



GM Lead Users Group

Date: May 12, 2004, Wednesday
Time: 9:00–11:00 a.m.
Location: 6001 Executive Building, Conference Room A1/A2
Advocate: Michael Loewe

Next Meeting: TBA

Actions Items

1. (Mike Loewe) Ask Dan Hall to give a demonstration of Closeout in the NIH eRA Commons at the next GM Lead Users Group meeting.

Handouts

- E-Notification for PO Grant Approval
- Grants.Gov, E-Grants, Research and Related Data Set Presentation:
http://era.nih.gov/docs/E-Grants_presentation_ePUG_meeting.pdf

New Sign-Off Notification

Cathy Walker

At the last GM Lead Users meeting, group members decided that it would be beneficial to have an e-notification that would inform Grants Management Specialists when Program Officials sign off on grants. Cathy explained that she would like to begin by building this e-notification into the eRA e-notification system itself. The e-notification would list the grants signed off in the last twenty-four hours and would be sent daily to GM staff. Cathy distributed a sample of this proposed e-notification and the group provided the following suggestions:

- Change the subject line to “PO Grant Approval.” No date should be included. The group agreed that this would create confusion.
- Sort email by grant type, then start date, then serial number.
- Provide GM users to unsubscribe to these e-notifications.

Eventually, Cathy would like to feature an “Event Queue” in the GM Module redesign; this queue would list all real-time activity on grants and when that activity took place. Cathy distributed a concept of this queue and the group provided the following comments:

- Consider listing the PO who was originally *assigned* to the grant in the “Event Queue” in addition to listing the PO who *signed off* on the grant. The group explained that sometimes the PO who *signs* the grant is not the same PO who was originally *assigned to* the grant.

- Provide users ability to customize content that is listed in the queue. Cathy explained that customizing the queue will be a possibility for the future; however, for the first release, the queue will be relatively simple.
- Consider listing other staff members (besides the PO) who sign off on grants. Cathy said that this was a good idea, but that it would be best to begin with just the POs.
- Work with OPDIVS such as AHRQ and HERSA who have different processes from the NIH. Many OPDIVS are not using the Program Module and may require a paper “Paid” memo from POs. Cathy said that she would investigate the matter.
- Decide when to remove information about a grant event from the Event Queue. The group suggested featuring an “Acknowledge” button that users can push when they have received and no longer need information about a particular grant. Other group members said that this button would be too tedious and recommended letting the system remove information after a certain period of time.

E-Grants Update, Status on Research and Related Dataset

Michael Goodman

Michael Goodman, a Business Analyst and Task Manager working on the eRA Project, provided a brief update on the recent activities of E-Grants, particularly on the effort to standardize datasets across all Federal grants communities:

http://era.nih.gov/docs/E-Grants_presentation_ePUG_meeting.pdf

Mike Loewe explained that it is important for the NIH to be prepared for E-Grants and to be aware of the challenges posed to the NIH.

Mike Goodman explained that the Inter-Agency Electronic Grants Committee (IAEGC) was formed to coordinate the effective use of electronic commerce throughout the federal grants community. As such, the IAEGC has been charged with establishing common data requirements and common business processes in order to eliminate redundancy and complexity experienced by grantees when submitting applications. That is, the IAEGC is working to promote a “common face to the grantee,” increase efficiency for applicants since much of the same information can be reused on subsequent proposals to other agencies, and to reduce the number of unique application forms that grantees must fill out and that Grants.gov must maintain.

To accomplish this mission, the IAEGC has worked to establish five common cross-data elements for grant applications and awards: the Core dataset based on the SF424 (this data is used across all agencies), the Research and Related dataset, the Arts and Humanities dataset, other Cross-Agency datasets, and State, Local, Non-Profit, and Other datasets.

The development of the Research and Related dataset (the dataset most relevant to the NIH) is underway. Version 1 data elements and forms have been completed and submitted to the Federal Register for public comment. The public and agency remarks received during this comment period will be rolled into Version 2 of the Research and Related dataset.

Michael explained that any agency that uses the R&R dataset (the NIH included) must use the PureEdge R&R form. Any agency-specific data that is not supported on this form must be collected in one of two ways: as a binary attachment (PDF) or as a separate, supplemental form.

E-Grants strongly encourages agencies to reevaluate the need for data that falls outside of the R&R set.

To account for the “gaps” between the new 398 and the R&R Form, NIH is developing an agency-specific form. eRA plans to pilot a grant opportunity using this NIH-specific form and the R&R dataset in October of 2004. In the meantime, Michael explained that the NIH must work through several challenges to prepare itself for the wide usage of Grants.gov. NIH must—

- Analyze and evaluate data elements required on the 398 but not found on the R&R form. Currently, Michael is in the process of establishing three working groups (one in Review, Program, and Grants Management) to focus on this task. These groups will then meet together to discuss the “gaps” in the 398 and the R&R form and determine the specific needs of the NIH and the OPDIVs.
- Analyze data solicited on the R&R form to see if NIH can capitalize on the opportunity to collect new information.
- Determine how the grant image will be maintained and presented.

In response to Michael’s presentation, the GM Lead Users Group posed several questions:

- *What is the CGAP project at the NIH?*—Beginning in 2002, the CGAP Project works closely with Service Providers who are developing grant authoring and submission tools for grantees. The CGAP system is a backend submission engine that was designed to receive and process XML grantee data sent by the Service Providers. So far, the CGAP system has gone through three iterations; the next CGAP release will be sometime in the June or July timeframe. Currently, the CGAP Focus Group is working on how to produce the grant image once it’s received at the NIH as well as how to handle the submission of error corrections.
- *How does the CGAP Project “fit in” with Grants.gov?*— eRA will still use a lot of the backend that was initially created for CGAP when eRA moves to Grants.gov. Ultimately, Service Providers will begin sending the data they receive from grantees to Grants.gov instead of to the NIH. The information sent to Grants.gov will then flow to the NIH.
- *What happens to the data once it arrives to the NIH?*— It is uncertain whether the NIH will be able to see the actual form submitted by the grantee or just the data itself. Decisions need to be made on this issue. The vision is that the data, not the form, will flow “downstream” through the various modules in eRA. However, this vision can only be accomplished if everything is electronic and functioning; there can no longer be paper processes. This is the real challenge for eRA.
- *After E-Grants is “up and running” will grantees still be able to submit Just-In-Time (JIT) Information through the NIH eRA Commons?*—Mike explained that the submission of JIT information is a different process than the E-Grants process. As such, the JIT process will not be affected.

Next GM Lead Users Group Meeting

Bob Tarwater

The next scheduled GM Lead Users Group meeting conflicts with the GMAC seminar. The group decided to cancel this GM Lead Users meeting and meet again in July

Finally, Mike Loewe suggested that Dan Hall present a demonstration of Closeout in the NIH eRA Commons at the next meeting. This demonstration would be very useful since it would provide a view of what grantees see when they access Closeout.

Action: (Mike Loewe) Ask Dan Hall to give a demonstration of Closeout in the NIH eRA Commons at the next GM Lead Users Group meeting.