

NIH eSubmission Item of Interest – December 4, 2007

NIH Reduces Error Correction Window to Two Business Days

Did you see [NOT-OD-08-018](#) in the [NIH Guide for Grants & Contracts](#)?

You knew this day would come. “Limited time only”, “Temporary”, “First few submission cycles”, “Don’t get into the habit of relying on it”...these are some of the phrases we have used since the beginning of NIH’s transition to electronic applications to describe the error correction window.

In the beginning, the error correction window made sense. The process was new to all of us. The error correction window helped to ensure that Grants.gov and NIH processing times did not prevent the submission of a corrected application in time to meet the receipt deadline. It allowed applicant business offices to get the initial applications in the door and then go back and work with each investigator to correct errors/warnings. NIH and applicant organizations needed to work through the initial learning curve and to identify and make adjustments to the submission process based on their early experiences. Today the situation is very different and it is time to wean folks off of it.

Before you start emailing us at NIHElectronicSubmiss@mail.nih.gov (feedback always welcome), let me take a stab at some of the questions you might have...

When does the “error correction window” clock start ticking?

After January 8, the “error correction window” will be the **two** business days (Mon.-Fri., excluding Federal holidays) that follow the receipt deadline of the Funding Opportunity Announcement. For example, if your receipt deadline is Tuesday, February 5, 2008, then the “error correction window” begins on Wednesday, February 6 and ends at 5:00 p.m. local time on Thursday, February 7.

Does this change effect how much time I have to view my application in eRA Commons?

No. The “error correction window” comes into play before you have an assembled application. The two business day “application viewing window” to check your assembled application in eRA Commons remains unchanged.

Can I still use the “error correction window” to address identified Warnings if my application is assembled and placed in eRA Commons?

Yes. This practice has not changed. To ensure you have one and only one application go forward, it is best to Reject the current assembled application and then submit your corrected application. This is especially important if you are changing PD/PI or application title information.

Why move to a two day “error correction window” instead of eliminating it all together (yes, we do get feedback from folks that it should be totally eliminated)?

We felt a gradual reduction would be easier on the applicant community. In addition, we’d like to maintain as consistent a message to the applicant community as we can. We still have more grant programs to transition to electronic applications. This new pool of applicants should have the benefit of an error correction window as they work through the electronic submission process.

Why now? Shouldn’t NIH wait until after the move to the new Adobe forms?

Actually, one has nothing to do with the other. The error correction window was never intended to be a built in cushion for potential system issues. The transition from PureEdge to Adobe forms does not change the SF424 (R&R) form set, NIH’s application requirements, or the overall submission process - just the tool used by Grants.gov within their forms-based solution. NIH has contingency plans in place that would cover any unforeseen Grants.gov or NIH system issues.

If you still have questions or want to provide feedback, we’d be glad to respond.

One more thought...the reduced “error correction window” gets the applications to Receipt and Referral three days earlier and it is likely that fewer applicants will be taking advantage of the “error correction window” by using it to make changes not directly associated with errors or warnings. We’ve heard from the community that this continues to be a problem, so reducing the window should help everyone enforce the rules.

Take care,

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens, women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities, are essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

F. Review Information Provided to PI

When a decision has been made (whether an award or a declination), the following information is released electronically to the PI through FastLane:

- description of the context in which the proposal was reviewed;
- copies of all reviews used in the decision (with any reviewer-identifying information redacted);
- copy of panel summary, if the proposal was reviewed by a panel at any point in the process;
- site-visit reports, if applicable.

In addition, if not otherwise provided in the panel summary, the PI is provided an explanation (written or telephoned) of the basis for the declination. A PI also may request and obtain any other releasable material in NSF's file on his/her proposal. Everything in the file, except information that identifies either reviewers or other pending or declined proposals is usually releasable to the PI.

Chapter IV - Non-Award Decisions and Transactions (Section C, Declinations).

A PI whose proposal for NSF support has been declined will receive information and an explanation of the reason(s) for declination along with copies of the reviews considered in making the decision. If that explanation does not satisfy the PI, he/she may request additional information from the cognizant NSF Program Officer or Division Director. See [GPG Chapter III.F](#) for additional information.

PIs and co-PIs may access review information electronically via FastLane after the decision has received the concurrence of the cognizant Division Director, when all the review information has been released for their proposal.