

PREVENT GRANTS.GOV/NIH SUBMISSION ERRORS

The following is a list of recurring errors we have experienced. Investigators run the risk of missing the deadline when multiple submissions are required.

1. **Use the Correct Application Package:** All applications must now be submitted in response to a specific FOA (FOA=Funding Opportunity Announcement, e.g., RFA, PA, or Solicitation). Make sure the package you are submitting corresponds to the appropriate FOA. NIH has developed Parent announcements for use by applicants who wish to submit what were formerly termed, Investigator-initiated or “unsolicited” applications.
2. **Attach Pdfs only:** NIH only accepts attachments in Pdf, (and in some cases, PureEdge formats). Word attachments are **not** allowed.
3. **Incorrect/Missing eRA Commons user names:** Commons user names are required for all individuals with a project role of ‘PD/PI’. Double check that you are using the correct Commons user name. If you are not certain of a senior/key person's user name, other than the PD/PI, we suggest leaving the ‘Credential’ field blank. [How to query Commons user names.](#)
4. **Check ‘Changed/Corrected’ when fixing Commons errors:** Once an application package is error free and ready to be re-submitted, select ‘Changed/Corrected Application’ (box 1) on the SF 424 (R&R). When you select ‘Changed/Corrected Application’, the Federal Identifier (box 4) becomes active; enter ‘N/A’.
5. **Senior/Key Person Profile-Do not use ‘Co-PD/PI’ for NIH:** The project role ‘Co-PD/PI’ is not recognized by NIH. On the *Senior/Key Person Profile* form, ‘Project Role’ is a drop down list. For co-investigators we recommend selecting either ‘Faculty’ or ‘Other’. If ‘Other,’ enter ‘Co-Investigator’ in the ‘Other Project Role Category’ field. Only for [multiple PD/PI applications](#), may there be more than one PD/PI.

SUBMISSION TIPS

- [NIH recommends](#) constructing the Research Plan in one document. It is important to adhere to the page limit prior to breaking the Research Plan into each section.
- If URA addresses warning(s)/error(s) and resubmits an application, the administrator will be advised and should make the changes to his/her version of the application.
- PIs have two days to review an application once the image appears in the NIH Commons. An application may be rejected if, *due to an eRA Commons or Grants.gov system issue*, the application does not correctly reflect the submitted application package (e.g., some part of the application was lost or didn't transfer correctly during the submission process). The PI/Administrator should contact URA to reject an application.

REVIEW THE FINAL APPLICATION AND SUBMIT EARLY

[NIH Guidance states] “While the assembled application image is not available to view until it has passed the NIH validations and received no errors, each attachment should be reviewed carefully and printed prior to submitting to ensure it's ready to go. Applicants are strongly encouraged to start the application process early and submit before the deadline to ensure time for corrections PRIOR to the submission deadline. Once the application is submitted via Grants.gov it is similar to dropping the old paper application into the FedEx box and there is not an opportunity to take it back to make changes.”