Extension of eRA Commons User IDs to Individuals in Graduate and Undergraduate Student Project Roles with Measurable Effort on an NIH Annual Progress Report (PHS2590 & RPPR)

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Key Dates

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Purpose

Over the next year the NIH will start requiring an eRA Commons ID for all individuals in graduate and undergraduate student roles who participate in NIH-funded projects for at least one person month or more. That information will appear on NIH progress reports, including those submitted on paper using the DHHS Public Health Service Grant Continuation Progress Report (PHS2590, rev. 8/2012), and electronically using the Research Performance Progress Report RPPR, rev. 08/2012). Beginning on October 18, 2013 a warning will be generated when an RPPR is submitted that lists individuals in a graduate or undergraduate student role who have not established an eRA Commons ID.   Then beginning in October 2014, RPPRs lacking the eRA Commons ID for Graduate and Undergraduate Students will receive an error and the RPPR will not be accepted by the NIH without this information.

The NIH PHS 2590 and RPPR forms will be modified to prompt for this information beginning on October 18, 2013. Also beginning on that date, graduate students and postdocs who complete their eRA Commons Profile will be required to answer certain demographic questions related to their date of birth, gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities, US citizenship status and country of citizenship; and where applicable, they will need to indicate their highest educational degree and the institution where it was earned, in order to complete the data collection. For items that request information on gender, race and ethnicity, and disability one of the acceptable responses will be "I Do Not Wish to Provide".

Once phased in, this new policy will extend the existing eRA Commons ID requirement for Program Directors/Principal Investigators (PDs/PIs) and postdoctoral researchers. In addition to providing information on PD/PIs and those in the training phases of their careers, grantee institutions will be encouraged to create an eRA Commons Account for all other personnel listed on the All Personnel List of the PHS 2590 or in the Participant Section (D.1) of the RPPR. This new collection will provide more comprehensive information about the size and nature of the biomedical research workforce. Entering an eRA Commons ID in the Participant Section of the RPPR will pre-populate other components of this form reducing some of the burden associated with annual progress reporting.

The newly revised instructions and forms will be available on October 18, 2013 at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms.htm. And, the following tools for creating eRA Commons Accounts are now available:

- Creating an eRA Commons Account, Searching for an Account & Avoiding Duplicate Accounts
- eRA Commons Personal Profile Overview (video)
- Personal Profile Online Help

Background

Consistent with reporting requirements from the NIH Reform Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-482, "NIH Reform Act"), NIH has collected identifying and demographic information, facilitated by eRA Commons Registration, for individuals designated in applications as the PD/PI(s) and any individual with a postdoctoral role who participates in a

NIH-funded project for at least one person month.   In addition, NIH maintains a comprehensive data collection on students and postdoctoral researchers supported by the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) programs.   The inclusion of all individuals in a graduate or undergraduate student role who participated in a project for at least one person month or more will enhance the NIH's ability to describe these populations in detail and to conduct comprehensive workforce and career outcome studies and analyses, consistent with the NIH Reform Act requirements.

In addition to this statutory directive, the requirement for eRA Commons IDs for students responds to recommendations on the Biomedical Research Workforce from the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director:

> *The NIH should ensure that all students and postdoctoral researchers supported by the NIH on both research grants and research training grants are identified and the necessary variables are collected to assess the impact of NIH funded experiences on their subsequent careers.*

Further, the NIH solicited input from the community in a Request for Information (RFI) that was issued in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts on February 21, 2013.   The RFI included questions specifically about the plan to gather information about students on research grants by requiring eRA Commons accounts. In general, individuals who responded to the RFI supported the concept that the NIH should identify and track those who receive NIH support from any source during the training phases of their careers.   Some of the respondents expressed concern about burden, duplication of current data, privacy, confidentiality and security.   Some suggested close coordination with the federal scientific profile system, Science Experts Network curriculum vitae (SciENcv) that will be launched as a public beta version later this summer. In response to the concerns raised in the RFI, all eRA Commons information will continue to be stored in a database protected by the Privacy Act.   To reduce respondent burden, information collected in the eRA Commons will be available to pre-populate the on-line SciENcv to permit users to easily generate biosketches associated with federal grant applications and progress reports.

Implementation

Beginning this summer, on August 15, the NIH will make undergraduate, graduate student, and other project personnel roles available in the eRA Commons.   At that time, grantee Commons Account Administrators should begin working with individuals in those and other roles at their institution to establish eRA Commons accounts and to populate their profiles. Various components of these requirements will become available at different times, as shown below:

eRA Commons Accounts: Beginning on August 15, Grantee Commons Account Administrators should start encouraging graduate and undergraduate students and others to establish eRA Commons Accounts.   All individuals establishing Commons Accounts should be encouraged to complete all requested fields. Beginning on October 18, 2013, warnings will appear in the eRA Commons screens to alert individuals identified as undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers that the following fields should be completed: date of birth, gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities, US citizenship status and country of citizenship. For those who have completed undergraduate or graduate degrees (graduate students and postdoctoral researchers), the highest educational degree, the degree date, and the institution where it was earned also should be completed.   Beginning on October 1, 2014, those fields in the eRA Commons screens will be required for individuals identified in any of those three roles.

Progress Reports: On/after October 18, 2013, all graduate and undergraduate students reported on the All Personnel Form in the PHS2590 or the Participants Section (D.1) in the RPPR should have eRA Commons IDs in addition to the current requirement for postdoctoral researchers. A warning will be issued for all graduate and undergraduate students listed on the Participant List of the RPPR who do not have an eRA Commons ID. Beginning October 2014, RPPRs lacking an eRA Commons ID for graduate and undergraduate students will receive an error and the RPPR will not be accepted by the NIH without this information.   eRA Commons IDs will be encouraged for all other individuals listed on the All Personnel Form or the Participants sections of those reports.

NRSA Fellows and Trainees: Please note that these new eRA Commons roles should NOT be used for individuals submitting Individual NRSA Fellowship applications. The PD/PI role will continue to be used for those

submissions. These roles also should not be used for individuals being reported in xTrain or on a Statement of Appointment Form (PHS2271); the Trainee Role must be used for that reporting requirement.

Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries to:

Grants Info
Office of Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health
Telephone: 301-435-0714
TTY: 301-451-5936
Email: Grantsinfo@nih.gov
User support is provided at http://ithelpdesk.nih.gov/eRA/.

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