

REEport Update – June 2010

Important Stage A Dates

- Site Administration/Portal
 - Training site available – September 1, 2010
 - Production site available – mid-September, 2010
- Project Initiation
 - Training site available – mid-September, 2010
 - AD-416/417 submission through CRIS Forms Assistance site for non-formula grants ceases - September 23, 2010
 - REEport production site available – October 1, 2010

Detailed deployment information can be found on the REEport Implementation web page at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/reeport_imp.html.

Terminology

Stage A REEport will not be using form numbers such as AD-416, AD-417, AD-419, or AD-421. Instead, REEport will refer to screens or modules such as Project Initiation (which includes classification), Progress Report, Financial Report, and Final Technical Report.

Transition from CRIS to REEport for Stage A

Stage A of REEport, non-formula grant project initiation, is scheduled to become operational on October 1, 2010, replacing the current CRIS AD-416 and AD-417 for non-formula grants. NIFA has developed the following process by which that transition will occur.

Note that this is applicable *only* to new NIFA non-formula grants. CRIS AD-416 and AD-417 data for existing non-formula grants will be transferred from CRIS to REEport during Stage B deployment.

1. On September 9, 2010, NIFA will email all Project Directors (PDs) and Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs) on proposals that have been recommended for award and have not yet submitted CRIS AD-416 and AD-417 data to alert them that they have until September 23 to complete and submit that information in CRIS.
2. The training site and materials for Project Initiation will be available in mid-September.
3. On September 23, the CRIS web forms site will be modified to prevent submission of AD-416 and 417 information for non-formula grants. Any partially completed AD-416 and AD-417 information will be deleted. All AD-416/417s not completed and submitted through CRIS by September 23 will have to be completed in REEport on or after October 1. A notice will be placed on the CRIS web forms site documenting this. All proposals recommended for award by NIFA after September 23 will be instructed to submit Project Initiation information through REEport (after October 1).
4. On October 1, the Project Initiation software for REEport will be available for data entry.
5. On or shortly after October, NIFA will email all Project Directors (PDs) and Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs) on proposals that have been recommended for award that did not submit CRIS AD-416 and AD-417 data prior to September 23 instructing them to submit a Project Initiation through REEport.
6. These actions will not affect the entry of AD-416 and AD-417 information for formula projects. The CRIS web forms will continue to accept AD-416 and AD-417

information and, because REEport will require a Grants.gov or NIFA grant application number for non-formula grant project initiation, users will be unable to enter formula projects into REEport.

How will REEport Project Initiation work for Non-Formula Grants?

Background – What is a site and a Site Administrator?

The use of the term “site” and “Site Administrator” appears frequently in reference to REEport. There are many NIFA grantees that do not have sites or Site Administrators to whom this may be confusing. For their information, sites are established in REEport and recognized by NIFA to represent the eligible submission and data management authority for specific formula grant projects as defined within the various research formula grant program legislative authorities. In addition, these sites can manage standard or non-formula grant project submissions for project directors affiliated with their state partner site.

How it works

1. Once a NIFA program decides to recommend a grant application for award, two key actions occur that are important for REEport:
 - a. The NIFA program officer contacts the PD on the grant application, informs them that they are being recommended for award, and supplies them with specific items that are required for award. One of these items is the requirement to submit Project Initiation information through REEport and program-specific guidance may be supplied.
 - b. The NIFA program officer will enter key information recommending the grant application into NIFA’s internal grants management system.
2. These actions will trigger NIFA’s internal grants management system to transmit data about the grant application to REEport.
3. REEport will email the PD on the grant application, with cc’s to the AOR, the grantee Site Administrator (if applicable), and the NIFA program contact, providing instructions for preparing and submitting a REEport Project Initiation. If the PDs email address has not previously been registered with REEport, instructions will also be provided for first creating a REEport account.
4. If the PD is not part of a site, they will need to prepare and submit a Project Initiation to REEport in order to receive funding.
5. If the PD is part of a site, the PD will need to follow the rules established by the Site Administrator for the preparation, possible review, and submission of a Project Initiation in REEport in order to receive funding. The preparation, review, and submission of Project Initiations may be assigned to the same or to different people within the system.

Mockups of the Project Initiation data entry screens are posted on NIFA’s REEport web page at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/reeport_imp.html or directly at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/pdfs/reeport_2010.pdf.

Cessation of Collecting AD-419 Data for Non-Formula Grants with FY 2009 Data

As previously announced, as part of the REEport deployment, NIFA will no longer be asking for the submission of financial reports on the AD-419 for non-formula grants. This change is effective with the submission of FY 2009 AD-419s; no FY 2010 AD-419s will be requested for non-formula grants. The reason for this change is that NIFA receives financial information on non-formula grants on the SF-425, a government-wide form for collecting this information. Thus, for non-formula grants, the AD-419 is redundant.

More information on the SF-425 can be found under "Financial Reporting" at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/pp_non-formula_grants.html, part of NIFA's new Grant and Project Reporting pages accessible at <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/reporting>.

NIFA is working on a means of certifying funding for institutions receiving Animal Health funds and will release those procedures as soon as they are available.

User Management (for Site Administrators)

Important Request for Site Administrators

Attached to the end of this newsletter is a decision tree for how REEport determines whether a grant is associated with a REEport site. It is important to review this decision tree and understand how REEport will decide whether a grant application being recommended for award should be associated with a site. *A key piece of information to be used by REEport in making this decision is the DUNS number listed on the grant application.* Therefore, NIFA needs an authoritative list of DUNS numbers that may be associated with grant application submissions from Project Directors associated with your site. **Email this list of DUNS numbers to reeport@nifa.usda.gov by August 1.** In addition, email any subsequent modifications to this list to the same address.

Key Information on Site Administration

A NIFA Reporting Web Conference on Site Administration was held on June 10, 2010. The slides and recording from that web conference are available at <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/rwc> and include screen snapshots of the site administration software. Questions and Answers from the web conference are also posted on the site.

Key items regarding site administration are:

- For Stage A, only PDs for a pending grant application submitted to NIFA need to be in REEport. For Stage B, only these and PDs on active NIFA grants need to be in REEport. It is not until Stage C that PDs for formula projects need to be in REEport.
- In order for a new project associated with a non-formula grant application to be automatically associated with a site in REEport, the following must exist prior to a NIFA grant application being recommended for award:
 - The PD on the grant application must exist in REEport
 - The PD's email address as listed on the grant application must be associated in REEport with the site
 - The DUNS number listed on the grant application must be associated in REEport with the site.
- Data on Site Administrators (SAs) will be preloaded based on information currently in use in the CRIS system.
- Prior to Stage A, names, email addresses, and phone numbers for primary PDs on active NIFA non-formula grants only will be loaded from existing grant information. SAs will have a screen where they can use a check box to associate/disassociate these PDs with their site.
- There will not be a bulk pre-load of PDs associated with formula projects at this time. This will be done at a point closer to deployment of Stages C and D so as to have more current information.
- Note from the attached decision tree how REEport will treat PDs associated with multiple sites. Especially note that if REEport is unable to determine which site the project belongs to, the project will initially be assigned as Independent in order to expedite award of the grant and it will be identified for resolution to one site by NIFA

working with the Site Administrators. This is an issue for non-formula grants but will not be an issue for formula projects.

- There has been, at times, confusion about which project type to select on the CRIS site which has resulted occasionally in a non-formula project being submitted with a formula project type. This has required re-entry of the project information using the correct project type. NIFA believes that the REEport design will minimize this confusion, especially given the system generated email to the PD/SA requesting the Project Initiation and that data will be pre-populated in the system from NIFA's internal grants management data system. However, until Stages C and D of REEport are implemented, the CRIS site will still accept formula project AD-416/417 submissions. Since the first notice an institution has that a non-formula grant application submitted to NIFA will be awarded is a contact, usually a phone call, from NIFA program staff to the PD, it is possible that the PD will contact the SA about submitting a Project Initiation before REEport has sent the system generated message. It is important the SAs understand this and clarify whether NIFA is recommending a non-formula grant application for award or whether the PD is wishing to create a new formula project. If the former, SAs should be sure the PD is associated with the site in REEport and then wait for REEport to request a Project Initiation be submitted. If the latter, the SA should proceed to submit AD-416/417 information through the CRIS Forms Assistance site.

Do You Download Project Data from CRIS through the University of Vermont Site?

NIFA is aware that at least several institutions download their project data from the web forms CRIS site hosted by the University of Vermont in D:Base format. NIFA intends to provide the ability for institutions to download their detailed project data through REEIS. The format for such a download has not yet been determined but it is possibly XML or a delimited text file.

In order to be able to provide appropriate functionality for downloading project information, NIFA needs information from you. If you are currently using this tool hosted by the University of Vermont, we ask you to email us at reeport@nifa.usda.gov and address the following:

- Do you need aggregate or individual project information?
- If you need individual project information, do you download data for all projects at once; one project at a time; or selected sets of projects?
- Do you need all the data fields? If not, which fields do you need?
- When and how often do you download this information?

If your institution does not currently download this information but wishes to do so, we also invite your responses to the questions above but please clearly indicate that you do not currently download the data.

Reminder that the Federal Research Performance Progress Report will be the Basis for the REEport Progress and Final Technical Reports.

On April 21, 2010, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memorandum outlining Federal policy on the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). The draft RPPR was the basis for the CRIS transition standard report implemented a few years ago. This policy memorandum addresses agency implementation and use of the RPPR, the development of agency- or program-specific reporting components, the use of other formats, and the maintenance and posting of administrative requirements. This policy memorandum and accompanying White House news release, as well as a link to the RPPR

format itself are posted in the News and Information section of the NIFA Grant and Project Reporting page at www.nifa.usda.gov/reporting.

NIFA's review of the final RPPR format and requirements reveals that there will be changes in the progress and final reports implemented in REEport from the transition standard report implemented in CRIS a few years ago. The guidance to agencies for the RPPR is specific and the language that governs its use in particular is as follows:

Each category in the RPPR is a separate reporting component. Agencies will require award recipients to report on "Accomplishments". As needed, agencies may also use optional components of the format to request additional information. Within a particular component, agencies should direct recipients to complete only those questions that are relevant to the award or agency. If a recipient has nothing significant to report during the reporting period on a question or item, they will be asked to state "Nothing to Report."

Agencies will utilize the standard instructions that have been developed for each category, but may provide additional program-specific instructions necessary to clarify a requirement for a particular program.

While much of the data to be entered is the same or similar to that which has been collected in CRIS, the structure and guidance for the report is different, in some cases quite different. NIFA will exercise the ability to "provide additional program-specific instructions necessary to clarify a requirement for a particular program" to provide additional NIFA and, in some cases, program-specific guidance to clarify the requirements and connect them with the terminology currently in use by NIFA. NIFA will make a draft of the basic report layout and guidance, and then a mockup of the screens, available in the next few months.

Outreach

Outreach efforts regarding REEport by NIFA in the past month include:

- A NIFA Reporting Web Conference on Site Administration was held on June 10, 2010. The slides and recording from that web conference are available at <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/rwc>.

Decision Tree for How REEport Determines Whether a Grant is Associated with a REEport Site

The decision is based on the following sets of information:

1. Information from the grant application to be awarded:
 - a. Project Director (PD) email address
 - b. Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) DUNS
2. REEport table of Project Director email addresses associated with sites
 - a. Pre-populated from CRIS
 - b. Maintained by Site Administrators
3. REEport table of DUNS numbers associated with sites
 - a. Populated by request Site Administrators to provide the DUNS numbers that may be associated with grant application submissions from Project Directors associated with their site
 - b. Maintained by Site Administrators working with NIFA staff

Definitions

1. Site means a university business entity that receive NIFA formula grants and wish to centrally manage their REEport project submissions.
2. Independent means a PD is not associated with a site.
3. Grant application means a grant application for a NIFA non-formula grant submitted to NIFA through Grants.gov.
4. Project means a project to be recorded in REEport.

Decision Tree:

1. Is the PD's email address from the grant application associated with one or more sites in REEport?
 - a. No – Independent
 - b. Yes – Go to 2
2. Is the PD's email address from the grant application associated with only one site in REEport?
 - a. Yes – Go to 3
 - b. No – Go to 4
3. Is the site associated in Step 2 with the PD's email address also associated in REEport with the DUNS number listed for the AOR on the grant application?
 - a. Yes – Associate the project with the site
 - b. No – Independent
4. Are one or more of the sites associated in Step 2 with the PD's email address also associated in REEport with the DUNS number listed for the AOR on the grant application?
 - a. No – Independent
 - b. Yes – Go 5
5. Is only one site associated in Step 2 with the PD's email address also associated in REEport with the DUNS number listed for the AOR on the grant application?
 - a. Yes – Associate the project with the site
 - b. No – The project will initially be assigned as Independent in order to expedite award of the grant and it will be identified for resolution to one site by NIFA working with the Site Administrators.