


## Completing the SF 424 R&R

### TIPS & HELPFUL HINTS

#### DOs

- **Do** download a new application for each FOA.
- **Do** read the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) carefully, making sure to follow instructions as outlined.
- **Do** follow all application instructions, page limits, content requirements, budget limits to the letter. Applications could be rejected based on incomplete applications or applications which do not follow the FOA guidelines.
- **Do** read the instructions for completing each application page are listed at the bottom of each screen.
- **Do** turn on the Help mode on the Grants.gov toolbar; as you hover over a box, it will provide instructions to completing that box. 
- **Do** prepare Research Plan in Word, making sure to check page limits; save sections as separate PDF files; upload application into relevant sections of SF424. NIH validations include checks for page limits. Some accommodation will be made for sections that when combined must fit within a specified limitation. The PDF files should not contain fillable forms or any security settings.
- **Do** name your .xfd file and all uploaded PDF documents using only letters, numbers, and underscore (\_).
- **Do** click 'Check Package for Errors' once the application is completed.

#### DON'Ts

- **Do not** reuse grant application packages. The PureEdge ICS Viewer (installed on your desktop) is used to view and edit application packages.
- **Do not** erase auto-populated information.
- **Do not** leave any highlighted data fields blank. These fields are mandatory; however, there may be additional fields which are mandatory, depending on the application guidelines.
- **Do not** use any special characters or spaces in the file names of your .xfd file or any uploaded PDF documents.
- **Do not** try to upload any other file type, e.g. Word, Excel. Make sure attached files contain data. Empty files/blank pages can create delays in Grants.gov.
- **Do not** convert .xfd files to .pdf for upload as attachments (applicable when uploading subaward budgets). Attachments generated from PureEdge forms should not be converted to PDFs; only text attachments must be converted to PDFs.
- **Do not** include headers, footers, page numbers, or table of contents. These are generated automatically by NIH upon receipt of the PureEdge file from Grants.gov.
- **Do not** click 'Check Package for Errors' until you have finished entering information. This button only checks that required fields are not left blank; it does not provide validation or spell check.
- **Do not** click Submit the application. The PI/Admin sends the package to us with all items in "completed" column. The AOR (Jill Mortali or Deborah Good) is the only person who can submit.

### TOP 2 ERRORS UPON SUBMISSION

1. **Missing NIH Commons User ID**

The application did not include the PI's Commons User ID in the field called 'Credential, e.g. agency login.' It's a good idea to check the NIH Commons and make updates to PI Profile, if necessary.

2. **PDF Issues**

For details on these and other common errors, please go to the [Avoiding Common Errors](http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/avoiding_errors.htm) page at [http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/avoiding\\_errors.htm](http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/avoiding_errors.htm)

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

### GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE

#### THE SHELL

The shell contains all the forms need to respond to a particular FOA. Mandatory forms are determined by the FOA and are required. Optional forms may not truly be optional, but are potentially not applicable to all applications. The circumstances of an application may require one or more of these optional forms, e.g., in cases of subcontracts the Subaward budget form is required. Please refer to the relevant FOA to find out which forms apply.

The left hand side of the cover page lists all the necessary forms (the Mandatory Documents) and also forms which may or may not need to be included (the Optional Documents), according to the FOA. Once a form is completed and saved, it should be moved to the appropriate right hand column (either Mandatory or Optional Completed Documents for Submission). Once it has been moved to the right hand column, a form can still be opened and edited --- this feature is meant to simply help you track the forms as you complete them.

**Application Filing Name:** This is not to be confused with Project Title. Application Filing Name is a required field and helps both SPA and the PI keep track of the application. The Application Filing Name should include the PI last name and other relevant information that distinguishes it from other applications the PI may have in development, e.g., "Smith – R01 – Topic of research"

#### GENERAL COMPONENTS SF424 Research & Related (R&R)

Box 1:	Type of Submission	<p>✓ <b>Check one:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pre-Application: for Letters of Intent</li> <li>○ Application: New applications</li> <li>○ Changed/Corrected: If the same application previously failed system validation and is being resubmitted with necessary corrections (under same receipt by sponsor date)</li> </ul>
Box 2-3:	Date Submitted and Received	Filled automatically by Grants.Gov upon submission
Box 4	Federal Identifier (FI)	<p>New application: Leave blank</p> <p>Changed/Corrected: When entering a change/corrected "new" application this filed is required. Enter the tracking number that was assigned by Grants.Gov at first submission.</p> <p>If application is a continuation, revision, or renewal (even if submitting a change/corrected one): Enter the assigned FI number, which is usually the grant number, e.g., CA123456.</p>
Box 5:	Applicant Info	<p><b>Organizational DUNS: Always use DUNS # 047006379 ! (Grants.gov will add the 4 zeros.)</b></p> <p>Legal Name: President and Fellows of Harvard College            Department: Sponsored Programs Administration            Division: Harvard Medical School            Address: 25 Shattuck Street, Boston, MA 02115            Person to be contacted: Ms. Jill Mortali            PH: 617-432-1596; Fax: 617-432-2651            email: spa_award@hms.harvard.edu</p>

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

### SF424 Research & Related (R&R) continued

Box 6:	EIN or TIN	Enter EIN: <b>1042103580C5</b>
Box 7:	Type of Applicant	From drop-down menu choose: O. Private Institution of Higher Education
Box 8:	Type of Application	<p>✓ <b>Check only one:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> New</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Resubmission: Application previously submitted and not funded</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Continuation: Non-competing</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Revision: An application that proposes a change in             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Federal Government's financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation; <u>or</u></li> <li>2. Any other change in the terms and conditions of the existing award.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
Box 11:	Description Title	<b>Limit: 81 characters.</b> Avoid special characters. If new, title must be unique; if resubmission or renewal, must be same as previous years.
Box 12:	Areas Affected	For NIH, enter N/A (required)
Box 13:	Proposed Project Dates	Date format is MM/DD/YYYY
Box 14:	Congressional District	Both "MA-008" (in rare circumstances the project location congressional district will be different from the applicant (HMS) congressional district)
Box 15:	PI Contact Information	Name must exactly match the name that is in eRA Commons, e.g., check the use of a middle initial.
Box 16:	Estimated Funding	For Most NIH/PHS awards, 16a and 16b will be the same, unless cost sharing is identified as a requirement in the FOA. 16a/16b should match the total costs of the cumulative budget.
Box 17:	State Executive Order	Always 'No: Program is Not Covered by E.O. 12372' for Massachusetts
Box 19:	Authorized Rep	<p>Ms. Jill Mortali          Director, Sponsored Programs Administration          Harvard Medical School          25 Shattuck Street          Boston (County: Suffolk), MA 02115          Ph: 617-432-1596; Fax: 617-432-2651          spa_award@hms.harvard.edu</p> <p>(in cases where your SRA rep. has told you that Jill is not in the office to submit, Deborah Good, Associate Director, will be submitting and her name should be entered here using the same contact information.)</p>
Box 20:	Pre-Application	Unless specified in FOA, not used by NIH. In cases where this is used, attachment must be one PDF file.

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

### SF424 R&R Other Project Info

Box 3	Proprietary Information	Up to the PI to determine. Such things to consider are patentable ideas, trade secrets, and privileged info. If “yes” is marked, it is instructed to mark lines or paragraphs that deal in proprietary info with a caveat (such as: “The following contains proprietary/privileged info that [name of applicant] requests not be released to persons outside the Government, except for purposes of review and evaluation.”)
Box 4	Environmental	Unless FOA indicates National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) applies, then “no.”
Box 6	Project Summary /Abstract	Old 398 Form Page 2 is now broken up into “Project Summary” formerly Description (PDF attachment) and ...
Box 7	Project Narrative	“Project Narrative,” formerly Relevance (PDF attachment) – 2-3 sentences max.
Box 8	Bibliography & References Cited	398 Section H of Research Plan, “Literature Cited.”
Box 9	Facilities & Other Resources	398 Resources Page (Lab, Animal, Computer, Office, Clinical + Other)
Box 10	Equipment	398 Resources Page, Equipment section.
Box 11	Other	Not applicable for NIH or other PHS agencies.

### SF424 R&R Performance Sites

Up to 8 locations. If more than 8, assemble info in Word document and attach as a single PDF
--

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

---

### SF424 R&R Senior/Key Personnel

- Enter all Key Personnel separately.
- “Credential” field (i.e., NIH eCommons Username) MUST be filled in for PI/PD or else rejection by eCommons validation. Careful: It is not yellowed or asterisked. For Other Key, it is not required, but recommended.
- If there’s more than 1 Key person, click “Next Person”. PI/PD info will auto-populate at top; bottom half for next person.
- The new Expanded form (v. 2A) allows for the collection of up to 40 senior/key persons in structured data fields. The process for including the PD/PI and the next seven senior/key persons is similar to the use of the standard form. For more than eight senior/key persons you will be instructed to create and attach supplementary forms for each additional eight senior/key persons up to 40 total senior/key persons. The form-in-form model is similar to how the R&R Subaward Budget form works. As with the R&R Subaward Budget form you will be attaching PureEdge forms within the PureEdge form – *do not* convert the supplemental forms to PDF before attaching. I know it is tempting to include some of the key persons in structured data and then attach the rest in a single document, but resist the temptation...Grants.gov will let you, but NIH’s system will not! You will only be able to use the attachment for “Additional Senior/Key Person Profile(s)” at the bottom of the form if you have used each of the 40 structured data slots. When submitting an application for a FOA that allows co-PIs, follow these tips:
- NIH does not recognize the “Co-PD/PI” project role on the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) form. When multiple-PIs are included on an application, use the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) project role for each PI.
  - Any individual that is designated as a PD/PI on the R&R Senior/Key Person Profile form must include their eRA Commons user name in the “Credential, e.g., agency login” field.
  - Prior to application submission, all individuals designated as PD/PI on the application must be registered in eRA Commons and assigned the PI role. The PI account also may have the Internet Assisted Review (IAR) role. If the PI is also the Signing Official (SO), they must have a separate account with the SO role (i.e., can’t have PI and SO on the same account).
  - The individual listed in the “Profile – Project Director/Principal Investigator” section of the “R&R Senior/Key Person Profile” form must be affiliated with the applicant organization. When multiple PD/PIs are proposed, all the PD/PIs listed as additional “Profile – Senior/Key Persons” must have an affiliation either with the applicant organization or their own organization. Note that PI accounts are automatically affiliated with the organization that created them.
- For NIH, Other Significant Contributors: from the drop down box under Senior/Key Person, “Project Role”, pick “Other”; then enter “Other Significant Contributor” in the box entitled “Other Project Role Category.”
- Attach Biosketch for each person. (Note: Biosketch page limit change; 4 total still, but no longer 2 page max for sections A + B.)
- Do not attach “Current/Pending Other Support.”; this remains JIT info.

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

### SF424 R&R Budget

Former 398 budget form is now divided into 3 parts. **All 3 parts must be completed for each budget period.**

For main component budget, DUNS will auto-pop. For subaward budgets, enter the DUNS# of the subawardee.

<b>I. Section A→B (Personnel)</b>	<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effort is now done in Person-months. Person months is the metric for expressing the effort (amount of time) PI(s), faculty and other senior personnel devote to a specific project. The effort is based on the type of appointment the individual has with the organization; e.g., calendar year (CY), academic year (AY), and/or summer term (SM). (HMS appointments, with a few exceptions, are calendar year)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">To calculate:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Months of type of appt. x % effort = Person Months.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red;">For example, PI with a 12-month appointment plans to devote 15% effort each year. The calendar month equivalent is 1.8 person mos. (12 x 15%).</p>
	<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Categories such as Post-Docs are already listed – simply enter the total number of post docs and the total amount requested – no need to list individually by name.</li> <li>Grad students have their own space in section B, no longer ‘Other’.</li> </ul>
<b>II. Section C→E (Equipment, Travel, Trainee Costs)</b>	<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipment: Now must itemize. Per item, include cost of item + shipping and maintenance (if applicable).</li> </ul>
	<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel: Same</li> </ul>
	<b>E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participant/Trainee Costs: Think NSF (this will usually be N/A for NIH, but has been used in some cases such as R25). Tuition Remission is still under section ‘F. Other’</li> </ul>
<b>III. Section F→K (Other, IDC, Total, Fees (N/A for NIH), Budget Justification)</b>	<b>F</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other Direct Costs - Box 5: Total subaward cost (including sub F+A)</li> </ul>
	<b>G</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct Costs: automatically calculates total.</li> </ul>
	<b>H</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indirect Costs: IDC type is “Modified Total Direct Costs”. Can show breakdown of multiple rates (other schools, etc.), if applicable</li> <li><b>HMS cognizant agency is: DHHS, POC is Robert Aaronson, (212) 264-1823</b></li> </ul>
	<b>J</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fee: N/A for HMS. This is a SBIR/STTR field.</li> </ul>
	<b>K</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Justification: Follow budget categories. Make sure to list all names here and roles, as well as associated months, salary and fringe for all Post-docs and Grad students listed in Section B.</li> <li>Make a text file and convert to PDF for upload on Box K of first budget period (this file will auto-populate in the subsequent budget periods, as the justification should include all periods)</li> </ul>
<b>Cumulative Budget</b>		<p>(Replaces 398 Form Page 5) <b>AUTO-FILLS &amp; AUTO-CALCULATES!</b></p>

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

---

### **SF424 R&R Subaward Attach Form**

Form will be under Optional section in application shell. Each line represents separate sub.

To pull out subaward budget, click “Extract” button. Save the file using the first 10 letters of the sub organization’s name as the file name and leave “.xfd” as the file extension. (The extracted budget is a PureEdge document.) Then send to sub via email... the sub fills out and emails back (make sure DUNS etc is unique to sub)...and upload here. *Do not convert this attachment to PDF, this should be uploaded as a .xfd file.*

#### **Helpful hints for applications which include subawards:**

If non-modular, subaward budget(s) will be extracted from the grant application package and emailed to the sub organization for them to complete and send back. If modular, do not use this subaward budget component. The information for the sub will be entered as usual, on the 398 modular budget form.

#### **For subawards, regardless of budget type, SPA will still need to collect:**

- Subaward cover letter or equivalent, signed by participating organization
- Itemized budget for each year

## Completing the SF 424 R&R

### NIH AGENCY-SPECIFIC COMPONENTS

#### PHS398 Cover Letter

- Applicants are now encouraged to submit cover letter (uploaded as one PDF document) which includes:
  - Application title
  - PA/RFA # and Title
  - Request for assignment
  - List of people who should NOT review the application
  - Disciplines involved
  - Statement of approval for over \$500K, if applicable

Note: this information will only be seen by authorized NIH staff and will not be stored as part of the grant image.

- For late applications, include an explanation as to the delay.
- When submitting a changed/corrected application, a cover letter is required explaining the reason for the change/correction.

#### PHS 398 Modular Budgets

- If Modular allowed/required, it will be specified in FOA
- Remember to remove consortium F&A
- Budget Justification is again an attachment; categories: Personnel, Consortium, Additional (i.e., if modules vary or large piece of equipment)
- Same as before, % effort (in person months) must be noted on Key personnel and subaward personnel

#### PHS 398 Research Plan.

Applicants are encouraged to construct the Research Plan as a single Word document which conforms to the overall page limitation and follows all margin, font, and other requirements. Once that is complete, save individual sections as their own PDF file and upload where required. This allows the applicant to better monitor formatting requirements such as page limits. When validations for page limits are applied, Grants.gov may return a warning that the page limits may have been exceeded – in most cases, this is OK because the NIH Commons will make allowances for the white space created by breaking the text into separate files for uploading

- Page limits = 25 pages for Items 2-5 (398 A-D). Same format requirements (margins, fonts, etc.)
- Box 15: NIH now considers our signature alone as compliance that we, the prime applicant and all subcontracts, understand NIH policies and conditions. This is where programmatic, fiscal and admin. arrangements between us and subrecipient are discussed.

#### **Guidelines as to what to include in the appendix vs. references cited (eff. 1/3/07)**

- NIH will allow only **3** publications in the appendix, as of 1/3/07.
- Published manuscripts and/or abstracts that are publicly available in a free, online format may be referenced in the application. These publications may **not** be included in the appendix. URLs or NIH PubMed Central (PMC) submission identification numbers may be included along with the full reference in the Bibliography and References Cited section (SF 424RR)/Literature Cited (PHS 398) section, the Progress Report Publication List section and/or the Biographical Sketch section.
- Applications requiring electronic submission on the SF424 (R&R) may include graphic images of gels, micrographs, photographs, etc. in the Research Plan PDF; however these images may **not** be included in the Appendix (except when part of a qualifying publication). See the SF 424 (R&R) Application Guide for guidance as to size and resolution of images.

#### PHS 398 Checklist

Application Type: Pre-populated from 424 R&R.

Federal Identifier: For new applications, this section is left blank.