

ECPS USER MANUAL

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Logging On

An offeror must have an account in order to submit proposals through eCPS. To log in to eCPS, an offeror must have either an NIH External Account or an eRA (electronic Research Administration) Commons account.

NIH External Active Directory

If you do not have an NIH External Active Directory Account, please click [here](#) to apply for a new account at least 3 business days prior to the closing date and time of the solicitation. If you have any questions/concerns please contact eCPS Admin.

eRA (electronic Research Administration) Commons

If you already have an eRA Commons account, you can use your eRA Commons account user name and password to log into eCPS. However, it is recommended that you establish and use an NIH External Account for use with eCPS.

According to NIH, "For the purposes of exchanging research grants administration information, the NIH provides this 'Commons'. The Electronic Research Administration (eRA) Commons is a virtual meeting place where NIH extramural grantee organizations, grantees, and the public can receive and transmit information about the administration of biomedical and behavioral research. The eRA Commons is divided into both unrestricted and restricted portions that provide for public and confidential information, respectively." For a list of frequently asked questions and answers, please see http://era.nih.gov/commons/faq_commons.cfm.

Setting up your institution in eRA Commons requires the following steps:

1. Registering the applicant institution in eRA Commons.
2. Creating user accounts.
3. Editing personal profile information.
4. Managing the institutional profile.

For detailed information on each of these steps, please see http://era.nih.gov/commons/faq_commons.cfm#II2.

To register with eRA Commons, click [here](#). According to NIH, you should register for an eRA Commons account at least four weeks before the closing date and time of your proposal.

Submitting Proposals

This topic covers the following:

- [Submitting an Electronic Proposal](#)
- [Submit additional/alternate proposal](#)
- [Revising a Proposal \(short version\)](#)
- [Viewing a History of Submitted Proposals](#)

Submitting an Electronic Proposal

To submit an electronic proposal, follow these instructions:

1. Log in to the eCPS (electronic Contract Proposal Submission).
2. Locate the contract solicitation for which you intend to submit a proposal.
3. Create one PDF file of your Technical Proposal, including all appendices. The Technical Proposal should be created in a PDF format that enables word searches to the maximum extent practicable. Forms and/or documents requiring signature(s) may be scanned, but must be merged into the Technical Proposal PDF file.
4. The Business Proposal must be comprised of the following two files:
 - a. The first file must be a single PDF of your Business Proposal, including all attachments and/or appendices as required by the solicitation. The Business Proposal should be created in a PDF format that enables word searches to the maximum extent practicable. Forms and/or documents requiring signature(s) may be scanned, but must be merged into the single Business Proposal PDF file.
 - b. The second file must be a cost breakdown as required by the solicitation in Excel format, not the PDF format.
5. eCPS file naming convention requires that the file names for your Technical Proposal, Business Proposal, and the Excel workbook include the name of the offeror, the solicitation number, and the type of proposal (i.e., either Technical or Business). Here are some examples:
 - a. Technical Proposal: *XYZ Company_NIHAI2012001_Technical.pdf*
 - b. Business Proposal: *XYZ Company_NIHAI2012001_Business.pdf*
 - c. Excel workbook: *XYZ Company_NIHAI2012001_Business.xlsx*
6. Click **Submit a Proposal** to the right of the solicitation for which you wish to submit a proposal.
7. Browse for your Technical Proposal, Business Proposal, and Excel Workbook

8. Click **Upload and Submit**.
9. Once you upload and submit your proposal, you can only revise your proposal by overwriting previously uploaded documents. You can find submissions to revise under **My Submission History**. You have up until the closing date and time to make as many revisions as you need.
10. After the closing date and time, the system prevents further proposal submissions or revisions.

Submit additional/alternate proposal

To submit an additional proposal, do the following:

1. On the navigation bar, click [All Active Solicitations](#).
2. Click [Submit a Proposal](#) next to the same solicitation that you submitted to before.
3. Enter a different **Proposal Name**.
4. Browse for your (new) documents.
5. Click **Submit additional or alternate proposal**.

Revising a Proposal (short version)

For instructions on revising proposals later (that is, some time after you have submitted your proposal and the submission confirmation screen no longer appears), please see [Revising a Proposal \(long version\)](#). If you have just submitted your proposal and the screen indicates that you have been successful, use the following steps to revise your proposal:

1. Leave the **Proposal Name** field as it is. (Do not change it.)
2. If you wish to revise your Business Proposal document, in the **Business Documents** area of the screen, do the following:
 - a. Click the icon or the [Replace](#) link by "Business Document PDF."
 - b. Click **Browse**.
 - c. Browse for your new document on your local machine or local network.
3. If you wish to revise your spreadsheet document, in the **Business Documents** area of the screen, do the following:
 - a. Click the icon or the [Replace](#) link by "Business Document Spreadsheet."
 - b. Click **Browse**.
 - c. Browse for your new document on your local machine or local network.
4. If you wish to revise your Technical Proposal document, in the **Technical Document** area of the screen, do the following:
 - a. Click the icon or the [Replace](#) link.
 - b. Click **Browse**.
 - c. Browse for your new document on your local machine or local network.
5. Click **Upload and Submit**.

Viewing a History of Submitted Proposals

To view a list of all of the proposals you have submitted and/or revised, click [My Submission History](#) on the navigation bar. The page that appears may be broken into two sections, depending on when your proposals are due. The top half of the page lists proposals with closing dates and time that have not been reached, yet, with the proposal that has the earliest closing date and time at the top of the list. The

bottom half of the page lists proposals that have closing dates and time that have already been reached, also with the earliest closing date and time at the top of the list.

Revising a Proposal (long version)

You may revise a proposal as many times as you wish until the solicitation closing date and time, but consider the following warning:

Each time you revise a proposal by uploading one or more new documents, the system overwrites the old documents with the new ones. You cannot retrieve the old documents through eCPS. You should therefore keep a copy of your old documents on your hard drive or network drive. If, after revising a proposal, you decide that you want to use your original document(s), you need to revise your proposal again by uploading the original document(s) again.

Use the following instructions to revise a proposal:

1. On the navigation bar, click [My Submission History](#).
2. The **My Submission History** page shows, at the top of the page, proposals that can be revised. (If the closing date and time has passed on all proposals that you have submitted, no such cells appear.) The bottom of the page lists proposals that can no longer be revised because the closing date and time has passed (If the closing date and time has not passed for any proposals you have submitted, no such cells appear at the bottom of the page.) If you submitted multiple proposals for a particular solicitation, they are clustered under the solicitation, each solicitation named with a unique **Proposal Name** that you entered. Using the Proposal Name you entered, locate the row that represents the proposal you wish to revise.
3. To revise a proposal, you must upload at least one new document. Click the [View / Revise](#) link at the far right of the row to upload a revised business proposal document and/or technical proposal document.

Uploading a new document into eCPS permanently overwrites the old document in eCPS.

4. To upload your new Business Proposal PDF document, do the following, but please heed the warning that follows:
 - a. In the **Business Documents** section of the screen, by "Business Document PDF," click [Replace](#).
 - b. Browse for your document on your local machine or local network.
 - c. Double-click on your document.

Do not click **Back** or close the window at this point, because your work is not yet saved by the system.

5. To upload your new spreadsheet, do the following, but please heed the warning that follows:
 - a. In the **Business Documents** section of the screen, by "Business Document Spreadsheet," click [Replace](#).
 - b. Browse for your document on your local machine or local network.
 - c. Double-click on your document.

Do not click **Back** or close the window at this point, because your work is not yet saved by the system.

6. To upload your new Technical Proposal document, do the following, but please heed the warning that follows:
 - a. In the Technical Document section of the screen, click **Replace**.
 - b. Browse for your document on your local machine or local network.
 - c. Double-click on your document.

Do not click **Back** or close the window at this point, because your work is not yet saved by the system.

7. Click **Upload and Submit**, and you are done.

Note: You may revise your proposal as many times as you wish until the solicitation closing date and time.

Frequently Asked Questions

- [Do I need an eRA Commons account to use eCPS?](#)
- [What types of documents can I submit?](#)
- [I can't find "My Submission History". Where can I view my previously submitted proposals?](#)
- [Where can I learn more about PDF documents?](#)
- [How many documents do I need to submit?](#)
- [Can I submit more than one proposal for a given solicitation \(Request for Proposals\)?](#)
- [Can I revise a previously submitted proposal?](#)
- [Can I delete an uploaded proposal?](#)
- [Can I withdraw an uploaded proposal?](#)
- [Does eCPS save my prior proposal when I submit a revised proposal?](#)
- [What is My Submission History?](#)
- [How does the Government know who to contact about my proposal?](#)
- [What is a Proposal Name?](#)
- [Can I change the Proposal Name after I submit my proposal?](#)
- [How can I tell if I successfully submitted my proposal?](#)
- [Can I view proposals that I have submitted already? How?](#)

Do I need an eRA Commons account to use eCPS?

No. The preferred way to log in to eCPS is through the NIH External Active Directory. However, if an offeror already has an eRA Commons account and does not wish to create a new account with the NIH External Active Directory, they may use their eRA Commons account to log into eCPS.

What types of documents can I submit?

You can only submit PDF documents, with the exception of the Electronic Cost Proposal Excel Workbook.

I can't find "My Submission History". Where can I view my previously submitted proposals?

My Submission History link only appears after you have logged into eCPS. Log in to eCPS and this link should appear next to "All Active Solicitations" in the top navigational bar.

Where can I learn more about PDF documents?

Learn more about PDF technology at <http://www.adobe.com/support/acrobat/>.

How many documents do I need to submit?

You must submit both a Technical Proposal, which consists of one PDF document, and a Business Proposal, which consists of one PDF document and one or more Excel Workbooks. In creating either your Business Proposal or Technical Proposal, you can merge multiple PDFs into one. Learn more about how to do this at [Adobe Acrobat Help Resource Center: Create Merged PDFs and PDF packages](#).

Can I submit more than one proposal for a given solicitation (Request for Proposals)?

Yes. After successful submission of your 1st proposal, you may submit other proposals by clicking 'Submit new/alternate proposal'.

Can I revise a previously submitted proposal?

Yes. You may submit proposal revisions until the closing date and time specified in the FedBizOpps solicitation. (For more information, see [Revising a Proposal](#) found under [Help](#)).

Does eCPS save my prior proposal when I submit a revised proposal?

No. When you submit a revised proposal, the prior proposal submitted is overwritten.

Can I delete an uploaded proposal?

No. You cannot delete a proposal once it is uploaded. You can, however, revise your proposal up to the closing date and time specified in the FedBizOpps solicitation. For example, if you decide that of the two proposals you uploaded, Business Proposal and Technical Proposal, that the Business Proposal was unsatisfactory, you could upload a revised version of the Business Proposal. For complete instructions, see [Revising a Proposal](#) found under [Help](#).

Can I withdraw an uploaded proposal?

In order to withdraw an uploaded proposal, you will need to contact the Contracting Officer named in the solicitation.

How does the Government know who to contact about my proposal?

When you log in to eCPS, your name, telephone number, and e-mail address is automatically retrieved from your account. The Office of Acquisitions is able to see this information. Additionally, you are required to identify one or more individuals authorized to negotiate contracts on the Proposal Summary and Data Record, NIH-2043, in the Business Proposal.

What is a Proposal Name and how is it used?

A Proposal Name is a name that you assign to a proposal and it is used primarily to distinguish between two or more proposals that you submit for the same solicitation. (You still, however, need to enter a Proposal Name even if you upload only one proposal.) For instance, you may submit a primary proposal and name it "Primary Proposal" and a second, alternate proposal that you name "Alternate Proposal." The Proposal Name helps you to distinguish between the two so you can keep track of your submissions.

Can I change the Proposal Name after I submit my proposal?

Yes, up to the closing date and time specified in the FedBizOpps solicitation. From the "My Submission History" page, click Revise to the left of the appropriate Proposal Name, revise the Proposal Name, and then click "Update Proposal".

What is My Submission History?

My Submission History page appears as a navigational item on the top bar next to the "All Active Solicitations" link only after you have logged into eCPS. It lists all proposals you've submitted for any given solicitation. You can revise your documents and Proposal Name from this table or submit a new proposal for the same solicitation if the closing date and time has not passed. You cannot view the content of submitted documents.

How can I tell if I successfully submitted my proposal?

If your proposal submission is successful, the screen changes to reflect this with a "Congratulations..." message. Also, you may click the "My Submission History" item on the navigation bar to see a list of all of your successful proposal submissions. You are responsible for verifying the contents of your uploaded proposal by clicking on the file links after the "Congratulations..." message. If a virus or corrupt file is found after the upload your electronic proposal will not be accepted.

Can I view proposals that I have submitted already? How?

No, you can only view a listing of your submitted proposals on the 'My Submission History' page but you cannot view the PDFs or Excel files.