

# NCURA PRA-III Workshop-WS4: Grants.gov Boot Camp

---

Monday, August 11, 2008: 8:30am – noon

Presenters:

John Massa – [john-massa@uiowa.edu](mailto:john-massa@uiowa.edu)

University of Iowa

Michelle Powell - [michelle.powell@osp.gatech.edu](mailto:michelle.powell@osp.gatech.edu)

Georgia Institute of Technology

## **How to prepare & submit PureEdge and Adobe Grants.gov applications.**

Download the latest version of this PowerPoint presentation

<http://uidspflooding.com/pr-3-gg-bootcamp.ppt>

Download the latest version of the complete PDF handout

<http://uidspflooding.com/pr-3-gg-bootcamp.pdf>

1



## Grants.gov Boot Camp

---

### **Basic training:**

- Setting up your institution for Grants.gov
- How to prepare, submit and troubleshoot Grants.gov applications

2

## Institution Responsibilities

---

- Your Institution must be registered with Grants.gov and the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)  
[http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp)  
If your institution receives Federal grants, you may already be registered in CCR, which facilitates electronic funds transfer
- NIH submissions: Your Institution must be registered with NIH eRA Commons  
<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/>  
Other Federal agencies may have their own electronic systems in which you will need to register, e.g., HRSA electronic Handbooks

3

## Grants.gov: Required Software

---

You will also need one of the following to **create PDF file attachments** (required by NIH) from MS Word or other text editors:

### Adobe Acrobat (8.1.2 or higher)

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/matrix.html>

### Cute PDF Pro (Similar to Adobe Acrobat)

<http://www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/Pro.asp>

### CutePDF Writer(free)

<http://www.cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp>

6

## PI's NIH eRA Commons Account

---

To submit an NIH grant application via Grants.gov, the Principal Investigator must have an

**NIH eRA Commons Account**, with:

- a **"PI"** role designation, and
- an **"ACTIVE"** account status, and
- an **AFFILIATION** with the applicant institution

If the PI has an NIH Commons account as an NIH **reviewer** only, or if the account associated only with a **former institution**, the account must be updated before an NIH application from your institution can be submitted to the NIH eRA Commons via Grants.gov .

4

## The future of PureEdge Forms

---

- Pure Edge → Adobe
- Grants.gov has begun a "phased deployment" to change over to Adobe forms
- **NIH** will begin to change from PureEdge to Adobe forms in **December, 2008**, assuming that a late summer, 2008, pilot goes well:

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-08-073.html>

7

## Grants.gov: Required Software

---

Download the required software:

### PureEdge Viewer (for PureEdge Forms)

[http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/help/download\\_software.jsp#pureedge](http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/help/download_software.jsp#pureedge)

### Adobe Reader (for Adobe Forms)

Always use the latest version of the Adobe Reader that Grants.gov specifies (currently 8.1.2)

[http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/help/download\\_software.jsp#adobe811](http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811)

5

## Find Funding Opportunities

---

- Even "Investigator-Initiated" Grants.gov applications require a specific Grants.gov application package.
- The Grants.gov search page looks for funding opportunities available from the 26 participating federal granting agencies
- Grants.gov: FIND GRANT OPPORTUNITIES  
[http://www.grants.gov/applicants/find\\_grant\\_opportunities.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/find_grant_opportunities.jsp)

8

## NIH: Funding Opportunities

---

- Locate a "Funding Opportunity Announcement" (FOA) for EACH electronic NIH application
- Each NIH mechanism (R01, R03, R21, etc.) has its own "Parent" announcement and application package for **Investigator- Initiated** awards:  
[http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/parent\\_announcements.htm](http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/parent_announcements.htm)
- Specific NIH program announcements (PAs & RFAs) have their own specific application packages. For example:  
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-014.html>

9

## Saving and sharing the file:

---

Save the downloaded Grant Application Package:

- Save the Application Package on your local hard drive, server, USB drive, etc.
- Data entry error messages appear when you first save the package because no data have been entered yet. Error messages will be seen each time you save until all required data are entered.
- Re-save the file as you add information to save your edits
- When you SAVE, note the file name and folder location to avoid creating multiple versions in various places.
- PureEdge files have an .XFD extension
- Adobe files have a .PDF extension

12

## The Grant Application Package

---

- From the NIH "program announcement," click the "Apply for Grant Electronically" button to obtain the Grant Application Package for that announcement.  
For example (Parent R01):  
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-07-070.html>
- You must download the specific Application Package for each Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)  
For example, the Grant Application Package downloaded from an R03 FOA may **not** be used for an R01 application  
Always check for an updated version, i.e., do not use an older R21 Grant Application Package that was downloaded for a prior deadline without checking to see if there has been an update. 10

10

## Validations and Grants.gov

---

- A successful submission must meet the validation standards set by **both** Grants.gov and NIH eRA Commons
- The Grants.gov form itself (prior to submission), and the NIH eRA Commons (after agency retrieval), check for completion of mandatory fields and inclusion of mandatory attachments.

13

## PureEdge & Adobe Files: File Sharing

---

PureEdge or Adobe Grants.gov Packages are similar to MS Word documents:

- The Grant Application Package file must be saved on a local hard drive, server, etc - it is NOT an "on-line" web-based document;
- Only one person at a time can work on the document
- Adding information or editing must be done sequentially in the same document

PIs and their administrators need to discuss how the Grant Application Package will be shared during completion and review, and how tasks will be assigned.

11

## Validations: NIH vs. Grants.gov

---

- NIH has a more stringent set of validation rules than does Grants.gov.
- A yellow field in the application means that *Grants.gov* will not permit the submission.
- However, even if no yellow fields remain, the *NIH validation* may reject the application due to **NIH** errors.

14

## NIH Validation: **Errors** vs. **Warnings**

---

- An NIH Commons validation **ERROR** means that the submission is not successful and the application will not go forward in the review process.
- An NIH Commons validation **WARNING** means that some inconsistency was found that **might** need to be changed (better check!), but that the application will move forward for further review.

15

## NIH: Attachments

---

- Create each attachment in MS Word (or similar text editor).
- Convert the final version of the document to PDF using Adobe Acrobat or CutePDF. You'll need to have one of the following installed on your computer to *convert* to PDF:

Adobe Acrobat (not free) (Note: This is NOT the Adobe Reader!)

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/matrix.html>

CutePDF Writer (free)

<http://cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/writer.asp>

CutePDF Pro (not free)

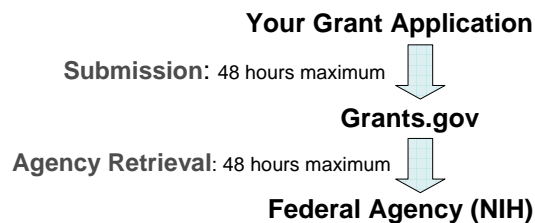
<http://cutepdf.com/Products/CutePDF/Pro.asp>

- Do not add headers or footers
- NIH provides the format for some attachments:  
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm>

18

## Grants.gov: Submission and Retrieval

---



Submission & Retrieval **could** take 4 days!

16

## Can't I just **SCAN** the pages?

---

- The only documents that should be **scanned** to PDF (rather than **converted** to PDF) are letters of support and other appendix documents that are not available electronically and **MUST** be scanned.
- Do not add headers or footers. The NIH Commons will provide these.
- NIH provides the format for some attachments:  
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm>

19

## What You'll Need to Complete the Application Package

---

- Institutional data (similar to that required for the paper PHS398 forms)
- PI and Key Person contact information and biosketches (in proper format)
- Budget (preferably) on a spreadsheet
- Attachments (NIH: all text attachments are in PDF format)

17

## Attachment tips

---

- Use **short file names** for your PDF attachments. **DO NOT USE SPECIAL CHARACTERS IN THE PDF FILE NAME!** ("&" = Fatal Error)
- Be sure to **SAVE versions** of the Grant Application Package as you add attachments:

Smith-01.XFD

Smith-02.XFD

Smith-03.XFD

20

## Submission and Validation

---

- AOR submits the application through Grants.gov
- A [confirmation page](#) is seen, providing the Grants.gov TRACKING NUMBER: (For example: **GRANT00479723**)
- Then at least four email messages begin to arrive.
  - Grants.gov receipt
  - Grants.gov validation
  - Agency retrieval
  - Agency tracking number assigned
- These NIH Commons emails are sent to the PI and AOR. NIH: Agency e-mail notifies whether the application contains **errors** (fatal) and/or **warnings** (usually not fatal).
- These e-mails may arrive in **15 minutes**, or up to **4 DAYS**.

## NIH: Check the Application on the Commons

---

- NIH allows 2 business days for the PI and Signing Official (SO) to review the application on the NIH Commons.
- Only the SO can reject the application if the PI or SO determines that warnings must be addressed.
- If the application is rejected, a "Changed/Corrected Application" must be submitted.
- If no action is taken within the 2-day period, the application will **automatically** move forward in the NIH review process.

24

## NIH: Errors, Warnings and Corrected Applications

---

- An **ERROR** is fatal. The application will **NOT** go forward for review.
- Errors must be corrected by submitting a **corrected application** via Grants.gov **prior to the agency deadline**.
- Warnings should be reviewed and corrected, if required. Warnings will generally **NOT** impede the progression of the application in the review process unless the "warning" turns out to be a serious matter (e.g., \$500k/year direct cost limit).
- Most Warnings are minor and do not required correction/resubmission.
- Some Warnings can be avoided by ensuring that PIs and Key Persons have updated their data in the eRA Commons Personal Profile

22

## NIH: Corrected Applications *prior to* The Submission Deadline

---

**Prior to the submission deadline**, the AOR/SO can reject the application and submit (again, prior to the deadline) a **changed/ corrected application** to Grants.gov.

An explanation for the changed/corrected application is **NOT** needed in an NIH cover letter, since the NIH deadline has not passed.

25

## NIH: Accepted on the NIH Commons

---

IF no NIH validation Errors are seen, the NIH Commons will:

- Assemble the grant image as a PDF document
- Generate a Table of Contents
- Insert headers (PI name) & footers (page numbers) on all pages
- Cover letter and Appendices are separated from the rest of the application, and no headers or footers are inserted on those documents.

AOR and PI should then review and verify the grant image in the eRA Commons. Rarely, weird transmission errors can occur.

23

## NIH: Corrected Applications *after* The Submission Deadline

---

### TO CORRECT A WARNING:

If the AOR/SO rejects the application **after the submission deadline** to address warnings, a changed/corrected application can be submitted within the **TEMPORARY two business day\*** correction window NIH is allowing **during the transition**. A cover letter must be attached to the application package, explaining the reason for the delay.

### TO CORRECT A USER ERROR (e.g. TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR):

If the AOR/SO rejects the application **after the submission deadline** for some reason other than Grants.gov or NIH Commons system issues or warnings, a changed/corrected application can be submitted to Grants.gov. **HOWEVER**, applicants need to be cautioned that these applications will be subject to the NIH late policy and may not be accepted. A cover letter must be attached to the application package, explaining the reason why the application is late.

\*used to be 5 business days<sub>26</sub>

## NIH Grants.gov Info Page

---

- University of Iowa's WEB page for NIH Grants.gov details:

<http://research.uiowa.edu/dsp/main/index.php?get=electronicsubmissionnihgrants.html>

- Georgia Tech's WEB page for NIH Grants.gov details:

<http://www.osp.gatech.edu/grants.shtml>

27

## Labor-Intensive E-mails to the PI

### ISSUE:

Labor-intensive e-mails to the PI and helpers about "Corrections needed" prior to Grants.gov submission.

### TIP:

Use a "canned" e-mail response that includes common errors. It's much easier to DELETE than to COMPOSE.

30

## "What do I put in the boxes?!"

---

### Filling out the NIH Grants.gov Forms:

- **Pop-Up Help (For PureEdge Forms):**

[http://research.uiowa.edu/dsp/main/downloads/gg\\_nih\\_help2A.pdf](http://research.uiowa.edu/dsp/main/downloads/gg_nih_help2A.pdf)

- **Grants.gov Tutorial (PureEdge Forms)**

[http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/flash/Application\\_Package.swf](http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/flash/Application_Package.swf)

- **Grants.gov Tutorial (Adobe Forms)**

[http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/flash/AdobeReaderApplicationTutorial\\_skin.swf](http://grantsgov.tmp.com/static2007/flash/AdobeReaderApplicationTutorial_skin.swf)

28

## Searching for forms on Grants.gov

### TIP: All Grants.gov "search" pages are NOT EQUAL

Grants.gov: **DOWNLOAD APPLICATION PACKAGE**  
[https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms\\_apps\\_idx.html](https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms_apps_idx.html)

This Grants.gov search page will also find "unadvertised" Grants.gov packages, such as HRSA non-competing applications.

Grants.gov: **SEARCH GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

<http://www07.grants.gov/search/basic.do>

This Grants.gov search page will NOT find all Grants.gov packages. For example, it will NOT find HRSA non-competing applications.

[Examples](#)

31

## "My PureEdge edits disappeared!"

---

### ISSUE:

How to respond to a user who claims: "All of my edits on the PureEdge form keep disappearing after I KNOW I've saved them!!"

### TIP:

No, the edits didn't disappear. The EDITED file was saved by PureEdge to a different folder. You opened the old (PRE-EDITED) file and thus it appeared that the edits "disappeared." Name your files consecutively so you can tell which file you are looking for.

Smith-03.XFD  
Smith-04.XFD

29

## MS Windows VISTA & Grants.gov

### What's up with VISTA?:

- Adobe (all versions) now supports Microsoft Windows VISTA
- Adobe Viewer 8.1.2 or higher (NOT 8.0!) is REQUIRED;
- Grants.gov PureEdge is still not supporting VISTA *and never will, because the PureEdge forms are being phased out.*

32