



eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2002
Time: 9:00–10:00 a.m.
Location: 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205
Chair: John McGowan

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 11, 9:00 a.m., 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205

Action Items

No new action items assigned.

Attachments

- Knowledge Management Update (Richard Morris):
http://era.nih.gov/Docs/KnowledgeManagement_02-25-03.pdf
- eRA Program Module (PGM): March 2003 and Beyond (Chanath Ratnanather):
http://era.nih.gov/Docs/PGM_March_2003_%20beyond.pdf
- J2EE Query Tool for Operational & Production Use (Sherry Zucker):
http://era.nih.gov/Docs/Query_Tool_02-24-03.pdf
- CGAP Progress Update (JJ Maurer): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/CGAP_Update_02-24-03_v21.pdf
- NIH eRA Commons and eSNAP Status (Dan Hall):
http://era.nih.gov/Docs/eSNAP_Commons_Update.pdf

Opening Remarks

John (JJ) McGowan

JJ announced that the NIH eRA Commons workshop was a success, including more than 1,000 hits on the videocast. He noted that there will be a more aggressive outreach to all ICs, with the Advocates playing a major role in getting the word out.

JJ welcomed the new Advocates who have joined the eRA Project Team:

- Mr. Michael Loewe, Grants Management (GM)
- Dr. Ellen Liberman, Receipt, Referral & Assignment
- Mr. Chip Groh, IC Technical Perspective
- Ms. Mary Ann Williamson, Internal ADP/EP

Knowledge Management

Richard Morris

Richard Morris provided an overview of the first stage of the Knowledge Management investigation for possible application to the eRA project. He first described the life cycle of

disruptive technologies, such as knowledge management, in three stages. The goal of the first stage is to demonstrate that the concept is sound, can result in significant value, and is worth pursuing. In the second stage, niche applications with a good fit to the concept are identified, the concept is marketed in the framework of benefits to those niche applications, and the process of building “true believers” is begun. The third stage includes procurement and implementation. The concept is mature, accepted, and spreads to other applications.

Richard then presented a status report on what has already been done in the area of knowledge management and where the project is headed. The Conceptual Phase of the project, including detailed system and functional requirements, was completed in December 2002. The Design Phase, including performance requirements and detailed design, completed this month. The project is now transitioning to the pre-production phase. Two proposed pilots have been identified: Situational Awareness and Reviewer Selection.

Richard explained how key information can be extracted from the research proposals corpus and manipulated using knowledge management tools to identify trends and provide information to support executive decision-making. The key to utilizing the full potential of knowledge management is in the constant updating and refining of the specialized rules and dictionaries used in each application. With the proper groundwork up-front, knowledge management can be a flexible and powerful tool throughout the grants management process. For example, Knowledge management could be used for referral, assignment, and to check conflict or to locate the best Reviewers in a particular field.

Richard reviewed the key performance, usage, and operational metrics identified for the Grant Review System (GRS). Documentation of a baseline is underway, so that quantitative measurements can be taken to track the benefits realized through knowledge management going forward.

There are still some key questions that must be answered:

- Readiness—Is the organization ready? Do we have the pilot sites identified, buy-in?
- Budget—Do we have Phase 2 funds for pre-production piloting? Do we funds/plan for a full-scale implementation?
- Management/Staff—Do we have staff to manage and oversee the project? Does the contractor have needed resources/skill sets?
- Inputs—Do we have the needed data sets? Is the XML corpus ready?
- Assessment—Do we have baselines? Do we have credible means of verifying best practices?

Richard closed his presentation re-emphasizing that knowledge management is a disruptive technology and, as such, we will need to work through each of the phases from concept to implementation, but there is tremendous potential benefit to many applications in NIH and the journey is worth pursuing.

JJ McGowan echoed that sentiment, stating that we now know enough about knowledge management to believe it will work for us, he has personally seen it in practice, and that the concept is here to stay. A procurement strategy is underway and we should expect to hear more about this topic soon.

eRA Program Module (PGM): March 2003 and Beyond

Chanath Ratnanather

Chanath opened his presentation with the overall Program Module (PGM) vision:

Enable Program Officials (POs) to conduct NIH research administration using the paperless processes mandated by Congress

- *A “gateway” to research and eRA information*
- *Focus on the PO’s portfolio throughout the application and grant lifecycle, from pre-submission through post-award activities*

He reviewed the major Program features and tasks including:

- *Hierarchical Portfolios*—Default portfolios at many levels
- *Manage Portfolios*—Add/Remove grants, custom portfolios
- *Review e-SNAP/Progress Reports*
- *Customizable Checklists/Program Approval*—Delegation: approvals, sign-offs, checklists to PA’s
- *Pre-submission/Access to resources*—select, save journals for searching; research PI’s
- *MS Outlook Calendar integration*
- *Interface to shared systems*—e-Notification; e-Requests: ARA, 901s, and other PI requests
- *DEA/Council functions*

He then reviewed the functionality to be introduced in the March and July releases:

March Release	Recommended for July Release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Default PO portfolio list function for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pending SRG, Pre-Council, Post-Council, and Post-Award/Pending Type 5s ■ Search on PI Name and/or grant# ■ New J2EE Grant Folder ■ New J2EE Grant Snapshot (v2.0) ■ Reports: PO Worksheet, master list of applications, and SRG agenda ■ Export portfolio list to Excel ■ Seamless access to ICO Checklists and Program Approval View/update PO Notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pre-Award, and Other/Withdrawn Grants page ■ Attention Flag column in each list ■ Hierarchical portfolios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To be defined—IC, Division, Branch, Program Area ■ Delegation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Approvals, sign-offs, and checklists to PA’s ■ Add/Remove applications from a portfolio ■ Integration with shared eRA modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – J2EE checklists and approvals – Reports, Analysis, & Evaluation (RAE)

Chanath concluded his presentation with a slide show demonstration of the User Interface (UI). He reviewed each of the main sections of the tool (Pre Submission, Pending SRG, Pending Council, Post Council, and Post Award) and pointed out the key fields and functions.

Chanath noted that their strategy remains to use one common data instance, but they are trying to remain flexible in creating different views of the data based on user need to make it as user-friendly as possible.

New J2EE Query Tool for Operational and Production Use

Sherry Zucker

Sherry remarked that the J2EE Query Tool Task Manager/Lead Analyst is Johnnie Pearson; the Lead Developer is Daniel Fox; and the User Interface Designer is Jay Lu. Sherry thanked them for all their hard work on this project. She also thanked Ev Sinnett for his contributions to Review and the Internet Assisted Review Focus Group while working with the eRA project team.

There is a plethora of eRA query tools and access methods (e.g., ICStore, QuickView, CRISP Plus, IQR, ICO, QVR/ECB, etc.) currently in use. Sherry explained that having too many choices is often confusing for users and the duplicative functionality is an inefficient use of resources. Other drivers for the J2EE query tool implementation were the project decision to migrate from client/server to J2EE architecture, the desire to update and improve tool appearance to a real Web UI and the desire to provide the same interface for some reporting functions to internal and external users.

Sherry described the many types of tool users, which included:

- Quick View Users
- Scientific Query Users
- Advanced Query Users (ICSTORE)
- Business Area Specific Users
- Document Tracking Users
- Program/IC Portfolio Users
- Finance and Budget Users
- Program Analysis Users

Different categories of users have different requirements for query and retrieval, making a single user interface impractical. The challenge that faces the team is to retain the unique requirements of each interface/access method while eliminating unnecessary duplication. To meet this challenge, a detailed analysis to identify requirements for different query and retrieval interfaces and their common components is needed. The next step is to use that analysis to build a draft UI and pilot the J2EE Query Tool. Business areas must be selected and focus groups convened. The target timeframe for a pilot is July and the target for rollout is October.

Sherry demonstrated the J2EE Query tool and showed the flexibility of the basic, advanced and nested search mechanisms. Search field categories (Grant ID, PI Name, Institution, Meeting, Assignment, Grant Dates, Grant & Document Status, Award & Budget data, Administrative Coding and Text Search) are found in the left frame. Users have the choice of filling out the fields

by category or using the “Show All Basic” or “Show All Expanded” views. Later, users will have the option of customizing search templates. Sherry ran through several sample queries, pointing out key parameters and result fields. She reviewed the basic hit list screen and sorting options.

The Project Team was generally excited about the tool and Sherry was asked to present the tool to several specific user communities for feedback.

CGAP Progress Update

JJ Maurer

JJ Maurer provided a status update for the CGAP project. He reviewed the following delivered and in-progress functionality.

Delivered	Work In Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Description of eRA CGAP Exchange <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Functional Description of Exchange – Technology selection for CGAP – XML strategy for core and non-core ■ XML schema and documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – XML schema – Mapping of Paper forms to XML – XML list of issues to be addressed ■ Working list of issues with Receipt for new applications (first pass done!) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Definition of Iteration 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Process flow and content – Use cases – Project plan for development Iteration 1 – Data model changes – Business rules ■ Overall revised project plan ■ Technical architecture for development environment and SBIR tests ■ Continuation of issue list with Receipt and e-applications processing

There are several open issues that the CGAP team is working through. First, since it is still unknown what E-Grants will propose, direct communications with the E-Grant team is planned to ensure there are no strategy conflicts. Second, resource issues and several days lost due to inclement weather have left the team slightly behind schedule. The development team has only been partially available due to March release constraints. JJ commented that the recent code freeze should help to free up the team. To get the project back on schedule, assistance from other teams and re-arrangement of analyst workloads are being considered.

NIH eRA Commons and eSNAP Status

Dan Hall

Dan Hall stated that, despite a low profile rollout, eSNAP is scaling fast. This month 330 new accounts were initialized, there were 5000 logins, and the number of institutions that have logged into the system rose to 180.

Dan reported that the CWG pilot began this month and 42 eSNAPs have been processed. Of the 42 eSNAPs, 25 are being worked by PIs, 7 are in Review for Submission and 10 have been

completed. Current eSNAP organizations include: Dartmouth College, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, University of California Los Angeles, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, Northwestern University, Cornell University Ithaca, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He then reviewed the functionality to be introduced in the March and July releases:

March Release	Recommended for July Release
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Significant usability improvements ■ Delegation of personal profile ■ eSNAP in demo facility ■ Full delegation of PI (PPF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Study counts/Pop Tracking in eSNAP ■ Consolidation of eSNAP/Status/FSR Query & Results ■ eNotifications (probable)

Dan commented that usability improvements and the ability to train and practice in a demo facility that will come with the March release would position the team for a more aggressive pilot of 500 eSNAPs. In July, the software will be ready for full production.

Attendees

Albrecht, Lyn (LTS/COB)	Hann, Della (OER)	Seppala, Sandy (LTS/COB)
Austin, Patricia (OER/COB)	Hausman, Steve (NIAMS)	Siegert, Mark (OER/OPERA)
Cain, Jim (OER)	Liberman, Ellen (NEI)	Silverman, Jay (NGIT)
Collie, Krishna (RN Solutions)	Loewe, Michael (NINDS)	Sinnett, Everett (CSR)
Cox, Michael (OER)	Martin, Carol (NHGRI)	Soto, Tracy (DEIS)
Cummins, Sheri (LTS/COB)	Maurer, JJ (Ekagra)	Twomey, Tim (OD)
Erickson, Bud (NCI)	McGowan, JJ (NIAID)	Van Brunt, Virginia (LTS)
Flora, Carla (OER)	Morris, Richard (NIAID)	Vess, Nancy (NIGMS)
Fox, Daniel (NGIT)	Morton, Pete (CIT)	Williamson, Mary Ann (NIDCR)
Frahm, Donna J. (OER)	Panniers, Richard (CSR)	Wright, David (OPERA)
Gibb, Scarlett (OER/COB)	Patel, Kalpesh (Ekagra)	Zucker, Sherry (DEIS)
Goodman, Mike (OD/OER)	Pearson, Johnnie (Z-Tech)	
Grandy, Vanessa (Z-Tech)	Ratnanather, Chanath (Ekagra)	
Groh, Chip (NIBIB)	Sachar, Brad (Oracle)	