

## Avoiding Common Errors

Going through the final checks below will go a long way towards submitting error-free applications.

### Ten Checks Before Hitting Submit

- 1. Does the DUNS number on the SF424 (R&R) cover form match the DUNS used for Grants.gov & Commons registration?**
- 2. Did you provide correct Type of Submission (box #1), Federal Identifier (box #4), and Type of Application (box #8) information on the SF424 (R&R) cover form?**  
These three fields all work together – be sure to follow the [application guide](#) instructions carefully.
- 3. Did you include the eRA Commons ID in the Credential field of the R&R Sr/Key Person Profile form for all PD/PIs?**  
Including the eRA Commons ID for the PD/PIs is an NIH requirement and is critical to our ability to post errors, warnings and the assembled application image in eRA Commons. The credential field is not marked required on the federal-wide form since not all agencies that use the form need this field. NIH uses the Health and Human Services logo within the application guide to flag agency-specific instructions and clarifications for fields on federal-wide forms. Pay special attention to the HHS “birdie” or you may miss key NIH requirements.
- 4. If submitting a Multiple-PD/PI application, did you give all PIs the PD/PI role on the Sr/Key Person Profile form?**  
There are several roles on the form drop-down that are similar – PD/PI, Co-PD/PI and Co-Investigator. *Only the PD/PI role is recognized by NIH as the correct designation for all PIs on a multiple-PD/PI application.* Using the correct designation allows the system to flag the application as multiple-PD/PI and facilitates appropriate handling of the application as it flows through review and other post-submission activities.
- 5. Did you include Organization name for all Sr/Key listed on the R&R Sr/Key Person Profile form?**  
The Organization name for each Sr/Key is one element used to determine potential conflicts for review. For this reason, we require applicants to provide Organization information for ALL Sr/key entries.

**6. Did you include all required attachments?**

Often attachments are conditionally required based on how an applicant fills out specific questions. Here are a couple of examples:

- Answering 'Yes' to the Human Subjects question on the R&R Other Project Information form makes the attachments in the Human Subjects section of the PHS 398 Research Plan required. Similarly, if you answer 'Yes' to the Vertebrate Animals question, then the Vertebrate Animals attachment is required.
- If you have more than one entry on the R&R Sr/Key Person Profile form with the role of "PD/PI," then the Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan attachment on the PHS 398 Research Plan form is required.

**7. Are all your attachments in PDF format?**

Grants.gov will allow other document formats, but PDF is an NIH requirement. Use simple PDF-formatted files for ALL attachments. See [PDF Guidelines](#).

**8. Did you follow the page limits specified in the FOA and application guide?**

**9. Did you include effort > 0 for all Sr/Key listed on the R&R Budget form?**

It is not necessary to list every person from the R&R Sr/Key Person Profile form in the Sr/Key section of the R&R budget form. For the entries you do list, however, you must provide measureable effort using the Calendar Months OR a combination of Academic and Summer Month categories.

**10. Did you follow all special instructions noted in *Section IV. Application and Submission Information of the announcement*?**

The eRA validations will catch many, but not all, submission requirements. FOA-specific requirements are not typically system-enforced. Applications that do not comply with the instructions may be delayed or not accepted for review.

Even if you diligently go through the checks above, **PLEASE SUBMIT EARLY!** NIH is tightening the rules regarding post-submission materials (see [NOT-OD-10-115](#)), and it is more important than ever to make sure your application is correct at time of submission. eSubmission validations actually help you to submit an application that complies with instructions and catch missing information needed for review. Submitting early provides the opportunity to make necessary application adjustments and submit a Changed/Corrected application for the same deadline. The alternative would be to submit an application for a deadline, find out after the fact that you were not in compliance with the requirements and have to submit again for the next deadline (if there is one).