

NIH Electronic Submission Guide

Prepared by Research Services Office, University
of Toronto Last update: April, 2021

Research Services Office Contacts:

For faculty appointed within Dalla Lana School of Public Health, Applied Sci & Eng, Dentistry, Forestry, Kinesiology & PE, Nursing, Pharmacy, UTM, and Medicine (last names A-M only).

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For faculty appointed within Architecture, Arts & Science, Law, Rotman, Information, Social Work, OISE, UTSC, Music, and Medicine (last names N-Z only)
TBA, Research Funding Manager US & International

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Options for Submission

NIH offers two options* for the submission of an application. Applicant can complete either a web based version of the application package through NIH's ASSIST System or through the grant.gov's application system named Workspace. **This package will focus on applications using NIH ASSIST System.**

Overview

Electronic submission to NIH consists of these three systems working together:

Grants.gov: The University of Toronto is fully registered with Grants.gov. This is the U.S. Federal Government's on-line portal to find and apply for Federal grants funding. This is the site where applicants can search for funding opportunities, access Workspace on-line application system. UofT Faculty wishing access to Workspace for their application should complete the Grants.gov registration process outlined [here](#) and once processed, the University's Research Service Office will then add access to Workspace to the faculty member's account.

ASSIST: The Application Submission System & Interface for Submission Tracking (ASSIST) system is used to prepare and submit grant applications electronically to NIH and other Public Health Service agencies. Applicants sign-in to ASSIST using their eRA Commons ID and password.

NIH eRA Commons: The NIH electronic Research Administration system that allows applicants/grantees to electronically receive and transmit application and award information. Once applications have been submitted NIH retrieves its applications from Grants.gov for agency validation. Applicants can then check the status of their application using their Commons UserID and Password.

Preliminary Steps

- 1) Registering with NIH eRA Commons. <https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/>

If you do not already have an NIH eRA Commons UserID and Password please inform the Research Services Office contact and they will initiate your account.

If you already have an existing account on the NIH eRA Commons as a review panelist but not as a Principal Investigator (PI) please provide your UserID Research Services Office contact in order to add the PI status to the account and to affiliate the account with the University of Toronto.

Basic Application Steps

IMPORTANT: The internal deadline for all NIH grant applications is 4 business days prior to the NIH submission deadline.

1. Review the Program Announcement for the Opportunity you wish to apply. Ensure that **Non-domestic (non-U.S.) Entities (Foreign Institutions) are eligible to apply.**

2. Contact the RSO Contact to let them know that you plan to apply. Please provide the PA/RFA number to which you are applying and the deadline date you are working toward.
3. Access the application via ASSIST. For assistance in preparing your application using ASSIST. Please visit NIH's resource found [here](#)
4. Let the RSO Contact know if your project will have co-applicants from other Canadian and/or foreign institutions. Template institutional approval documents will be provided. Institutional approval is required from the RSO equivalent for all non-UofT co-applicants (including those conducting their part of the project at UofT affiliated hospitals).
5. Complete the all of the Mandatory application components plus any of the optional components (some that are likely mandatory despite the term "optional"). Convert all attachments to PDF format, name using the rules found in the NIH Application Guide and then attach to application.
6. Once the application is complete, validate the application in ASSIST and create PDF of the application using the Preview the Application button. Once this process is complete, please upload and submit it in UofT's [My Research Application \(MRA\) system](#). The system will route the application for department/division, faculty and research services office approval. This process should be initiated in advance of internal deadline as the application cannot be submitted without these approvals.
7. Have all UofT personnel listed as Key Personnel on the grant complete the NIH FCOI Tutorial and Financial Interests Report. Forward the FCOI tutorial certificates and completed financial interests report forms to the NIH administrator at RSO. More information and links to these documents can be found [HERE](#).
8. Once the application is received via MRA by RSO, the application will undergo an administrative review. RSO will provide any comments/revision requests within 24hrs of receipt of the application. The final application must be forwarded to RSO 2 days in advance of the NIH deadline by Update Submission Status Link to Ready for Submission. The application will undergo a final review to ensure all items noted in the initial review have been addressed.
9. The RSO Contact will then submit the final application via ASSIST. An application is considered "on-time" if it is accepted error free by NIH by 5pm local time of the deadline date. **As the NIH system can (at high volume times) take 24-48hours to review and return any errors or warnings that must be addressed by the deadline. RSO is unable to guarantee that final applications received later than 2 days in advance of the submission deadline will be submitted successfully to NIH.**
10. Once an application has been submitted, a series of status emails will be received indicating any errors or warnings with the application. However, since email can be unreliable, PIs should check the status of the application by logging on to the eRA Commons with Username and Password. Errors will prevent the application from moving on to study section assignment therefore a changed/corrected application must be submitted to Grants.gov (back to step 5) by the NIH submission deadline. If there are no errors the application will automatically move forward for processing by the Division of Receipt and Referral after two business days.

11. PIs may then track the status of the application as it moves through the review process by logging into his/her eRA Commons account. Research Services recommends that PIs check their applications once they receive the : ***“Validations Complete/Check Assembled Application, Grants.gov Tracking Number GRANT xxxxxxxx, PI name”*** from the eRA Commons. Please let the NIH administrator at Research Services know if any problems are detected otherwise the application will proceed for NIH review as submitted.

**SF424 Version E:
University of Toronto-specific information and a few tips**

Below is a list of the U of T details and tips you will need in order to complete the forms:

(R&R) Cover

Item 5 Applicant Information:

DUNS – 259999779
 Legal Name – The Governing Council of the University of Toronto
 Department – leave blank
 Division – leave blank
 Street 1 – McMurrich Building, 3rd floor
 Street 2 – 12 Queen's Park Crescent West
 City – Toronto
 County – leave blank
 State – leave blank
 Province – Ontario
 Country – use drop down menu to select CAN: CANADA
 ZIP/Postal Code – M5S 1S8

Person to be contacted on matters involving this application

Prefix – leave blank
 First Name – Krista or Loredana
 Middle Name – leave blank Last Name – Montgomery or Polidoro
 Suffix – leave blank
 Position/Title: Research Funding Manager
 Street 1 – McMurrich Building, 3rd floor
 Street 2 – 12 Queen's Park Crescent West
 City – Toronto
 County – leave blank
 State – leave blank
 Province – Ontario
 Country – use drop down menu to select CAN: CANADA
 ZIP/Postal Code – M5S 1S8
 Phone Number – 416-946-2155 or 416 946-5568
 Fax Number – 416-971-2010
 Email – krista.montgomery@utoronto.ca Or l.polidoro@utoronto.ca

Item 6 Employer Identification (EIN) or TIN: 1900002838A2

Item 7 Type of Applicant: use drop down menu to select W: Non-domestic (non-US) Entity

Item 12 Proposed Project Start Date: Please select the appropriate start date.
See <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm> for all programs.

For example, here are the earliest start dates for new R01 applications:

Application Deadline	Earliest Start Date
February 5	December 1
June 5	April 1
October 5	July 1

Item 13: Congressional District of Applicant: 00-000

Item 15: Please enter the total budget into sections 15a & 15c
15b: Enter amount if cost sharing is a requirement
15d: Enter amount if income will be generated through the research (e.g. royalties from patents derived from research or user fees charge to others for equipment purchased with NIH funding)

Item 16: Is application subject to review by State Executive Order 12372 process?
Select b. NO Program is not covered by E.O. 12372

Item 19 Authorized Representative: use the same info provided in Item 5 Person to be contacted on matters involving this application and add:
Position/Title: Research Funding Manager

Sites

For Primary Site:

DUNS Number: 259999779
Project/Performance Site Congressional District: 00-00

For all other Project/Performance Site Locations:

DUNS Number: enter their DUNS Number
Project/Performance Site Congressional District: enter their District if US or 00-000 for outside US

Other Project Information

Item 1a Human Subjects Assurance Number: If the project involves human subjects enter in 00005463 even if IRB approval is pending.

Item 2a Animal Welfare Assurance Number: If the project involves vertebrate animals enter in A5013-01 even if IACUC approval is pending.

Item 7 Project Summary/Abstract: This attachment should be no more than 30 lines.

Item 8 Project Narrative: This attachment should be no more than 2-3 sentences.

Item 12: Other Attachments:

Foreign Justification: As a foreign applicant, NIH requires that an attachment entitled Foreign

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RESEARCH SERVICES OFFICE, 3rd Floor McMurrich Building, 12 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, ON, M5S 1S8, Canada. See contact information on the website: www.research.utoronto.ca

Justification be attached here. This justification must describe how the proposed project has specific relevance to the mission and objectives of the NIH and has the potential for significantly advancing the health sciences in the US; whether similar research is being done in the United States and whether there is a need for additional research in this area. This justification will be assessed on whether the project presents special opportunities for furthering research programs through unusual talent, resources or characteristics of the research project (e.g., human subjects, animals, disease, equipment, techniques, environmental conditions) that exist in other countries and either not readily available in the US or augment existing US resources.

Senior/Key Person Profile

Credential, e.g., agency login: Enter your eRA Commons user name.

Project Role: Choose appropriate. Please note that NIH does not use the Co-PI role or Co-investigator, so either choose PD/PI or Other and then type in Collaborator

Note: Credential – eRA commons user name must be entered for each PD/PI.

Biographical Sketch: Attachment should not exceed 5 pages. Please note: NIH has recently revised their instructions, as well as the template for the Biographical Sketch. Ensure that Biosketch completed using the appropriate template as per the submission deadline of your application. Visit <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm> to more information and to access templates

Cover Page Supplement

Enter the required information into each section (as applicable). See NIH Guidelines

Research Plan

Always verify the page limits specific to your RFA or PA.

Item 10: Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan: If your application includes multiple PD/PIs you are required to upload a plan. Please see the NIH guide for further direction on this requirement.

Item11: Consortium/Contractual Agreements: If your application includes a subaward, a copy of their completed, signed facepage and statement of intent must be uploaded into this field.

Tip: Only add documents to the items that are applicable to your application. (e.g. if your application does not include human subjects, do not upload documents into the human subjects section)

R&R Budget

ALL foreign applications applicants must use the Research and Related Budget forms even if the funding announcement indicates that Modular Budget guidelines apply. Your entire budget must be in U.S. dollars. The Currency Conversion Rate used to prepare budget should be noted in budget justification

Tip: Please note that a budget period may only be for 12 month period or less. To add additional periods, please click on the “add period” button on the bottom of page 3 of the budget forms.

Section A & B. Personnel:

- For the PI Project Role always use PD/PI.
- Always include the Calendar Months effort for all personnel listed even if no salary is being requested. U of T operates on a 12-month appointment basis so Academic and Summer months are not used. (e.g. 10% effort = 1.2 cal month)
- Please ensure that salary requested conforms to the appropriate NIH Salary caps: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm
- The University's fringe benefit rate for Appointed Positions is 24.0%, Non-appointed Position 10%, Postdoctoral Fellows 10% +\$50 per month and Students is 0%. <http://www.finance.utoronto.ca/services/benefits/rates.htm>

Section H. Indirect Costs (required for each year that budget is requested):

- Indirect Cost Type: Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)
- Indirect Cost Rate: 8%
- Indirect Cost Base: enter in the amount from Section G: Direct Costs minus any equipment, student tuition, research patient care costs, rent, and sub-recipient charges (after the first \$25,000).
- Funds Requested: Multiply the Indirect Costs Base by the Indirect Cost Rate
- Cognizant Federal Agency: enter Per NIH NOT-OD-01-028 dated March 29, 2001

Budget Justification.

This file must provide the details of each expense that you have included in your budget including a description of each personnel, including the UofT PI and the roles and responsibilities in the project, as well as salary and benefits to be included. All materials and supplies should have a brief description, as well as a rough calculation of how you have calculated the total amount to be requested for each item. Supplies include various categories, such as chemicals, reagents, glassware, disposable plastic ware, vertebrate animals, among others.

Research and Related Subaward Budget Attachments

If your application includes subsites, you must include a separate budget for each site, which is uploaded into this form.

Tip: The total costs of the subsites are inputted into the subaward/consortium/contractual costs (Section 4, Item 5) of the main budget.

Note: The subsites indirect costs although calculated in the total direct costs of the budget, do not count towards the total allowable direct costs dictated by NIH for funding opportunities issues as program announcements. Please ensure you review your budget thoroughly to ensure that the UofT direct costs and direct costs of the subsites do not exceed the allowable costs for the funding mechanism.