

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced the restructuring of their paper PHS 398 and electronic SF 424 (R&R) application packages. This change was a direct result of the June 2007 agency-wide effort to reassess the peer review system. To see the entire notice click on the following link: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-09-149.html>. Highlights are outlined below:

**When will the new format be effective?**

- All new and resubmission applications targeting due dates on or after January 25, 2010 (i.e. applications considering FY 2011 funding consideration) must use the new application forms and instructions even if the initial submission used the current application forms and instructions.

**When will the new forms be available?**

- The new formats will be available for download by December 2009. Official notification from the NIH will be forthcoming when they are released.

**What are the highlights of the restructuring?**

- Three sections within the current Research Plan (1. Background and Significance, 2. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report and 3. Research Design and Methods) **will be consolidated into one new section** within the Research Plan entitled **Research Strategy**. The Research Strategy will be uploaded as one PDF but will contain the following:
  - Significance
  - Innovation
  - Approach. The Approach should address:
    - Preliminary Studies for New Applications and
    - Progress Report for Renewal/Revision Applications.

- **Shortened page limits.**

Current Research Plan Page Limit (Section 2-5)	New Research Strategy Page Limit
<25	<b>6</b>
25	<b>12</b>
>25	Follow FOA Instructions

- Note: one additional page will be allowed for Specific Aims.
- **Resources:**
  - The Facilities and Other Resources section will be changed to require a description of how the scientific environment will contribute to the probability of success of the project.

- **Biographical Sketch:**

- A new Personal Statement will be incorporated as Part A. Applicants will be required to state why experience and qualifications make the applicant particularly well-suited for role in the project.
  - Parts labeled as A, B, and C will become B, C, and D.
- Applicants will be encouraged to limit the list of selected peer-reviewed publications to no more than 15. The 15 should be chosen on the basis of how:
  - Recent the publication is.
  - Important the publication is to the field.
  - Relevant the publication is to the application.

**What will happen if I inadvertently use the old format after January 25, 2010?**

- Applications submitted using incorrect application forms or a mix of old and new forms may be delayed and may not be reviewed.

**Does the restructure apply to all applications types?**

- The restructuring applies to:
  - All applications (including individual Career Awards) electronically submitted using application packages that combine the SF 424 (R&R) with PHS 398 components (e.g. PHS 398 Research Plan Component and PHS 398 Career Development Supplement Form);
  - All electronically submitted individual NRSA Fellowship applications using application packages that combine the SF 424 (R&R) with the PHS Fellowship Supplement Form; and
  - All applications using the paper PHS 398 application package.
  - Note: AIDS applications intended for May 2010 council round and submitted by reviewers who are eligible for continuous submission must use the existing forms and instructions.

**Will I be able to download the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) before December?**

- The NIH will begin publishing some of the new FOAs without the accompanying application packages between now and December. The new application packages (to include new Parent FOAs) **will not** be posted as active FOAs until December 2009.
- Note: SBIR/STTR (R41/R42), Conference Grants (R13/U13) and Individual NRSA Fellowships (F30, F31, F32, and F33) will not be available until early 2010.

**How will I know I am using the correct version of the FOA?**

- The restructured electronic applications will be labeled “**ADOBE-FORM-B**”. The new paper PHS 398 form will be dated **JUNE 2009**. The current version of the SF 424 (R&R) form is identified with the text “Adobe-FORMS-A”.

Additional questions/concerns? Contact your Grants and Contracts Officer.  
<http://www.mcg.edu/SPA/preaward.htm>