



eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, January 11, 2005
Time: 9:00–10:00 a.m.
Location: Rockledge 1, 5th floor conference room
Chair: Izja Lederhendler

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 25, 9:00 a.m., Rockledge 1, 5th floor conference room

Action Items

1. (Felicia Shingler) Investigate possibility of adding contact information for each release listed in the deployment pages.
2. (Felicia Shingler) Investigate possibility of adding target release date or status change date to deployment pages.
3. (Felicia Shingler) Investigate possibility of adding release bullets to the beginning of release notes.

Handouts

- ❑ eRA Deployment Website Procedures (Felicia Shingler):
http://era.nih.gov/docs/eRA_Deployment_Website_procedures_Dec_30_2004.pdf
- ❑ Sample Screen Shots of Deployment Pages with Sort capability (Felicia Shingler):
http://era.nih.gov/docs/sample_deployment_page_sort_screenshots.pdf

Opening Remarks

Izja Lederhendler

- ❑ Although work has begun on select FY2005 objectives that have been approved, the complete FY2005 Annual plan is still pending approval from the Extramural IT Working Group (Ext-ITWG). Izja will present updates on the plan to the Ext-ITWG on January 13. Izja noted that the delay in approval can be attributed to several factors: new governance processes being worked out, learning curve of those in the governance processes new to eRA, and our ability to present a clear, integrated story of where eRA is headed and what it will take to get there.
- ❑ The FY2006 planning process is underway. The FY2006 Annual Plan will continue with the same general themes outlined in the FY2005 budget presentation, including:
 4. Maintenance, Performance, Data Quality
 5. Electronic Receipt of Applications
 6. End-to-End Process
 7. Future Innovations (Knowledge Management)
- ❑ Izja noted that activities related to Public Access and Co-PI would need to be considered as we plan for FY2006.

- ❑ Izja is scheduled to present drafts of the eRA FY2006 budget request to the Ext-ITWG on February 10 and 24. The final proposal will be presented to Ext-ITWG on March 10 and to the IT Working Group (ITWG) on March 23. On March 23, Izja will also present a detailed drill-down of obligatory expenses.

Deployment Pages

Felicia Shingler

Felicia Shingler, the Documentation team leader in the eRA Planning, Communications & Outreach branch (PCOB), presented prototype web pages designed to provide succinct information on upcoming eRA deployments and the status of each release.

Key presentation and discussion points:

- ❑ The deployment pages were designed in response to a requirement identified by the Project Team several months ago. Project Team members complained that they do not have a way to learn about and track releases in the pipeline for their business areas. The deployment pages list all releases actively being worked on by the eRA team, the status (e.g. Development, Acceptance Test, Integration Test, Deployed), Release Bullets and Release Notes.
- ❑ Information on a particular release will be archived a month after deployment.
- ❑ Felicia noted that a future enhancement will include tags to highlight “New” or “Updated” items.
- ❑ The team noted that it would be nice to have a link from a release to the eRA Business Analyst and/or Task Order Manager responsible for that release.

Action: (Felicia Shingler) Investigate possibility of adding contact information for each release listed in the deployment pages.

- ❑ The team suggested that a targeted release date be included. Concerns were raised over posting dates that may change over time.. While eRA wants to provide release information at the earliest, target dates frequently change due to resource scheduling. A potential alternative to a target release date may be to provide the date the release changes status (e.g., moved from development to test).

Action: (Felicia Shingler) Investigate possibility of adding target release date or status change date to deployment pages.

- ❑ Felicia stressed that the information provided on the deployment pages is subject to change. Her team will do its best to provide the most accurate information available at any given time. A process will be set up to alert the Documentation team of changes to a release.
- ❑ The eRA Documentation team publishes release notes at the time of deployment. The release notes provide a step-by-step picture of user visible changes and are an important tool for eRA users.
- ❑ The release bullets are posted prior to deployment and include all expected changes. The Documentation Team creates the release bullets from information found in ClearQuest (eRA’s issue tracking system) that is translated into user-friendly prose. Business Analysts review the release notes prior to posting to ensure the accuracy of the translated information.

- Carlos suggested that the release bullets be added at the beginning of the release notes so that once the release notes are available, users can have clean access to both sets of information.

Action: (Felicia Shingler) Investigate possibility of adding release bullets to the beginning of release notes.

- ❑ Current prototype contains static HTML; however, the plan is to move to a database which will allow more flexibility in the presentation of information (e.g., ability to sort on each column header).

OERRM

Izja announced his official placement as Director, Office of Electronic Research and Reports Management (OERRM). OERRM brings together the strengths of two talented teams: Office of Reports Analysis (ORA) and the Division of Extramural Information Systems (DEIS).

The complexity and size of the eRA program has increased exponentially over the past five years and will continue to expand to capitalize on technology advances and to better serve NIH. The eRA of the future will fully integrate all critical research program management activities, from program planning and initiative development through grant closeout and beyond.

The OER vision includes incorporating innovative technologies for Knowledge Management; this will expand the reporting and analysis capabilities and meet the requirements of all OERRM stakeholders including NIH and HHS staff, applicants, grantees, and the public.

Reorganizing OER to merge the extramural systems development and reporting currently within OPERA and ORA will improve OER's ability to manage systems development and enhance coordination of the collection and reporting of data on NIH's research programs. To date, the mission of eRA has been to facilitate the implementation of Klinger-Cohen. The paperless transfer of extramural research grant applications and administrative data is NIH's vision of the 21st century. OERRM provides a unified vision—focusing on end-to-end grant processing and integrated information management (KM, reporting, data quality, and portfolio analysis). The formation of OERRM allows OER to better support the increasingly complex data analysis needs of NIH and the public and to facilitate informed decision making.

OERRM's mission is to develop an Integrated Information Environment for extramural programs and to contribute to the overall NIH information environment. Such a knowledge environment will enhance the scientific capabilities of all OERRM's stakeholders.

Izja noted that if we do our job right, success can be measured by:

- ❑ Increased productivity (scope management, governance, priority setting)
- ❑ Reduced time from submission to grant award (business process integration)
- ❑ Reduced costs for processing grants (business process integration)
- ❑ Improved data quality of stored information (re-engineered data management practices)
- ❑ Improved public access to NIH-derived information (external drivers)
- ❑ More accurate reporting of stored data for executive decision-making (process alignment and risk management)

In organizing OERRM we need to effectively respond to the challenges of:

- ❑ Customers
- ❑ Governance
- ❑ External Drivers (increased scrutiny from federal government, GM LoB)
- ❑ Tighter budget constraints

Open Discussion

- ❑ Scarlett announced that Allyson Armistead, a member of the Documentation Team, has accepted a new opportunity with the Department of Education. The team thanked Allyson for her web team contributions and exemplary support of numerous working groups, JADs, conferences and meetings.

Attendees

Armistead, Allyson (LTS)	Frahm, Donna (OD)	McMaster, Don (QRC)
Ashley, Rich (RNSolutions)	Gaines, Patti (OD)	Milner, Tina (OD)
Blessing, Jim (IBM)	Gibb, Scarlett (OD)	Morton, Larry (OER)
Bukowski, Maria (OD)	Goodman, Mike (OD)	Moyer, Skip (AHRQ)
Caban, Carlos (OER)	Hausman, Steve (OD)	Patel, Kalpesh (Ekagra)
Cain, Jim (OER)	Hendrick, Brad (HHS/OS)	Salata, Kalman (CSR)
Chicchirichi, David (OD)	Horton, Marcia (HRSA)	Seach, James (NCI)
Connelly, Vance (BT)	Hughes, Steve (OD)	Shingler, Felicia (OD)
Cox, Michael (OD)	Jordan, Craig (NIDCD)	Simms, Sophonia (OD)
Craner, Matt (OD)	Katzper, Linda (OD)	Sinnett, Everett (CSR)
Cummins, Sheri (LTS)	Lagas, Robert (Lagas Assoc.)	Taylor, Jean (SAIC)
Diggs, Lana (OD)	Lederhendler, Israel (NIMH)	Thomson, Alastair (BT)
Dixon, Diana (OD)	Liberman, Ellen	Tucker, Jim (OER)
Dutcher, Sylvia (Mitrotek)	Loewe, Michael (NINDS)	Van Brunt, Virginia (LTS)
Faenson, Inna (OD)	Lynch, Peggy (IBM)	Zhen, Changqing (IBM)