THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NIH No-Cost Extension Guidance

May 2025

Office Of
Sponsored Projects

NIH No-Cost Extension in eRA Commons

NIH permits recipients of a Notice of Award (NoA) a one-time authority to extend the project period for up to 12 months (in any duration from 1 to 12 months) beyond the current end date stated in the NoA, without additional funding. Please note: No Cost Extensions (NCE) are allowed as part of the NIH's expanded authorities, as part of the Standard Terms of Award, provided there is no change in scope, no special restrictions in the NoA, and activity code allows extensions (e.g., Fellowship awards (F series) are not eligible for NCEs).

Criteria for a No-Cost Extension

A No-Cost Extension may be submitted with appropriate justification, such as:

- Additional time is needed to complete the original project aims

- Continued funding is needed while renewal (Type 2) application is under review

- Additional time is required to phase out the grant and complete final project closeout activities

NIH Temporary Suspension of Automatic No-Cost Extension (NCE) Functionality

NIH has temporarily suspended the automatic No-Cost Extension (NCE) feature in eRA Commons. As a result, institutions can no longer process a first NCE through the standard self-service link in eRA Commons. Instead, **all NCEs—including first-time requests—must now be submitted as formal prior approval requests** in eRA Commons. NIH staff will review these requests to ensure they align with the agency's mission and program priorities.

Submitting a First No-Cost Extension at URI

Normally, first NCEs are submitted electronically via the **No-Cost Extension feature in eRA Commons**, which becomes available **90 days prior to the current project end date**. Due to NIH's temporary suspension of this function, the following process must be followed:

1. **Complete a No-Cost Extension Request Form** and submit it to the URI Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) **at least 10 business days before the current award end date**.
2. OSP will review the justification and, if appropriate, submit the NCE request to NIH on behalf of the Principal Investigator (PI). Only individuals with **Signing Official (SO)** authority at URI may submit the request in eRA Commons.
3. Once approved by NIH, the project and budget period end dates will be updated in eRA Commons.

Retroactive NCE Requests

If the project period has already ended and no prior NCE request was submitted, a **retroactive NCE** may be considered. In this case:

- The PI must draft a signed letter addressed to NIH that includes:
    - The proposed new end date
    - A clear justification for the delay
- This letter must be submitted to the appropriate **OSP Pre-Award team member** for review and institutional countersignature.
- OSP will submit the signed letter to the NIH Grants Management Specialist for review and approval.

Second or Third NCE Requests

In some cases, an NCE may be needed **beyond the first extension**, such as when:

- The initial one-time extension has already been used;
- The award did not originally include expanded authority for an NCE; or
- The project period has ended but the award has not yet been closed.
- If the grant has previously had a no-cost extension and fewer than 90 days remain before the project period end date.

In these instances:

- The PI should coordinate with OSP well in advance of the current end date (preferably with at least 30 days' notice).
- OSP, as the Signing Official (SO), will submit a prior approval request in eRA Commons.

Note: If fewer than 90 days remain before the project end date and the award has already received a prior NCE, a second or third extension may still be possible, but requires prior NIH approval.

The No-Cost Extension Request Form must include the number of additional months requested, progress report, amount of unobligated balance (must be verified by OSP Post-Award Team), budget information, and a justification document. The exact details of what will be needed in these documents will be outlined by the awarding Institute/Center. Upon receipt of the form, OSP initiates a prior approval request in eRA Commons. The screen that needs to be completed by OSP looks like this:

Prior Approval Request No Cost Extension - Modify Request ❓

* Required Fields

Application Information

PD/PI Name
Mill, Evan

PD/PI User ID
EWMILL

Grant #:
5R01NS098000-05

Institution
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Grants Management Specialist
Walker, Pam
eRATest@mail.nih.gov
301-555-4207

Application Title
Interrogating Neuronal Dynamics

Budget Period
01/01/2021 - 12/31/2021

Program Official
Leeds, Miriam
eRATest@mail.nih.gov
301-555-1917

Project Period
01/01/2017 - 12/31/2021

Request Details

Request ID: 22001

Number of Months *
[Select One ⌄]

Proposed Budget Period End Date

Proposed Project Period End Date

Amount of Unobligated Balance *
[   ]

Does PI Maintain Measurable Effort? *
[Select One ⌄]

Vertebrate Animals - IACUC Approval Date: *
[mm/dd/yyyy 📅]

Progress Report *

⬆ Drop file or browse to attach 1 PDF file, not exceeding 6MB.

Budget Document *

⬆ Drop file or browse to attach 1 PDF file, not exceeding 6MB.

Justification Document *

⬆ Drop file or browse to attach 1 PDF file, not exceeding 6MB.

▸ Request History

← Cancel   🗑 Delete   💾 Save   ⟁ Submit

Terms and Conditions during the Approved No Cost Extension Period

All terms and conditions addressed in the NoA and stated in the NIHGPS remain in effect during the extension period.

Current approved effort levels for Key Personnel remain in effect during the extension period. If a significant reduction of effort is needed for a key person on the grant, it will be considered a change in status requiring NIH prior approval in accordance with the NIHGPS Prior Approval Requirements.