



MEMORANDUM

TO: All NYIT Faculty & Staff
FROM: Allison Andors, PhD, Assistant Provost; Senior Director, Grants
RE: Phase-out of Grants.gov Legacy Package and
Transition to Grants.gov Workspace and NIH ASSIST
DATE: December 31, 2017

On December 31, 2017, Grants.gov will retire its downloadable PDF package which has been the standard method of applying for federal grants for a number of years. Although Grants.gov will continue to accept previously downloaded packages through March 31, 2018, it will stop presenting its downloadable forms package as an option at the end of 2017. As of December 31, 2017, Grants.gov Workspace will become the standard application method for Federal grants. Workspace is a shared, online environment where applicants may collaboratively complete and submit grant applications. Forms may either be completed online through a web browser, or may be downloaded individually, filled out and then uploaded again to Workspace. The reported advantages of Workspace over the so-called legacy PDF package are that (i) multiple users can concurrently complete application forms, (ii) applicants can reuse saved Workspace forms when applying for new funding opportunities, (iii) applications can be validated prior to submission, thus reducing the number of rejections by Grants.gov, and (iv) a preview feature enables applicants to view the complete application in a single window. The application forms themselves are, for the most part, largely unchanged. A notable exception is the new PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form required by NIH, concerning which see below.

Anyone intending to submit or collaborate on a federal application during the coming year would be well-advised to become familiar with the Workspace guidance posted at <https://www.grants.gov/>, especially the recorded October 18, 2017 webinar entitled “Getting Started with Workspace: Become a Workspace Wizard”, and the “Learning Workspace Video Series” posted at <https://www.youtube.com/>.

While the full details of Workspace implementation at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) remain to be worked out, the following preliminary ground rules can be provided at the present time:

1. Please do not register with Grants.gov. Only applicants or grantors need register with Grants.gov. For the majority of grant applications submitted through the New York Institute of Technology, the organization—NYIT—is the applicant, not the individual faculty or staff member who ultimately undertakes the sponsored project or program once the grant is awarded. NYIT is already registered.
2. Please inform OSPAR of any intended federal application. NYIT’s Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPAR) submits grant applications to federal (and other) sponsors on behalf of faculty and staff. Allison Andors and Carlton Mitchell are NYIT’s Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs) for grant submission purposes. Once you have identified a promising federal funding opportunity, please e-mail it to OSPAR for verification of eligibility and to schedule the submission.
3. OSPAR will create, own, and manage all Workspaces unless it advises the Principal Investigator (PI) to the contrary. At NYIT, only Allison Andors and Carlton Mitchell have the Manage Workspace role. Participants, if any, will be added to a Workspace and form access provided at their sole discretion.
4. OSPAR will download individual PDF forms and, if applicable, e-mail them to unregistered team members/collaborators. In this respect, the process of obtaining, distributing, filling out, reviewing, and uploading forms will closely resemble the previous procedure using the legacy PDF package.
5. Unless it informs the PI to the contrary, OSPAR will complete all required webforms, upload all completed forms to the Workspace, perform error checks, submit, and track the application once it has been approved internally. Approval will follow the standard [OSPAR Proposal Submission Policy](#).

While the above-specified minimalist approach will probably suffice for the majority of Workspace-compatible federal applications, OSPAR will adjust its procedures as circumstances warrant, to afford maximum flexibility to grant-writing teams and to ensure that the system is used to its full potential.

Note on NIH Applications: For the special case of applications to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), OSPAR will, after December 31, 2017, utilize NIH's web-based Application Submission System & Interface for Submission Tracking (ASSIST) system to prepare and submit grant applications through Grants.gov. Because ASSIST has been optimized for NIH applications and is relatively user-friendly, it is probably the method of choice for preparing and submitting NIH proposals, although Workspace may be used instead.

For guidance concerning ASSIST, please see <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/prepare-to-apply-and-register/submission-options/assist.htm>, especially the introductory video.

Prior to using ASSIST, applicants should identify a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to which they intend to apply. FOAs are posted in the NIH Guide for Grants & Contracts and/or in Grants.gov. The FOA will indicate whether ASSIST can be used to apply to that opportunity. If ASSIST can be used, OSPAR will initiate the application and provide application access to team members as appropriate.

Forms are accessed through the FOA, which sets forth any FOA-specific requirements. Where these conflict with other guidance such as the NIH Application Guide, the FOA instructions take precedence.

An application must first be initiated in response to a particular FOA before one can gain access to the application forms within ASSIST. Although anyone with an eRA Commons ID can initiate an application and preview the forms in ASSIST, all applications from NYIT faculty must be initiated by OSPAR to ensure an orderly process. Preparation of the application should adhere to the [OSPAR Proposal Deadline Policy](#).

PIs in need of access to sample application forms in advance of an application being initiated in ASSIST have the option of viewing annotated form sets offline at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/resources/annotated-form-sets.htm>. There is also an [annotated FOA](#) that explains key pieces of information in funding opportunity announcements, and an [ASSIST User Guide](#) that illustrates and explains the online forms. Section IV of the FOA, "Application and Submission Information", lists all FOA-specific application requirements and supplements the instructions in the [SF424 Application Guide](#).

NIH Clinical Trial Applications: Pursuant to NIH Notice Number [NOT-OD-16-147](#), effective September 27, 2017, applications involving one or more clinical trials must be submitted through a FOA specifically designed to accept clinical trials. Thus, NIH will no longer accept clinical trial applications through "parent" FOA announcements or through other FOAs not specifically designed to accept clinical trials.

For FOAs with due dates on or after January 25, 2018, NIH, as part of its new FORMS-E application package, will require the use of a new PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form for any application involving human subjects and/or clinical trial research. This form consolidates human subjects, inclusion enrollment, and clinical trial information previously collected across multiple forms. It also positions NIH for future data exchange with ClinicalTrials.gov. Under an HHS regulation ([42 CFR Part 11](#)) and an NIH policy (Notice Number [NOT-OD-16-149](#)) that became effective January 18, 2017, all clinical trials funded in whole or in part by NIH, regardless of study phase or type of intervention, are expected to register at ClinicalTrials.gov and report findings. Another NIH policy (Notice Number [NOT-OD-16-148](#)), effective January 1, 2017, established the expectation that all NIH-funded investigators who are involved in the conduct, oversight, or management of clinical trials should be trained in Good Clinical Practice, consistent with the principles of the International Conference on Harmonisation (ICH) [E6](#) (R2).

Although these policy notices take us rather far afield from our immediate topic of changes in Grants.gov and NIH forms, they point to an evolving area of federal grants policy that will be of concern to many PIs.