



eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, March 25, 2003
Time: 9:00–11:00 a.m.
Location: 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205
Chair: John McGowan

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 8, 9:00 a.m., 10401 Fernwood, Main Conference Room

Action Items

1. (Donna Frahm) Present the July Requirements Baseline at the April 8 Project Team Meeting.
2. (Joe Pasquina) Presentation on Internal Validation and Verification (IV and V) at the April 8 Project Team meeting.

Opening Remarks

John (JJ) McGowan

JJ reported that, as the eRA system matures and the user-base grows, the eRA Steering Committee has an increasing interest not only in the overall health and direction of the project but also in the committee's ability to explain the project's importance to all NIH stakeholders and market the system effectively. To better equip the committee to provide specific feedback on issues and questions from respective ICs, JJ will ask advocates from the Project Team to attend future Steering Committee meetings and provide input specific to their areas. JJ has asked Steve Hausman and Eileen Bradley to attend the next meeting.

JJ re-emphasized that the NIH eRA IMPAC II may be the HSS department standard. At this point CDC and AHRQ are using the system for research grants. Now CDC will be determining what changes in business rules they can accommodate to use the system and what areas they may need to have built out within eRA or customized to meet their needs. JJ will invite interested OPDIVs to participate in Project Team meetings going forward to obtain status of the eRA project. JJ introduced Skip Moyer from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) who joined today's meeting.

eRA Deployment Update

Tim Twomey

Tim reported that the IMPAC II database upgrade and application deployment that took place over the weekend went extremely well. The deployment included the migration to Oracle 9i technology, the integration of IMPAC II and NIH eRA Commons databases, and the installation of enhancements to IMPAC II and NIH eRA Commons applications. He pointed out that the deployment plan was executed without major issues and that the system was brought back on-line and made available to ICs nearly a day early. Tim thanked the eRA functional teams for all the hard work and coordination it took to make the release go smoothly.

Tim mentioned that quite a few long-running sessions and higher than average system usage on Monday may have affected performance, but that the system seems to be settling down. Tim reported that the Help desk had also received a few reports of upload summary statement failures. The failures appear to be related to path length (around 100 characters), but the issue needs further definition.

Operations reminded the Project Team that the Staging environment should be used to tune extension systems. The Staging database is refreshed with each deployment.

The NIH eRA Commons Demo Facility will be deployed March 29. This Demo Facility will be a great tool for training activities and can accommodate hands-on training for large groups or small ad-hoc tutorials. Each user of the system will have a copy of the same sample data so that instructors can walk class participants through functionality and everyone will see the same data and results.

The Program Module (PGM) and CM Web, both pilot applications, will be released on April 4.

Jim Cain remarked that the eRA team is trying hard to establish stability and predictability within the system by defining and implementing rigorous development, testing and deployment processes. The smooth release is an outcome of those efforts.

NIH Participation in E-Grants Pilot

Paul Markovitz

Paul indicated that E-Grants has asked the NIH to participate in a pilot prior to moving to production in October 2003.

E-Grants plans to hold two pilots:

- Pilot 1, "Testing the Edges," will include core elements (OMB Standard 424). This pilot will test data only (no hand-off mechanisms will be tested).
- Pilot 2 will include core and non-core elements. The schedule has not been established, but early estimates point to the August timeframe. The NIH will take part in this pilot and provide validation of XML documents containing grant applications.

Preliminary requirements to participate in the pilot were due in February and included:

1. *Provide grant application data categorized as core and non-core.* Paul sent the draft XML schema to the E-Grants team and is re-working the information into the format required by E-Grants.
2. *Provide CFDA numbers list.* Paul submitted a list of approximately 104 CFDA numbers used by the NIH.

Minimal resources are required to take part in this pilot. E-Grants would like approximately five applicants that represent diverse communities to submit 1–2 applications each. The applicants would re-enter recently awarded applications into the pilot system and compare the results from the current and E-Grants systems.

Paul indicated that monthly meetings with E-Grants are taking place to make sure the NIH and E-Grants activities remain in step and that the working relationship has been very positive.

eRA Symposium—Progress in Program: Tying It All Together

Scarlett Gibb

Scarlett reported that planning for the third annual eRA symposium is moving forward. The event, titled “Progress in Program: Tying It All Together,” is scheduled for April 30 in the Natcher Auditorium. Dedicated to updating Program Officials (POs) on the impact of new eRA technology on NIH business processes, the symposium will introduce POs to the new Web-based Program module (PGM), which will debut in pilot mode on or about April 4. The symposium also will introduce the concept of knowledge management (KM) and how eRA plans to take advantage of this new data-mining technology to identify trends and support executive decision-making.

The agenda and other information regarding the symposium will be available on the eRA website shortly.

Patty Austin, the symposium chairperson, will be “knocking on doors” and seeking help for the event. The eRA Project Team is asked to do what they can to help Patty and her team make this event a success.

Status of Requirements Costing and Prioritization for July Release

Donna Frahm

Donna provided a quick update on the July requirements’ costing and prioritization process that is currently taking place. Using the July Plans list that Sherry Zucker presented at the March 11 Project Team Meeting as a starting point, Steve Hughes and Donna have been reviewing the large wish list with respect to the Architecture and strategic direction of the eRA project. These considerations, together with budget, resource, and scheduling input, allow the eRA team to further prioritize and refine the list of functionality to be included in the July and future releases.

The requirements’ baseline for the July release is due to be completed on March 28. Donna will present the requirements’ baseline at the April 8 Project Team Meeting. She will discuss why specific functionality was included or deferred and what functionality the team was able to include based on the additional funding from the Board of Governors (BOG).

Donna introduced Joe Pasquina who is leading the Internal Validation and Verification (IV and V) team to evaluate the financial health of eRA, as well as project processes and testing. Joe will make a presentation on IV&V evaluation results thus far at the April 8 Project Team meeting.

Attendees

Austin, Patricia (OER/COB)	Cox, Michael (OER)	Goodman, Mike (OD/OER)
Bradley, Eileen (CSR)	Cummins, Sheri (LTS/COB)	Grandy, Vanessa (Z-Tech)
Caban, Carlos (OER)	Erickson, Bud (NCI)	Hahn, Marcia (OER/OPERA)
Cain, Jim (OER)	Fitzgerald, Steve (RN Solutions)	Hann, Della (OD/OER)
Collie, Krishna (RN Solutions)	Frahm, Donna (OER)	Hausman, Steve (NIAMS)
Copeland Sewell, Zoe-Ann (OD/OER)	Gibb, Scarlett (OER/COB)	Hodgkins, Earl (NIGMS)
		Hughes, Stephen (OD)

Loewe, Michael (NINDS)	Pearson, Johnnie (Z-Tech)	Soto, Tracy (DEIS)
Markovitz, Paul (OER)	Pollara, Victor (OD/NIH)	Tucker, Jim (OER)
Martin, Carol (NHGRI)	Ratnanather, Chanath (Ekagra)	Twomey, Tim (OD)
McGowan, JJ (NIAID)	Sachar, Brad (Oracle)	Van Brunt, Virginia (LTS)
Morton, Pete (CIT)	Seppala, Sandy (LTS/COB)	Williamson, Mary Ann (NIDCR)
Moyer, Skip (AHRQ)	Silver, Sara (Z-Tech)	Wilson, Mike (NGIT)
Panniers, Richard (CSR)	Silverman, Jay (NGIT)	Wright, David (OPERA)
Pasquina, Joe (SOZA)	Sinnett, Everett (CSR/OD)	Zucker, Sherry (DEIS)
Patel, Kalpesh (Ekagra)	Snouffer, Anna (OD/OFACP)	