

Transcript – Signing Official: Finding Information

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Welcome to this video that focuses on the tools available to a signing official to find specific application and award information in eRA Commons. This process for a signing official, known as an SO, is different than that for a principal investigator because in many cases, the SO manages hundreds of applications and awards.

First, log in to eRA Commons using your login.gov credentials. From the landing screen, click the Status button along the left side of the screen. You can also get to the Status screen by clicking on the apps icon in the upper left corner of the screen, and from the menu presented, click Status. For screens that are not yet modernized, select the Status tab on the navigation bar.

The signing official is presented with the search screen. By default, the Search Type field is set to General. However, clicking the menu box will open a list of other search options. There are 9 options to help you find the information you are looking for. The screen changes dynamically with each option you select.

To narrow the search, the General search form provides different parameters to find applications and grants.

The first six fields are related to the grant number. Breaking down the grant number into its parts, we have Type. This indicates if the application is new, a renewal, non-competing, etcetera.

Next is the Activity Code. The activity code is a 3-character code used to identify a specific category of extramural research activity that is applied to financial assistance mechanisms. Some examples are F32 (individual fellowships), K08 (research career development awards), P01 (research program projects), R01 (investigator-initiated health-related research and development), T32 (institutional research training grants), etcetera.

IC/Institute. This two-letter code identifies the institute or center that is funding the award. The Serial Number is a unique five- or six-digit number that identifies a specific application. Support Year indicates the current year of support, for example 01 is a new grant and 02 would be in its second year of funding. Suffix Code is optional and used in a variety of ways, such as A1 would be the first resubmission of an application, while 'S' and a number would identify a supplemental award application.

The fields for the Program Director/Principal Investigator's (PD/PI) first and last name gives you the ability to search for applications and awards for a specific investigator.

Budget Start and Budget End date ranges can be used to search based on time. The application status menu filters results based on the status of the application — awarded, pending, withdrawn as well as other status options.

And finally, there is the Grants.gov Tracking Number. Since all applications for grants for all federal agencies must come through Grants.gov, Grants.gov creates a unique application identifier for each application it receives.

So as an example, a signing official might want to look for all the R01 applications submitted by Steve Rogers that have been withdrawn and have a budget start date from August 15, 2015 to today.

In the Activity Code field, type in R01. The field is a type-ahead field. As you add characters, it filters the list for appropriate matches from which you can choose. You add the PI's last name, then their first name in the corresponding fields. Use the date picker to select the Budget Start Date and the range date. Finally, from the Application Status, you select Terminated and the Withdrawn options.

This field supports multiple selection. Clicking the small x on a selection will remove it. After adding your parameters, click Search.

The system will display all the applications and awards that match your search criteria in the Status Results section. In this case, one withdrawn application was found. You can click on the three-dot ellipses icon to access any available actions. The actions that are listed are dependent on the status of the application or award.

One action in particular you want to be aware of is the Check eSubmission Errors/Warnings. Clicking this will open the Errors/Warnings for Prior eSubmissions screen. Listed here is the type of issue, whether it is a warning or an error, the form on the application where the issue occurred, and the Validation message generated by the system. Remember, warnings do not prohibit the application from moving forward, but errors keep the application from proceeding to the next level of validations or review.

In addition to the General Search fields, the Signing Official Status search screen provides other search options.

Signing officials can search for applications with the Just in Time link using the Just in Time search option from the Search Type menu.

You can search by Grant Number, in the same manner as the General Search; Principal Investigator Name; and JIT Status. Just in Time has three status options: Eligible for JIT, JIT in WIP, and Submitted.

Next, you can search for recently awarded applications by selecting that option from the menu. A whole number can be entered into the Days Since Awarded field. If results exceed 1000 records, the system will return an error message. If this happens, you need to add some other search parameters or reduce the number for the 'days since awarded' field.

Similar to the other Search forms, the Closeout search can be keyed on any number of variables. The parameters include the grant number fields, and the PI last and first name. In addition, there is the Project End Date Range and the Closeout Status. From the Closeout Status menu, you can select from Closed, In Unilateral Closeout, Unilaterally Closed, and Requires Closeout.

Finally, selecting any of the three checkboxes at the bottom will return any grants that are missing that particular type of report.

By default, all three checkboxes are selected. The options are: Requires Final RPPR; Requires Final Invention Statement; and Requires FRAM. RPPR is the Research Performance Progress Report, and FRAM is a Final Report Additional Materials request, meaning the awarding agency is asking for additional information before the closeout process can be completed.

If your institution's active award is being transferred to another institution or vice versa, you can search for awards with relinquishing statements by using the Manage Relinquishing Statements - Change of Institution search feature.

The search parameters include the grant number information, the PI's last and first name, and the Relinquishing Statement Search Type drop-down menu. The menu options are Not Started – this option looks for grants that are eligible for a relinquishing statement but have not yet been initiated. Search for Awards allows you to search for awards that have a relinquishing state in a specific status that you select as part of the search process. Search for Relinquishing Statements searches for awards that have relinquishing statements and could, if approved, be transferred to your institution.

If you are looking for the status of recently submitted applications, you will find the information on the Recent/Pending eSubmissions screen. The Accession Number is a tracking number assigned to the application after it has gone through the validations process. The Grants.gov Tracking number is assigned to the application upon submission to Grants.gov. eSubmission Status is a drop-down menu with the following choices: All, Pending Verification, and Rejected. And the Received Date From and To fields.

On the search results screen, you can find errors and warnings by clicking on the text that reads Show Prior Errors and Warnings.

The Re-assign Award option lets SOs change the assignment of a grant from one existing school or department to another existing school or department within their institution. You enter the search parameters for an application using any combination of these — all or part of a grant number; Contact PI name; or major School or Department

The ESI Eligibility option is a preconfigured search to let you see who is eligible for Early Stage Investigator status. ESI status is important because ESI applications with meritorious scores will be prioritized for funding by the institute or center receiving the application. Selecting ESI Eligibility opens a table that lists all the PIs at your institution and shows their eligibility status as Yes or No and displays the ESI Eligibility End Date. Using the Search By Name field at the top right of the table, you can quickly filter the results to a specific PI.

It is worth noting that selecting the last option, Search in ASSIST, brings you to ASSIST's application search screen. Here you can click on the HSS Applications check box to search for human subject related actions.

There are a number of resources available to you to assist you with understanding Status and Roles within eRA Commons:

- eRA Commons Online Help <https://www.era.nih.gov/erahelp/Commons/default.htm>
- Submit Just-in-Time <https://www.era.nih.gov/applicants/submit-jit.htm>
- Submit Closeout <https://www.era.nih.gov/grantees/submit-closeout.htm>
- Submit Relinquishing Statement <https://www.era.nih.gov/grantees/submit-relinquishing-statement.htm>
- Early Stage Investigator Policies <https://grants.nih.gov/policy/early-stage/index.htm>
- Account Roles <https://www.era.nih.gov/register-accounts/account-roles.htm>

If you still need assistance, please contact the eRA Service Desk. <https://www.era.nih.gov/need-help>

This concludes this video that focuses on the tools available to a Signing Official to find specific application and award information in eRA Commons. Thank you for watching.