ECB/QVR Steering Committee

Date:	Wednesday, February 1, 2006
Time:	10:00–11:30 a.m.
Location:	Fernwood Bldg., Room 3D-18
Chair:	Thor Fjellstedt
Next Meeting:	**Wednesday, March 1, 10:00 a.m., Fernwood 3D-18**

Action Items

1. (Thor Fjellstedt) Update the tutorial for finding the rank order of SBIR/STTR applications not percentiled and send it out to the distribution list.

2. (Thor Fjellstedt) Write a tutorial about the new features on the Selection Screen and send it to the distribution list.

3. (Cathy Buckley) Put the new features on the Custom Download Selection Screen into production and ask for comments.

4. (Cathy Buckley) Add link before the user runs a report that a tutorial is available for customizing PivotTables. *(Done)*

5. (Earl Hodgkins) Send a Grants Management list of contacts to Thor so that he can send them the budget adjustments tutorial.

6. (All) Send input to tutorials to Thor.

7. (Thor) Send list of classes to the listserv. *(Done)*

8. (All) Send training requests to Thor.

Discussion Topics

Multiple-PI Project Status

Heather Allison reported that development continues for incorporating multiple PI data into appropriate reports, such as where it is displayed on the Summary Statement search page. According to Thor, QVR hitlists will show the contact PI with a hyperlink to all PIs. However, Pete Morton reported that there are multiple initiatives addressing the issue and many issues that are not yet resolved, e.g., PIs and institutions often change on grants so how should it be reflected. There are Program Announcements (Pas) being released in the next few months that will include multiple PIs. Therefore, the project developers have gone back to the requestors to ask for more information about what the Multi-PI data should look like. A pilot is scheduled for October 2006 using the SF424 (R&R) on select Requests for Application (RFAs). Inna Faenson is the project coordinator.

Excerpt from an email distributed to staff by Dr. Norka Ruiz Bravo on February 6, 2006:

> *The NIH will make the multiple-PI option available for applications submitted in response to a selected group of Requests for Applications (RFAs) and Program Announcements (PAs) with May–June 2006 receipt dates. It is likely that additional*

initiatives will be selected to pilot this activity further for October 2006 receipt dates. Based on experience from these pilot initiatives, I expect that we will make the multiple-PI option available for most investigator-initiated research grant mechanisms submitted for January 2007 and later application receipt dates. The multiple PI option also will become available for other mechanisms at times to be announced in the future.

Rank Order of SBIR/STTR Applications Not Percentiled

QVR now provides a report that shows the rank order of SBIR/STTR applications for review purposes. It can show the rank position of all applications in a Review Committee as well as the rank of them with all other SBIR mechanisms.

Action: **(Thor Fjellstedt) Update the tutorial for finding the rank order of SBIR/STTR applications not percentiled and send it out to the distribution list.**

Custom Download Selection Screen Modifications

Cathy Buckley has new modifications to the Selection Screen in test. In showing the addition of a user-defined column capability, she asked for suggestions for improvement and additions. Some of the suggestions were:

- Change field label "Download Item Search" to "Download Item Contains."

- Delete "(User Defined)" on column title in report.

- Change label from "Excel Original" to "Excel Obsolete" to encourage people to use the "Excel" feature. The "Excel Original" contains streaming data and QVR has no control over the format. "Excel" is lightly formatted and easier to use but the user has to enable macros for it to display properly.

Action: **(Thor Fjellstedt) Write a tutorial about the new features on the Selection Screen and send it to the distribution list.**

Action: **(Cathy Buckley) Put the new features on the Custom Download Selection Screen into production and ask for comments.**

Tutorial on 2.35 Percent Reductions on Non-Competing Applications

Thor has added the tutorial "Add a Calculated Field to Excel PivotTable in QVR." It's important for users to know that there are more fields available than in any set table so that the user can customize the final report by dragging fields from the PivotTable field list to "Add Fields" after running the report.

Action: **(Cathy Buckley) Add note before the user runs a report that a tutorial is available for customizing PivotTables by changing the list downloads.** *(Done)*

There are 42 Standard reports now available through QVR.

Budget Adjustments Tutorial—Thor sent this tutorial out but has had no responses as yet. He wants to send it out to a wider range of people.

Action: **(Earl Hodgkins) Send a Grants Management list of contacts to Thor so that he can send them the budget adjustments tutorial.**

Action: **(All) Send input to tutorials to Thor.**

Current Status Receipt of Electronic Applications through Grants.gov

Pete Morton reported that the electronic submission project is moving ahead. They are examining lessons learned from the first rounds of submissions and determining changes that need to be made for future ones. Two issues were evident in the first rounds that NIH did not assess accurately ahead of time:

- Level of confusion in the user community

- How much customer support help would be needed

Regarding customer support, more users required help than expected at a level way beyond what the Helpdesk could handle. The initial decision to allow users to leave voicemail messages quickly got out of hand when more than 1,500 messages were left in a short period. The voice mailbox was cleared and turned off with a message to callers to send email.

There is an extensive "lessons-learned " process going on, which should smooth the way for the next rounds.

For the SBIR/STTR submissions:

- 2,500 applications are received on average for this type grant application

- 2,400 were received in the December electronic submission round

- 9,000 submissions overall were received in December for a final count of 2,400 because of multiple corrected applications that had to be resubmitted.

Here are some of the issues that are being addressed:

- **Validation criteria**—The team has tried to eliminate as many validation criteria issues as possible. Some of the criteria could easily be modified but others have to go to the policy group for reevaluation.

- **FAQs**—Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were posted on the Web site as the process began, with the thought that it would help users as they struggled with validation errors and submission issues. However, there were so many FAQs that no one could easily find the information. A working group is looking at them and is going to refine, compress and reorganize them.

- **Help text**—Help text was limited to a set number of characters, which turned out to be insufficient to get the correct information communicated clearly. The help-text field size has been increased considerably and the text examined to be sure it is clear and sufficient.

- **Volume of applications**—Pete calculated how many applications would arrive in the last 30 minutes before the deadline. He failed to calculate how many would arrive in the last two minutes before deadline. The system needed a 2,500 application capacity in two minutes, and it just can't be done. The tech team is evaluating how to spread these submissions out so that the system can handle them. A solution has to be found before the 20,000 applications (and 80,000 submissions) that are expected for the R01 submission date. *(Editor's note: the R01 date has been moved from December 1, 2006 to February 1, 2007.)*

- **Changes**—There will be another SBIR round in April, which will be helpful in showing what changes we have made work. By then, NIH will have increased the turnaround, improved the error messages, provided search support for the Helpdesk and eliminated errors that stopped previous applications.

- **Grants.gov**—Another area that is being studied is the handshake between Grants.gov and NIH. There was insufficient testing before the system went live so that there have been problems with XML data streams.

- **Appendices**—There were several issues regarding Appendices that have to be addressed:

  - Only one appendix showed in Peer Review.
  - CSR had to find a workaround to get all the appendices on the CD for reviewers.
  - If the appendix was a pdf attachment and there were problems with the attachment, the system stopped scanning the application for additional errors.
  - There is no way to remove incorrect or inappropriate appendices. In the past, they wrong-type appendices were manually removed before the application was sent to the reviewers. Now, CSR staff has to send reviewers a caveat and hope that reviewers will ignore the wrong-type appendices.

- **Citrix for Macintosh**—It was estimated in the group that about 50 percent of researchers use Macintosh computers for which the PureEdge application is not yet available. Citrix servers provide a way for Macintosh users to work on the PureEdge forms, but they have to be connected to the server (they can't download the forms). PureEdge takes up so much memory capacity (referred to as a *footprint*), that they are able to support about four users at a time. There were not so many Mac users for the SBIR/STTR applications so, in the end, this solution worked. However, the R01 applications could include 10,000 Macintosh users. The tech team is trying to find a solution.

"All Extramural" Feature in Test Environment

Earl Hodgkins continues his efforts to convene the QVR Budget Users group or a group of budget officers to see the "all extramural" feature, which includes contracts, loan repayments, and TAPS—obligation data only at this time.

IC Codes Project

Thor and the tech team have been working with some ICs in downloading their contract data. Thor is working with NIAID. NIAMS staff has indicated interest in testing their IC codes in QVR. He also heard from Renee Edwards who said that the SCS on Demand group isn't quite organized yet but should be in the next few months.

NIH Roadmap Update

Penny Burgoon, OD/Roadmap, reported that an RFA went out last week. The RFA is for the overall project and when the applications come in, each will be split into the various Roadmap groups, such as training, career, and will be given separate grant numbers.

The Roadmap concept has changed a lot in the research community. Groups that don't usually work together are doing so for these grants. Research needs to be done, now that Roadmap has been out there for a couple of years, to see how it fares in productivity, i.e., how many publications cite a Roadmap award.

Training on Grants Process and QVR for Help Desk staff

Action: **(Thor) Send list of classes to the listserv.** *(Done)*

Action: **(All) Send training requests to Thor.**

Thor conducted a training class for the CIT Helpdesk staff, which was very successful. Part of the training was to walk them through the grants process itself so that they would get an understanding of what the main business of the NIH is—awarding grants.

Cathy asked Thor to include in his training that QVR staff cannot address user ID, password and printing problems and that the Helpdesk must address them.

QVR Access on PDAs/Blackberries

The question was raised as to whether or not QVR access on PDAs would be of use. The business case for this has not yet been made. If there are specific bits of data that people would want, QVR could consider making those available. However, this is not a priority at this time and will be keep on the list as a possible future project.

Items put into Production since the last meeting

- **NRFC: search item**—create separate items on the search screen for NRFC and Not-Scored applications.

- **Enhanced Review Meeting Information Report—**Modifications to the *Project Lists with Title* layout of the Review Meeting Report have been made.

- **SBIR-STTR**—Rank order of applications not percentiled.

ECB/QVR and Related Training Classes

- **Introduction to the QVR System**
    - April 6, Thursday, 1–4 p.m., Fernwood Bldg., Lower Level Classroom
    - May 4, Thursday, 1–4 p.m., Fernwood Bldg., 3E-02
    - June 5, Monday, 1–4 p.m., Fernwood Bldg., 3E-02
- **Intermediate QVR Training**
    - January, 31, Tuesday, 1–4 p.m., Fernwood Bldg., Lower Level Classroom
    - May 1, Monday, 9:00 a.m.–Noon, Fernwood Bldg., Lower Level Classroom
    - June 6, Tuesday, 1–4 p.m., Fernwood Bldg., Lower Level Classroom
- **Advanced QVR Training**
    - February 2, 1–4 p.m., Fernwood Bldg., Lower Level Classroom
    - May 2, Tuesday, 1–4 p.m., **Bldg. 12A (note location)**, Rm. B51
- **Understanding the Grants Process**
    - April 7, Friday, 9:00 a.m.–Noon, Fernwood Bldg., 3E-02
    - June 2, Friday, 9:00 a.m.–Noon, Fernwood Bldg., 3E-02

Next Meeting

Thor will not be available for the next meeting, which will be held on March 1. He will ask someone else to chair the meeting.

Action Items from January Meeting

1. (Thor Fjellstedt) Monitor the progress of the Multiple PI initiative and get additional information, such as due dates for the two RFAs and one PA for which there will be a multi-PI pilot in March or April.

2. (Heather Allison, Don Tiedemann, Cathy Buckley) Evaluate the development of a report of abstracts and key personnel from Status 70 applications by April. *(On task list for April delivery)*

3. (Development Team) Evaluate the new feature that is under test that will separate the Not Scored applications from the NRFC applications. *(Done)*

4. (Don Tiedemann) Evaluate the development of a way to access the up to 10 appendices for electronic applications in QVR.

5. (Don Tiedemann) Investigate the possibility of bringing up SF424 (R&R) cover letters in QVR.

6. (Development Team) Investigate non-competing supplements and a way to access them.

7. (Development Team) Investigate the feasibility of writing a macro to refresh data in previously run reports/downloads using data from the new report/download.

8. (Tom Tatham) Send a real-life scenario for when a user-defined column would be used.

Attendees

Allison, Heather (CIT)	Connors, Anne (NIAMS)	Morton, Pete (CIT/ORIS)
Barnes, Martha (NIEHS)	Delcore, Sandi (NICHD)	Peng, Lisa (NIDCR)
Bleakley, Carol (OD)	Fjellstedt, Thor (CIT)	Seppala, Sandy (ORIS/LTS)
Buckley, Cathy (CIT)	Geiler, Christen (NIDCR)	Tatham, Thomas (CSR)
Burgoon, Penny (OD/Roadmap)	Hodgkins, Earl (CIT)	Tiedemann, Don (CIT)
	Ikeda, Rick (NIGMS)	Wong, JoAnne (NIMH)
Cao, Nanwei (NIAAA)	Lo, Cathy (NIDCO)	Woodland, Rayseen (NCRR)