

TIGER TIPS

RESOURCES FOR AUBURN RESEARCHERS

NIH Prior Approval Requirements for Proposals of \$500,000 or More

In accordance with Notice [NOT-OD-02-004](#), a principal investigator (PI) must seek prior approval from the NIH before submitting a grant application with direct costs of \$500,000 or more for a single budget year.

NIH has developed a process that provides the PI with an option to electronically submit these prior approval requests through [eRA Commons](#). This option is now available.

The following is the process that needs to be followed:

The Invite to Initiate a \$500K Request

The PI will reach out via email or phone to the Program Official (PO) at the Institute/Center (IC) with whom they have been working concerning the \$500K request, per current practice. The PO can then choose to invite the PI to initiate the prior approval request through eRA Commons. The initiation of the request will trigger an email notification to the PI and to the email address listed for receiving the Notice of Award (NoA) on the Institutional Profile screen (this is the OSP main e-mail account, ospadmn@auburn.edu).

PI Action

Upon being notified, the PI will go into eRA Commons and go to the ***Prior Approval*** tab along the top navigation menu. The PI will find two options and should click ***List my Requests***. The PI will find the \$500K Request under the column Request Type, with a status of ***“In Progress PI,”*** and should click the ***“Modify”*** link.

The Prior Approval Request \$500K screen will open. The screen is pretty straightforward with a few required fields, such as Project Title, Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) number, and Anticipated Submission Date. The PI will need to provide a short justification (limited to 500 characters) for the request, with up to 10 supporting documents allowed. The PI can submit the request directly to NIH.

Next Steps

If the request is approved by the Program Official at the IC, the PI will receive an email from the Program Official. When the error free application is received by NIH, this application will be matched with the \$500k approval from the IC and the application will move through the normal process.

For the moment, this is an option for the submission of \$500K requests. However, as NIH continues to move from all paper processes to a formal electronic environment, this option may become a requirement as they continue to seek solutions that provide accountability, transparency and improved reporting capabilities.

There are other features (status and history), which you can read about in the [Prior Approval section of the eRA Commons Online Help](#).

For more information, please see [Guide Notice NOT-OD-17-005](#).

NIH is also developing two new [video tutorials](#) on Prior Approval. One focuses on the request to withdraw an application, and the second demonstrates the process of \$500K requests as described above. In addition, the website also includes a number of other informational tutorials that may be of interest.