahead.

## Attendees

Ashley, Rich (RNS/OERRM)	Fadeley, Vickie (OER/OERRM)	Patel, Kalpesh (Ekagra/OERRM)
Avashia, Kashyap (IBM/OERRM)	Faenson, Inna (OER/OERRM)	Piquet, Barbara (IBM/OERRM)
Bielenstein, Danielle (FIC)	Flach, Jennifer (OER/OERRM)	Porter, Yvette (OER/OERRM)
Bradley, Eileen (CSR)	Gaines, Patti (OER/OERRM)	Salata, Kalman (CSR)
Brown, Bob (Optimus/OERRM)	Hahn, Marcia (OER/OPERA)	Scallions, Claire (CDC)
Bukowski, Maria (OER/OERRM)	Horton, Marcia (HRSA)	Seach, James (NCI)
Connelly, Vance (Blueprint Technologies/OERRM)	Karen, Sandra (HRSA)	Simms, Sophonia (OER/OERRM)
Copeland, Zoe-Ann (OER/OERRM)	Lagas, Robert (Lagas Associates/OERRM)	Snouffer, Anna (OD/OFACP)
Cox, Michael (OER/OERRM )	Lederhendler, Israel (OER/OERRM)	Subramanya, Manju (LTS/OERRM)
Cummins, Sheri (LTS/OERRM)	Liberman, Ellen (NEI)	Tucker, Jim (OER/OERRM)
Diggs, Lana (OER/OERRM)	Loewe, Michael (NINDS)	Twomey, Tim (OER/OERRM)
Dutcher, Sylvia (Mitretek/OERRM)	Lynch, Peggy (IBM/OERRM)	Wehrle, Janna (NIGMS)
	Milner, Tina (OER/OERRM)	Wright, David (OER/OERRM)
	Moyer, Skip (AHRQ)	