

NIH Reduces Temporary "Error Correction Window" for Electronic Grant Applications from Five Business Days to Two

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Key Dates

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NIH will reduce the "error correction window" (i.e. the time allowed after the submission deadline to address NIH system identified errors/warnings) from five (5) business days to two (2) business days for all electronically submitted grant applications with submission deadlines on or after January 8, 2008.

This change will mean that electronic applications will be considered "on-time" if all of the following criteria are met:

- All required registrations must be complete prior to the initial submission.
- Initial successful submission to Grants.gov must have a timestamp on/before 5:00 p.m. local time of the applicant organization on the receipt date.
- Applicants must correct errors and/or warnings within the **two business days** following the receipt date (referred to as the "error correction window").
- All application corrections must be in response to a system-identified error/warning (application submissions with additional changes may be refused).
- If final submission is sent after the receipt date, a cover letter attachment must be included identifying the system-identified errors/warnings that have been corrected.

The two business days provided to view the assembled application image in eRA Commons will remain unchanged.

It is NIH's ultimate goal to define "on-time" submission as having an error-free application (i.e., passes Grants.gov and eRA Commons system-enforced business rules without errors) with a Grants.gov timestamp on/before 5:00 p.m. local time of the applicant organization on the receipt date. NIH temporarily relaxed the definition of "on-time" submission by allowing a five business day "error correction window" for the first six electronic application receipt cycles following the initial transitions to electronic applications. The "error correction window" allowed applicants to adjust to the system-enforced business rules and ensured that Grants.gov and NIH system processing times did not interfere with successful submission. Progress on both fronts allows us to close this window which helps speed up the process of getting the applications in to review and ultimately award.

Since beginning the NIH Electronic Submission of Grant Applications Program in December 2005, both NIH and the applicant community have gained valuable experience with the electronic process and forms. NIH now receives 80% of its applications electronically through Grants.gov using the SF424 (R&R) form set. Experience and system improvements have led to a significant rise in the number of applicants that successfully complete the submission process within two attempts. Over 93% of applicants submitting to the November 5, 2007 R01 receipt date successfully completed the process within two submission attempts. We also have measured dramatic improvements in Grants.gov and NIH response times so applicants can now quickly turn around any needed error corrections. The November 5 applicants experienced an average response time (from submission to Grants.gov to receiving a response from NIH) of 33 minutes and a median response time of 10.42 minutes.

NIH remains committed to ensuring applicants are not penalized for Grants.gov or NIH system issues that are beyond their control and has contingency plans in place to handle those situations. The "error correction window" is a separate concept and has no effect on the contingency policies.

Summary of electronic application process:

- Find funding opportunity announcement of interest and download application package
- Prepare application
- Submit application to Grants.gov
- Wait for NIH to retrieve application
- Check submission status in eRA Commons
- Correct all errors and, at applicant's discretion, any warnings and resubmit through Grants.gov
Note: If corrections are made after the receipt date, the "Error correction window" applies
- Check assembled application image in eRA Commons within the two business day "application viewing window"
- Submission complete

Inquiries

Inquiries regarding this Notice should be directed to:

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