eRA Paperless Business Practices Workgroup

Date:	February 25, 2003
Time:	3:00–4:30 p.m.
Location:	Rockledge 2, Room 3087
Advocate:	Steve Hausman
Analyst:	Michael Cox

Action Items

1. (All) Email Mike Loewe to participate in the Advanced Technologies focus group.

2. (Steve Hausman) Check on status of proposal to National Records and Archives Administration (NARA).

Overview of New Project Team Landscape

Steve Hausman announced a series of organizational changes regarding the eRA Advocates. He distributed a revised list of Advocates to the group, noting that he is no longer the Advocate for Paperless Business Practices. He is now the Advocate for Advanced Technologies.

Future of eRA Paperless Business Practices Steering Committee

Steve announced that it is time to phase out the Paperless Business Practices Workgroup. It has accomplished its mission of scanning all competing grant applications that are received through CSR. Scanning is no longer a pilot project or an experiment, but a reality, with approximately 56,000 grant applications scanned for FY 2002. Steve emphasized the success of the group's efforts, explaining that NIH has produced more CDs this January than during a four-month time period last year. He congratulated the group and expressed his gratitude for all their efforts and hard work. The Paperless Business Practices Workgroup will no longer meet.

As the new Advocate for Advanced Technologies, Steve will present at the eRA Symposium on April 30 and will give periodic presentations to the ICs about paperless business practices at the NIH.

Mike Cox and Steve will partner with Advocates and Analysts in all the eRA business areas to explore advanced technologies and ways to incorporate them into the ICs. Technologies include Knowledge Management (KM) and eventually replacing CDs with DVDs. Similar to Paperless Business Practices, Advanced Technologies is not a module but is a cross-cutting development that applies to all business areas at the NIH.

Focus Groups for Advanced Technologies

Mike explained that he plans to assemble a few focus groups to develop tools and explore advanced technologies for document management. These focus groups will be subcommittees of the eRA User Groups, such as Grants Management, Review, etc. Recommendations from these focus groups will be presented to the eRA User Groups, the corresponding business areas, and their executive policy-making committees. Mike explained to the group that they are more than

welcome to participate in one or more of these focus groups and may be asked to join by Steve or himself. All interested parties should email Mike directly.

So far, focus groups include

- Electronic file, Grant Folder, and the Official Grant Record

- Documentation notation, redact, and related issues

- CD Enhancement

- CD security, digital rights

The requirements for the electronic grant folder will be completed by a subcommittee of the Grants Management (GM) Lead Users Group and shared with GMAC. Mike hopes to have the subcommittee assembled by early March. The requirements for the electronic grant folder are due in July.

CD enhancements will be handled under a focus group comprising Review User Group members. Mike plans to make a presentation to the Review User Group (RUG) requesting their participation in exploring the future direction of CDs at the NIH. He explained that CDs eventually need to include the complete collection of documents that are normally distributed to review members, including Summary Statements, Review Guides, grant applications, etc. Mike also said that the NIH needs better multiple CD support and CD navigation. The focus group on CD enhancement will concentrate on resolving these issues.

Finally, Mike plans to assemble a subcommittee of the Review User Group that will focus on security issues with CDs. CDs need to be password encrypted. However, any security measure should not discourage or slow down reviewers as they read applications. This subcommittee will explore Digital Rights and ways to control user access to CDs.

Action: **(All) Email Mike Loewe to participate in the Advanced Technologies focus group.**

Overview of Document Management, Future Directions

Mike provided a brief update on present document management at the NIH. He explained that NIH staff can search and access all NIH documents (e.g., Notice of Grant Award, Summary Statement) via the IMPAC II system. Documents are organized by business area. For example, Review has access to documents that are relevant to Review functions while prospective grantees have access to Notice of Grant Award and other status information. The eRA system automatically places documents in the appropriate business area module. For example, documents relevant to Review are sent to the Review module while documents relevant to Grants Management (GM) are sent to the GM module. Finally, these documents can be printed or downloaded to a CD. The documents are protected via the log-on mechanism required to enter the IMPAC II system.

Mike also presented a few ideas for future document management at the NIH. The NIH needs to be able to

- Annotate documents

- Upload IC documents such as budget worksheets and emails

- Re-categorize documents; file and re-file
- Remove duplicates of documents and accept updated documents
- Conduct searches via word index

Electronic Grant Folder, Official Grant Application File

The group inquired about the status of the electronic grant folder becoming the official grant application file. Steve said that the Office of Management Assessment already may have sent a drafted policy statement to the National Records and Archives Administration (NARA) stating that the electronic image of a grant can be used as the official file. Steve said that he will check on the status of the drafted proposal. He is hopeful that the grant image will be established as the official file as soon as NARA approves the policy.

He reminded the group that grant images will be on the same record-retention schedule as paper grant records. That is, the grant image will be retained in the database throughout the active life of the grant. When the grant terminates, it will be stored in the database for six years. After that time the image and all back-up copies will be deleted.

Action: **(Steve Hausman) Check on status of proposal to National Records and Archives Administration (NARA).**

Attendees

Akeem, Carleen	Cox, Michael	Mason, Melvin
Armistead, Allyson	Fisher, Suzanne	McKay, Richard
Colbert, Penny	Hausman, Steve	Milman, Gregory
Coombs, Roger	Mason, Mary Elizabeth	Sinnett, Ev