The following is a step-by-step process for applying and submitting to the NIH, including our internal Health Research Services (HRS) requirements.

1. Grant opportunities for the NIH can be found in two places:
   i. NIH Office of Extramural Research - Grants OER home page
      http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm

2. The grant application must be downloaded from the Grants.gov site (Note: In order to view application packages and instructions, you will need to download and install a Grants.gov compatible version of Adobe Reader - http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/preparing.htm on your machine)

3. Be sure to save a copy of the application locally to your computer.

4. Prior to completing the application you must have an eRA Commons User ID for the Principal Investigator. This may be requested by sending an email to the Health Research Services office (hsresadm@mcmaster.ca).

5. Once the application (SF4242 Form) has been completed please send a copy along with a completed Health Research Services Application Checklist signed by your Department Chair to the Health Research Services Office for the grant review process. HRS will then grant you AOR status which allows you to hit the final "submit" button. HRS can provide a “Sample SF424” form, prefilled with McMaster institutional information.

6. Apply for approval through Grants.gov as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/OrcRegister and follow the instructions. After entering the DUNS number (207510108) you will be linked to an e-authentication site. Follow instructions. Only approved AORs may submit applications through grants.gov. Note: You are not registering as an individual, but as an AOR who submits grants on behalf of an organization called "the PI/applicant".

7. Once authorized as AOR, submit the application to Grants.gov directly (“Check Package for Errors” first, then “Save & Submit” – top of SF424).

Once the AOR submits the application to Grants.gov, the Grants.gov system performs very basic checks on the application.

NIH systems retrieve the application from Grants.gov and check the application against NIH business rules. If no errors are found, the application will be assembled in the eRA Commons for viewing by the applicant before moving on for further NIH processing.

If errors are found, the applicant will be notified in the eRA Commons. They must make required changes to the local copy of their application and submit again through Grants.gov. Once you can see your application in the Commons, be sure to review it carefully as this is what the reviewer will see.

See graphical overview (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/grants_process.htm) of process.
1. Once an application package has been submitted and any errors have been addressed, the PI, AOR, and SO have 2 business days to view the application.

2. If everything is acceptable, no further action is necessary. The application will automatically move forward for processing after two business days - OR - prior to the submission deadline the AOR/So can “Reject” the assembled application and submit a changed/corrected application within the 2 day viewing window.

   **Rejecting an Application Prior to the Submission Deadline:**
   The AOR/So can reject the application and submit a changed/corrected application to Grants.gov before the submission deadline. No cover letter is required.

   **Rejecting an Application After the Submission Deadline:**
   If the AOR/So rejects the application after the deadline for any reason other than an NIH system issue (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/submit_app.htm#faqs), the AOR/So can submit a changed/corrected application to Grants.gov but the application will be subject to the NIH late policy (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-086.html) and may not be accepted. A cover letter must be attached to the application, explaining why the application is late.

10. Applicants can track the progress of their application in the eRA Commons.

11. After the application has been successfully submitted, the applicant’s AOR status will be de-activated by HRS. The applicant will no longer be authorized to submit an application through grants.gov (until their next application). AOR registration is required only once through Grants.gov, after which Health Research Services will activate and de-activate AOR status with each application submission.

**Additional Notes:**

**Budget:** Please remember to include 8% Facilities and Administrative costs on total direct costs less equipment, as permitted by NIH:


**Submit EARLY:** To avoid any technical difficulties, please try to submit well in advance of the deadline (2-3 days if possible) to allow you enough time to respond to any error or warning messages you may receive after submission.

Additional Information on “Applying Electronically” to NIH is available at:

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/ElectronicReceipt/

**Avoiding Common Errors**


Last updated: August 9, 2011 Health Research Services