eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date:	Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2005
Time:	9:00–10:00 a.m.
Location:	Rockledge 1, 5th floor conference room
Chair:	Izja Lederhendler

Next Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 13, 9:00 a.m., Rockledge 1, 5th floor conference room

Action Items

1. (Tom Boyce) Get update from Grants.gov on Macintosh compatibility issue.

2. (Tom Boyce) Seek clarification on email sent regarding wish list for enhancements to Committee Management module.

Handout

[Timeline for electronic receipt](#)

Opening Remarks and Announcements

Izja Lederhendler

❑ Izja announced that management of all electronic receipt initiatives and projects is moving up one level with OER director Norka Ruiz Bravo having appointed Megan Columbus in the new role of NIH Program Manager for Electronic Receipt of Grant Applications. Megan will report directly to Norka. In this role, Megan will oversee the trans-OER coordination and implementation of several closely related initiatives including:

   o electronic Competitive Grant Application Process (eCGAP)

   o the transition from the PHS 398 form to the electronic 424RR form and the NIH-Grants.gov collaboration

   o the Multiple-Principal Investigator issue and

   o the integration of Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) such as AHRQ and HRSA into NIH.

Megan will work closely with OERRM, OPERA and OEP in shepherding these various initiatives to fulfillment. Izja also announced that he has asked Sheri Cummins of LTS, his senior executive assistant and eRA project analyst, to take the Communications lead and assist Megan in getting the word out about the electronic receipt initiatives. He described Sheri as his "outstanding right hand." In addition, Izja said he had asked Debbie Panitz of Blueprint, an eRA business analyst who is involved in OPDIV integration issues and electronic receipt, to assume the role of Executive Coordinator. Izja noted that eRA is focused on electronic receipt and the Dec. 1 deadline requiring electronic submission of all SBIR/STTR grant applications, with approximately 60 percent of eRA activities concentrating on electronic receipt activities. A lot of eyes are focused on that date, eRA's first big step in requiring grant applications to come in electronically.

❑ Izja said that the OERRM transition is moving forward quite well but has hit a snag — the simple merger of the Department of Extramural Information Systems (DEIS) (under which eRA falls) and the Office of Reports & Analysis (ORA) that was envisioned has not happened yet, so OERRM is not yet a legal entity. Until the formal, new organization is in place, a permanent management team cannot be hired. In addition, he noted that OER has a new executive officer who needs to be briefed on the merger. Izja said back in February when this reorganization began in earnest, he did not imagine what a huge endeavor this would be. He noted that the wait is creating uncertainty among employees who are managing old responsibilities and assuming new ones at the same time. However, even as the organization undergoes this tough transitional phase, an interim management team is in place and forging ahead on the business front. He expressed gratitude for the continued forbearance and support of OERRM staff and management.

Update on OERRM Retreat

Tom Boyce

Tom said the first offsite retreat at the Bolger Center on August 9 and 10 exceeded expectations. Seven working groups met to brainstorm goals for OERRM and detail internal processes to achieve those goals. He noted that participants emerged energized by the discussion. Tom noted that the plan is to post the working groups' goals and processes on a specially created web portal, so that the information can be shared with others. The plan is to have each working group continue their brainstorming in a series of meetings that will culminate in a final meeting sometime in late October or early November.

Electronic Receipt Timeline

Izja Lederhendler

Izja noted that NIH had mapped out an aggressive timeline for electronic receipt with the goal of targeting submission of all grant mechanisms via Grants.gov to NIH by September 2007. Norka had presented the timeline and announced it to internal staff through the newsletter 'OER Insider.' Izja noted that Megan Columbus and her team would mobilize the resources needed to achieve the goals set out in the timeline. He noted that the timeline would also serve as a way of bringing together various ongoing activities within eRA. Megan's knowledge of eRA and her work at OPERA will be invaluable in getting the groups together. Izja noted that the aggressive schedule had its risks. The first major hump will be the Dec. 1 receipt date set for all SBIR/STTRs to come in electronically via Grants.gov to NIH. This will be followed shortly thereafter by R13 Conference Grants on Dec. 15, Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA) grant mechanisms in January 2006 and R03s and R21s in June 2006. The next big grant mechanism on the timeline will be the submission of the investigator-initiated R01s, targeted for October 2006.

The projected timeline for transitioning various mechanisms to the SF 424 (R&R) via Grants.gov to NIH is as follows (target submission date in parentheses):

❑ SBIR/STTR   (Dec. 1, 2005)

❑ R13–Conference Grant   (Dec. 15, 2005)

❑ R15–AREA Grant   (January 2006)

❑ R03 and R21   (June 2006)

❑ R01   (October 2006)

❑ All mechanisms   (May 2007)

Discussion:

R36—Skip Moyer suggested adding R36 dissertation grants to the mix. Izja responded that he would discuss it further with Skip offline. Marcia Hahn said she has statistics on each mechanism and will take a look at the R36.

Mac compatibility—Rick Ikeda asked if Grants.gov would accommodate Macintosh computers, given the question of their compatibility with Grants.gov's PureEdge system. He noted that a number of people use Macintosh computers for Conference Grants. Tom Boyce noted that IBM had recently acquired PureEdge Solutions Inc., but said he did not know the ramifications of this purchase on the compatibility issue. Pete Morton said that the Center for Information Technology (CIT) made CITRIX servers available last year to assist with the Pioneer Awards submission via Grants.gov to NIH.

Izja noted that Grants.gov is sensitive to the Macintosh issue because there has been an outcry. He said that NIH's timeline has dependencies on Grants.gov. It is in their interest to see that NIH succeeds in its electronic receipt endeavor. Izja noted that SBIR/STTR applicants are not so intensely Macintosh-driven. David Wright noted that one solution is for applicants to submit through Service Providers, who offer electronic applicants platform-independent software. Tom said he will seek an update from Grants.gov on the Macintosh issue.

Action: (Tom Boyce) Get update from Grants.gov on Macintosh compatibility issue.

Communications—Carlos Caban asked if big universities, who had been holding off on submitting through eCGAP, were in a position to go through Grants.gov. Members noted communications would play a big part in making the public aware of electronic receipt. Marcia Hahn noted that a NIH Guide Notice was released Friday (Aug. 19) and mailers are being revised to include information on electronic receipt. Izja noted that every communications issue should be on the table and all resources marshaled to get the word out on electronic receipt. Izja noted that the coming weeks would involve the melding of technical, policy and communication issues to make this huge endeavor a success.

Table Talk

CMUG email— Everett Sinnett said he was puzzled by an email that he received seeking input from him on a wish list for enhancements to the Committee Management module. Tom Boyce noted that while soliciting input was fine, eRA was not looking to take on a lot of work in that area. He said he would follow up and clarify the issue.

Action: (Tom Boyce) Seek clarification on email sent regarding wish list for enhancements to Committee Management module.

Attendees

Avashia, Kashyap (IBM/eRA)	Bielenstein, Danielle (NIH/FIC)	Boyce, Tom (OERRM) Brown, Bob (Optimus)

Bukowski, Maria (OD)

Burns, Amy (LTS/OERRM)

Caban, Carlos (OER)

Carr, Faizah (AHRQ)

Clark, Howard (Mitretek)

Clevenger, Gail (OD/OER)

Collins, Starla (eRA/OERRM)

Costa, Tom (Blueprint)

Cox, Michael (OERRM)

Cummins, Sheri
  (LTS/OERRM)

Dixon, Diana (OERRM)

Dutcher, Sylvia
  (Mitretek/OERRM)

Faenson, Inna (OERRM)

Fadeley, Vickie (OERR

Falls, Rick (SAIC)

Finch, Dorrette
  (ORA/OERRM)

Flora, Carla (OERRM)

Gardner, George (OPERA)

Goodman, Mike (OERRM)

Gutierrez, Adrian (NGIT)

Hahn, Marcia (OER/OPERA)

Hays, Timothy (OD)

Horton, Marcia
  (OER/OPERA)

Ikeda, Rick (NIGMS)

Jordan, Craig (NIDCD)

Lagas, Robert (Lagas
  Associates)

Liberman, Ellen (NEI)

Leahy, Tim (MSD)

Lynch, Peggy (IBM/OERRM)

Masood, Khalid (OER)

Mayer, Pamela (NINDS)

Morris, Richard (NIAID)

Morton, Pete (CIT)

Moyer, Skip (AHRQ)

Patel, Kalpesh
  (Ekagra/OERRM)

Pearson, Katrina (OERRM)

Porter, Yvette (OERRM)

Nastea, Sorin (IBM)

Salzman, John (OD)

Seach, Jim (NCI)

Seppala, Sandy
  (LTS/OERRM)

Shingler, Felicia (OERRM)

Siegert, Mark (OERRM)

Sinnett, Everett (CSR)

Snouffer, Anna (OD/OFACP)

Subramanya, Manju
  (LTS/OERRM)

Tipparaju, Suryarao
  (ACT/OERRM)

Tucker, Jim (OERRM)

York-Jolley, Jena (OERRM)

Walker, Catherine (OERRM)

Wright, David (OER)

Zeimetz, Marie (OERRM)

Zhen, Changqing
  (IBM/OERRM)