



eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2003
Time: 9:00–11:00 a.m.
Location: 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205
Chair: JJ McGowan

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 8, 9:00 a.m., 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205

Note: The meeting scheduled for June 24 has been cancelled.

Action Items

1. (Sherry Zucker, Steve Hughes) Analyze the ramifications, architecture and scope of work needed to capture subproject departmental affiliation information and develop implementation strategy.

Attachments

- ❑ Project Report - Expectations (JJ McGowan): <http://era.nih.gov/Docs/eranevision.pdf>
- ❑ Grants.gov Update (Mike Atassi): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/grants_gov_update.pdf
- ❑ CGAP Update (JJ Maurer): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/CGAP_update-6-10-03.pdf
- ❑ Updated July Release Requirements (Donna Frahm): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/July_2003_Scope_revised.pdf
- ❑ October Release Wish List (Donna Frahm, Sherry Zucker): http://era.nih.gov/Docs/October_wish_list.pdf

Project Report

JJ McGowan

JJ spoke to the team about expectations. He described how requirements have changed over time and the importance of understanding and managing emerging expectations. A full plate of requirements exists to improve processes with *e-tools*. In many cases, the vision is defined, but the plan, resources, specifications, and budget are not. He cautioned the team to be aware of new visionary requirements and to understand their potential to shift priorities and affect internal planning. The attached presentation outlines some of the reasons the original eRA vision must be re-examined and provides examples of high-level requirements that may lead to new or enhanced e-tools.

JJ is working to set expectations within management that a year is needed to recruit and build the required infrastructure and organization before tackling new large-scale initiatives. He urged the advocates to take opportunities within their own functional areas to remind decision-makers and users that change does not occur overnight and that realistic goals for change need to be set.

JJ reminded the team that each institution is facing strong budgetary pressure and many no longer want to maintain the cost of supporting separate systems. As systems between institutions are

consolidated, the need for an NIH standard set of definitions becomes critical. Currently, each institution has its own processes, language, and definitions. Once a common language is defined standard reporting tools (beyond QVR and Web QT) can be created to provide more sophisticated reporting.

Grants.gov Update

Mike Atassi

Grants.gov (originally called E-Grants) is the electronic storefront for Federal grants. The vision of the Grants.gov initiative is to produce a simple, unified storefront for all customers of Federal grants to electronically find opportunities, apply for grants, and to facilitate the quality, coordination, effectiveness, and efficiency of operations for grant makers and grant recipients.

Mike described Grants.gov as the *post office* of the grants process. Applicants submit their grants to Grants.gov. Grants.gov checks for viruses, verifies data format, and delivers the grants. Grants.gov does not review the grant content.

Additional detail regarding the Grants.gov solution, system architecture and application processing flow can be found in the attached presentation or online at <http://grants.gov>.

The Grants.gov pilot will run from June 30–August 15 and will include two software releases. The first release will focus on core (SF424) grants plus attachments. The second release will include non-core grants. NIH and the eRA team have been working very closely with Grants.gov and will participate in the second phase of the pilot.

The system is targeted to go into production October 31 and a comprehensive communications and marketing plan is underway.

CGAP Update

JJ Maurer

Competitive Grant Application Process (CGAP) is the eRA system module that is the electronic version of the PHS 398 grant application. A successful implementation of CGAP is critical to the overall eRA project.

JJ Maurer updated the Project Team on several key CGAP issues:

- ❑ **Use cases** – many of the use cases have already been written, but others are still in progress and are targeted for completion by June 27.
- ❑ **Testing** – automated testing and test plans are not yet in place. Although they are not needed for the July release, they do need to be in place this summer for the October release. Given the complexity of the system, manual testing of all the possible ramifications of a small change is not practical.
- ❑ **Receipt Referral (RR) and Review** – final determination of the business process and rules for electronic applications in RR and Review are not complete and behind schedule.
- ❑ **October scope** – requirements from all analysts must be submitted by the end of the month to prioritize for the October release. The deadline is approaching quickly and there is still a lot of requirements work to be done.

- ❑ **Grants.gov coordination** – Although the coordination for application transfer mechanisms, methods, and packaging has progressed very well, a coordination issue regarding XML schema has surfaced. The XML schema developed by Grants.gov for Core (SF424) did not take into account the work already done in eRA. One short-term approach for making this issue transparent to SBIRs and to allow for continued progress in CGAP is to create a translation of data to and from Grants.gov. The long-term solution is to develop a project management plan to resolve differences between the Grants.gov and eRA XML schemas.

The CGAP team is concentrating on the July release and continues to work closely with the Grants.gov team.

Load Balancing (BIG-IP) Post-Deployment Status

Ali Ghassemzadeh

Thanks to the tremendous coordination effort of the CIT and eRA teams, BIG-IP[®] was successfully deployed for external applications June 6–7. This is a milestone event for eRA that will allow the system architecture to grow with user demand.

In addition to load balancing, the BIG-IP deployment included Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) acceleration to enhance performance. Following the deployment some users received misleading alerts. The issue was traced to a BIG-IP parameter that was different in production than in the test environment. Turning off the parameter in BIG-IP corrected the issue. BIG-IP has a patch to address this issue that will be thoroughly tested and applied before the parameter can be turned back on in production.

Committee Management Web Application Demo

Krishna Collie

Krishna provided a high-energy demo of the CM Web J2EE application that will transition from its current pilot phase to production this summer.

For more than a year, CM representatives have been working closely with eRA technical staff to redesign the CM client-server application from the ground up in a Java 2 Enterprise Edition (J2EE) Web environment. Developers have met with the pilot group on a monthly basis to receive constructive feedback and suggestions for enhancement. As a result of user input, the new application has improved screen layout and usability, robust querying capabilities, logical grouping of functions, and accessibility from home or wherever the user can connect to the Internet.

The first production release of CM Web only will support meeting and roster functionality, including meeting and roster maintenance and five reports: Committee Roster, Meeting Roster, NIH-1715, Mailing Labels and Invitation to Travel Reports. All other CM transactions (i.e., Committee Administration, Federal Register Notices, Nomination Slates, Vouchers, OFM Uploads and Check Register) need to be performed using the client-server version. The CM Web module will run in parallel with the CM client-server application until all functionality is supported by the new Web version.

The CM technical team, the Communications & Outreach Branch (COB) and the User Support Branch (USB) have been working together to provide a comprehensive training program for the community. In addition to the classroom instruction posted below, an online class will be available in eRA's [virtual school](#). There also will be user manuals and quick reference guides.

To register for one of the classes below, email the [eRA HelpDesk](#) or call 301-402-7469 or toll-free 1-866-504-9552. For more information or reasonable accommodation, contact Patty Austin, eRA training program administrator at patty.austin@nih.gov or 301-435-0690 x617.

Date	Place	Time	Seating Capacity
June 19	Rockledge II, Room 9100	1 p.m.–4 p.m.	80
July 9	Natcher, Rooms E1 & E2	1 p.m.–4 p.m.	125
July 16	Executive Plaza South, Room H	1 p.m.–4 p.m.	56

July & October Release Requirements

Donna Frahm

Donna distributed an excerpt from the full July requirements document. The excerpt was sorted two ways, by subsystem and by change type. The excerpt included changes to the July requirements that were approved through the CCB process (highlighted in attached full document).

Donna also distributed a *wish list* prepared by Sherry Zucker for the October release. The wish list must go through the usual architecture, resource, and budget filters before being baselined. Given the close proximity of the release to the pending re-compete, it is especially important to prioritize functionality slated for October. Although the eRA teams are planning for a full release, expectations must be managed and users must be aware that the release is subject to *best effort* and may fall short of planned targets.

CRISP Subproject Departmental Affiliations

Connie Atwell & Mary Ellen Michel

Connie and Mary Ellen discussed with the team the need to capture subproject departmental affiliation information within the CRISP database. Without the subproject detail, credit for multi-disciplinary research can only be traced to the principal investigator (PI) and the amount of work done by subproject or collaborative efforts cannot be tracked.

As the team discussed the request, several issues were raised (hierarchy information is currently available for higher education only, increased work load of manual assignments made by System Quality Assurance & Interfaces Branch, enforcement of entering subproject information, lack of common definitions across ICs). Due to the number of concerns raised, the team agreed that although the requirement should be addressed, an analysis of the ramifications of the change, appropriate architecture, and the scope of work is needed.

Action: (Sherry Zucker, Steve Hughes) Analyze the ramifications, architecture and scope of work needed to capture subproject departmental affiliation information and develop implementation strategy.

Attendees

Atassi, Mike (NGIT)	Hausman, Steve (NIAMS)	Shingler, Felicia (COB)
Atwell, Connie (NINDS)	Hughes, Stephen (OD)	Silver, Sara (Z-Tech)
Burns, Amy (LTS/COB)	Lederhendler, Israel (NIMH)	Silverman, Jay (NGIT)
Caban, Carlos (OER)	Liberman, Ellen (NEI)	Sinnett, Everett (CSR/OD)
Cain, Jim (OER)	Martin, Carol (NHGRI)	Snouffer, Anna (OFACP)
Copeland Sewell, Zoe-Ann (OD/OER)	McGowan, JJ (NIAID)	Tucker, Jim (OER)
Cox, Michael (OER)	Michel, Mary Ellen (NINDS)	Van Brunt, Virginia (LTS)
Cummins, Sheri (LTS/COB)	Morton, Larry (OER)	Williamson, Mary Ann (NIDCR)
Frahm, Donna (OER)	Morton, Pete (CIT)	Wilson, Mike (NGIT)
Ghassemzadeh, Ali (OER)	Newburgh, Janet (CSR)	Wright, David (OPERA)
Gibb, Scarlett (COB)	Panniers, Richard (CSR)	
Hahn, Marcia (OER/OPERA)	Patel, Kalpesh (Ekagra)	
	Seppala, Sandy (LTS/COB)	