



Information for project coordinators involved in negotiations currently open in NEF

Over the weekend of 26/27 April the Commission introduced the new Unique Registration Facility (URF). This will have an effect also on the systems for proposal submission (EPSS) and for grant agreement negotiation (NEF). The main feature of the new system is that verification and storage of information on the existence and legal status of participants will be separated from the negotiation of individual grants. The following will happen:

- NEF will be closed from Friday 25 April 12.00 for several days. Neither Commission staff nor coordinators will have access to the system in this period.
- All fields in NEF related to existence (including legal name and address) and legal status of entities¹ will become read-only for all participants. For entities that are already validated the data displayed will come from the new common organisation database called PDM. For entities not yet validated, either the data of the proposal (for new negotiations starting after 1 May) or the data entered in NEF before (for negotiations already open in NEF) are displayed. The deployment of NEF might thus induce changes of some data in NEF in some ongoing negotiations.
- If following the deployment of URF you notice in an ongoing negotiation that some read-only fields are not correct or need updating, changes must be introduced through URF (no direct changes in NEF possible). Once validated in the central organisation database, such changes will be picked up automatically in NEF.
- All organisations participating in FP7 will be assigned a Participant Identification Code (or PIC). A PIC has already been assigned to the 5000+ entities validated and will be communicated to the known contacts in each entity during the month of May. The PIC of your organisation (and of all other participants involved in your proposal) will be displayed in NEF when resuming operations after 29 April.
- For registering new entities and for changes to data of registered entities, the URF will become the unique entry point from 28 April onwards (<https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/urf/>). The preferred way is that the entity appoints a LEAR (Legal Entity Appointed Representative) who will receive login and password for the URF (the web interface) and introduces the data/changes online. The forms and guidance for appointing LEARs are available at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/urf-lear_en.html. An alternative during the interim period (when LEARs are not yet appointed for many entities) is that the entity contacts the Central Validation Team via its functional mailbox RTD-URF-VALIDATION@ec.europa.eu.

¹

Note that the legal status will also include the method for determining indirect costs

- Submission via the EPSS without a PIC will still be possible. In this case, the organisation data submitted in the proposal will be automatically propagated to the new organisations database PDM for successful participants.

The practical consequences of these changes depend on the stage of the process a proposal has reached:

During proposal submission for all calls closing after 15 May:

- If the proposal has already been submitted, no specific action is needed. The link to the URF system will be made at the early stages of negotiation (for successful proposals).
- If the proposal has not yet been submitted, the proposer can either continue as before (and the link will be made as above), or the proposer can use the PIC to simplify data entry during proposal submission.
- If the proposal has not yet been submitted, and the proposer has used the PIC mechanism, any changes to organisation data can be made through the URF (or the mailbox of the Central Validation Team listed above). However, the changes will not be visible in the proposal record; they will be transferred from PDM to the proposal record during negotiation.

During proposal negotiation:

- NEF will not be available for several days (see above).
- When NEF restarts:
 - Participant data will be retrieved from PDM and may not be the same as what was entered previously in NEF.
 - Participant data will be read-only, and can only be updated through PDM-URF, as described above.

The deployment exercise for PDM-URF will be a starting point towards a new mode of operation with regard to legal entity validation, relieving researchers involved in individual proposals and grants from the related tasks. We hope for your understanding and count on your support for the difficulties in the deployment phase during the next weeks.