

Electronic Prior Approval Request System

User Instructions



Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

Online PAR Application url is located at:
<https://www.acs.ncsu.edu/par/index.jsp>

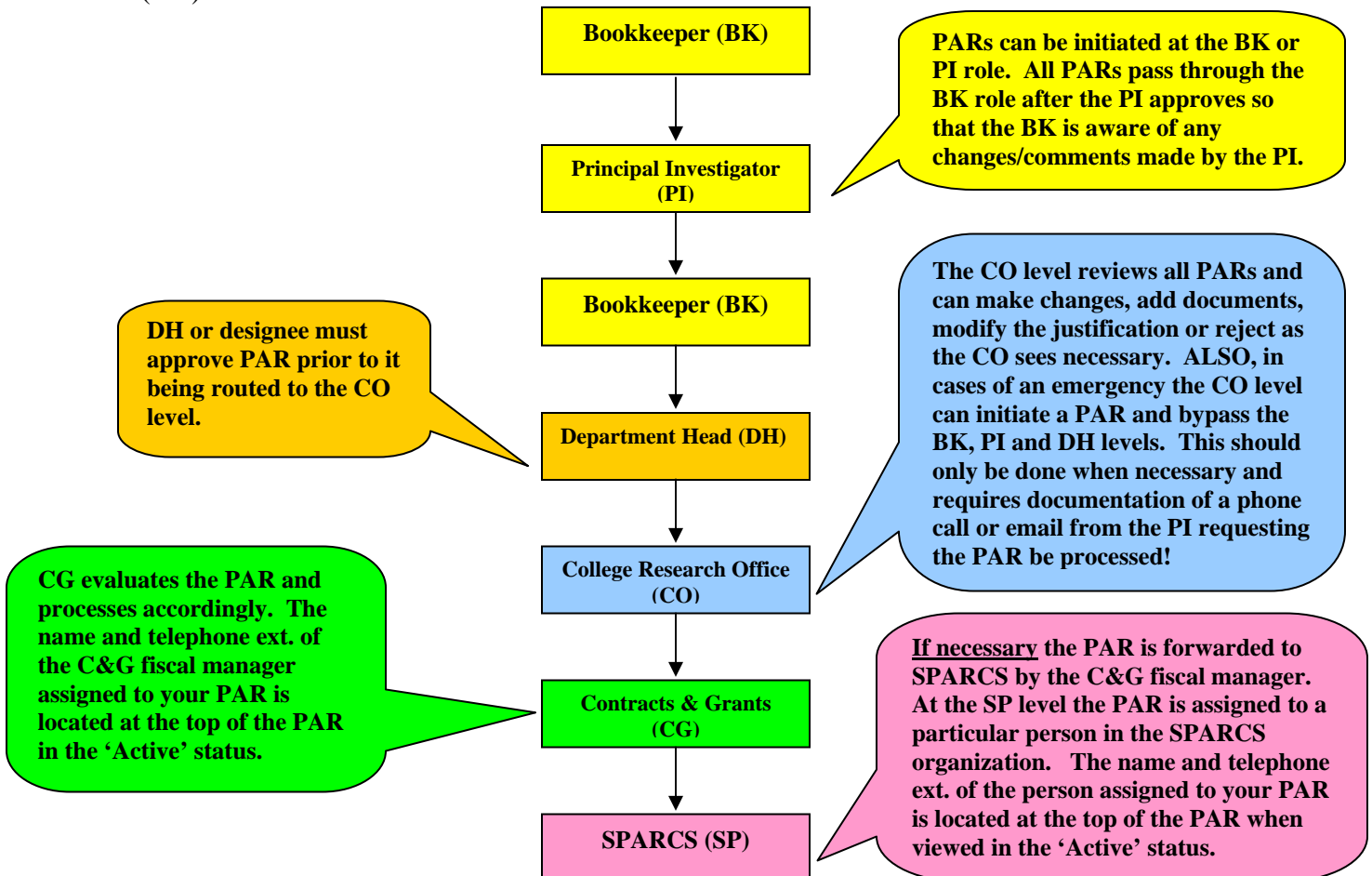
The newly created Online PAR Application streamlines prior approval requests from the department/PI to the College Research Office, then on to C&G and Sponsored Programs. The online PAR system also provides accountability for all who manage and process PARs. At any time during the life of a PAR a user is able to view the PAR's status, current location and all actions taken thusfar.

1. What project actions require a Prior Approval Request?

1. Rebudgets
2. No-Cost Extension Requests
3. Pre-award Costs
4. Subaward Requests/Modifications
5. Equipment Acquisitions
6. Travel Requests – Foreign and Domestic
7. Change in scope/objective of project
8. Change in Principal Investigator
9. Other (BA-148 for example)

2. Who initiates a PAR?

A PAR can be initiated at either the Principal Investigator (PI) or department Bookkeeper (BK) level. All PARs follow a workflow similar to the one shown below:



Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

3. What is my current user setup?

After logging onto the online PAR system you are taken to the 'Main Menu'. On the Main Menu screen you will see the roles and OUCs to which you have access to create and view online PARs. If you find that your access is incomplete or needs to be modified please contact your College Research Office.

Contracts and Grants
A Department of Financial Services

[Main Menu](#) **Prior Approval Request** [Logout](#)

Main Menu

Instructions:
Click on choice below.

- [Create Request](#)
- [Search Requests \(0 Pending \)](#)
- [Approver Maintenance](#)
- [Edit Expenditures Codes List](#)

USER - Julie Busfield

| ROLE | OUC/DEPT | MGR | ID |
|---------------------------|----------|-----|----|
| Bookkeeper | 1101 | | |
| Bookkeeper | 1137 | | |
| Contracts and Grants | ALL | 9 | |
| Sponsored Programs-SPARCS | ALL | | |
| Super Role Administrator | ALL | | |
| View All | ALL | | |

4. How do I create a PAR?

Choose the selection '[Create Request](#)' from the main menu. You will be taken to a screen that allows you to search for the project using the Project Number, OUC/Dept number, RADAR number (using the format 06XXXX), or Agency Name. **If you have the project number the simplest choice is to enter the project number (5XXXXX) and click 'Search'.** Click on the underlined project number to be directed to the [Create Request](#) screen for that particular project.

Contracts and Grants
A Department of Financial Services

[Main Menu](#) **Prior Approval Request** [Logout](#)

Select Project

Instructions:
Specify search criteria and click the "Search" button.

PROJECT :

OUC / DEPT :

RADAR :

AGENCY :

Search using specified criteria

Search Results:
Click on a column heading to sort by it, or a project number to select that project.

| PROJECT | OUC | RADAR | AGENCY | TITLE |
|------------------------|--------|--------|------------------------|--|
| 523325 | 113706 | 040878 | NEW MEXICO STATE UNIV. | Advanced Extension Food Safety Internet Aggregation System |
| 523952 | 113706 | 042013 | UNIV OF MINNESOTA | CYFERnet Technology |
| 524626 | 113706 | 050574 | UNIV OF NEBRASKA | National e-Extension Project |
| 524953 | 113706 | 051614 | UNIV OF NEBRASKA | Extension Information Technology Management/Leadership Team Roles and Responsibilities |

Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

Complete the online Prior Approval Request form using the following steps as guidance:

Step 1 –

Confirm that the project appearing on the Complete Request screen is indeed the project for which you wish to create a PAR. Verify that the Project Number, Agency, Title, OUC, and RADAR numbers are correct. Here you will also see the name, telephone number and email address of the Fiscal Manager assigned to your project/PAR in C&G.

Step 2 –

Enter the PI email address and select ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ for the PI to receive emails at each approval level. Only if the PI wishes to be notified at each approval level (even when no action is required from the PI) click ‘Yes’. This has been leading to confusion because PIs receive an email and are unsure of what they should do. So, unless the PI specifically wants to see the PAR at each approval level it is best to not select the ‘Yes’ option.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Request' form in the 'Prior Approval Request' section of the 'Contracts and Grants' system. The form is titled 'Project Information' and contains the following fields:

| | | |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| PROJECT : 523305 | OUC : 113706 | RADAR : 040979 |
| AGENCY : NEW MEXICO STATE UNIV. | | |
| TITLE : Advanced Extension Food Safety Internet Aggregation System | | |

FISCAL MANAGER

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| NAME : Richardson Tonya M | PHONE : 5-8016 |
| EMAIL : tonya_richardson@ncsu.edu | |

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

| |
|--|
| * NAME : <input type="text" value="Kimsey,Herold R"/> |
| * EMAIL : <input type="text"/> |
| * SEND EMAIL : <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No |

Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

Step 3 –

Select the appropriate prior approval actions to be requested. You can select as few as one, as many as all, and anything in between. Below are some guidelines to assist you in completing your online request:

* Actions Requested

Approval is requested for the following action(s):

Domestic Travel No-Cost Extension

Foreign Travel Pre-award Costs

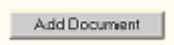
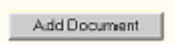
Equipment Acquisition SubAward Request/Modification

Rebudget Change in PI/Key Personnel

Other

If this request requires rebudgeting, indicate the budget categories and amounts that will be affected:

| SEARCH | ACCOUNT / CATEGORY | ACTION |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| <input type="text"/> | 51000 - Personnel Compensation BUDGET | Add Category |

- ✓ **Rebudgets:** Provide a thorough and technical in nature justification. Don't forget to enter in the specific account codes and amounts you wish to rebudget. The amounts entered must equal zero to continue.
- ✓ **No-Cost Extension Requests:** The date to which to extend the project to must be entered next to the selection box. Click on the calendar icon for assistance with the correct format.
- ✓ **Subaward Request/Modification:** For all new subaward requests and modification requests you must complete the online '[Detail for Subaward Action Request Form](#)' which can be found midway through the online PAR form. Click on the link to go directly to the form in a Word document. Once you complete the form online you must then save as a Word document and upload via the 'Add Documents'  function in the PAR system. If you would rather complete the form offline you may print out the form, complete offline and then scan in as a pdf document.
- ✓ **Change in PI/Key Personnel:** In addition to the justification, the CV/resume for a new PI or Key Personnel should be included in the prior approval request. Upload this information using the 'Add Document'  function found on the PAR form.

Step 4 –

A thorough, technical justification is required on all PARs. If you have a justification in a Word, Excel or Adobe document and wish to upload instead of retyping simply note in the justification field that a complete justification can be found in uploaded documents. Click the "Add Document" button to add a Word, Excel or pdf file to the online request.

Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

Step 5 –

Add 'Comments' to be viewed by all future approvers. I really can't stress enough the value of adding comments. It is a way to communicate with future approvers, ask the PI or College Research Office to add a needed document, or to give special instructions to C&G or SPARCS. The 'Comments' field is unlimited and should be used to mitigate uncertainties surrounding the PAR, provide direction to future approvers, etc.

The screenshot shows two sections of the PAR system interface. The top section is titled '* Explanation / Justification' and contains a large, empty text area for entering justification. Below this text area is a section titled 'Upload additional documentation:' with instructions: 'Please download and fill out the [Detail for Subaward Action Request Form](#) then upload the completed document if this hasn't already been done. *Files are restricted to MS Word, MS Excel and Adobe .PDF'. Below the instructions is an 'Add Document' button. The bottom section is titled 'Processing Comments' and contains another large, empty text area for entering comments.

Step 6 –

Choose your action, SAVE, APPROVE or DISCARD.

Save – The status of your PAR will change to 'New'. The PAR can be modified and reviewed prior to routing for approval.

Approve – The status of your PAR will change to 'Active'. The PAR will begin the routing process.

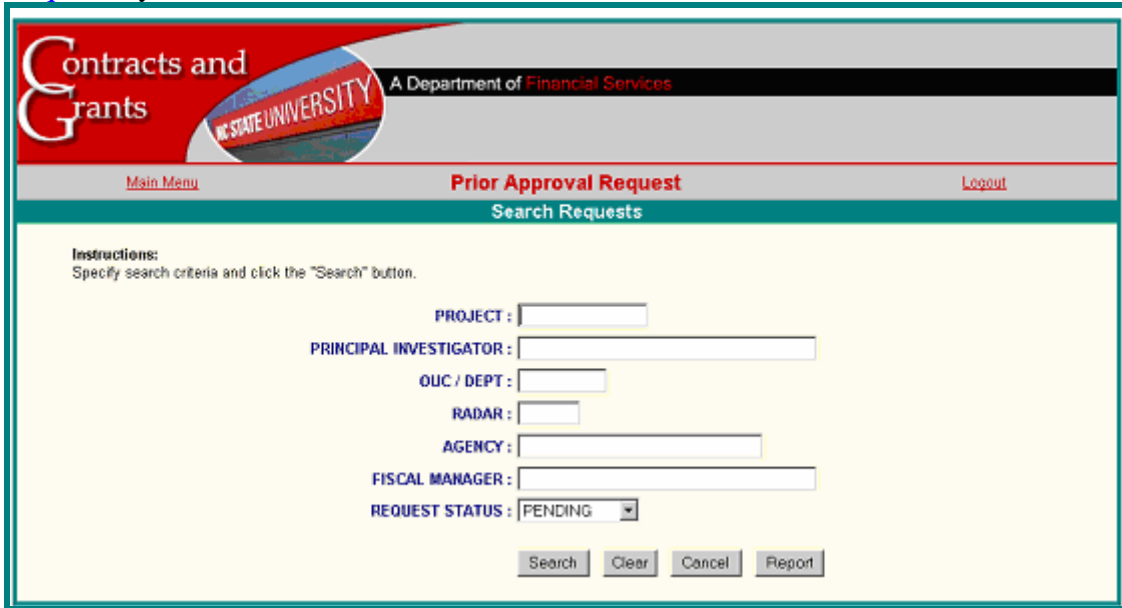
Discard – The PAR will be deleted and no record will be retained.

The screenshot shows the bottom section of the PAR system interface. It contains two certification sections: 'College Certification:' with the text 'This is to certify that this request is consistent with the scope and objectives of the project; complies with the grant terms and conditions; and represents effective utilization of resources. All individual costs involved have been determined by the appropriate college personnel to be allowable in accordance with OMB Circular A-21, or other guidelines pertinent to this project.' and 'University Certification:' with the text 'This request is approved based on the information provided by the college.' Below the certifications are three buttons: 'Save', 'Approve', and 'Discard'.

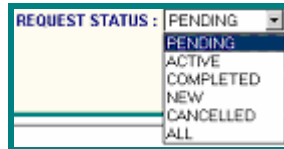
Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

5. How do I search and view the current status of an online PAR?

At the main menu select '[Search Requests](#)'. You will also see the number of PARS that are 'Pending' and waiting on action from you specifically. Once you select '[Search Requests](#)' you will be taken to a search screen.



It is helpful to know the meaning of the available PAR statuses. The following are brief explanations of the meaning of each PAR status:



Pending – This requires attention from you in order to proceed through the approval workflow. You can add comments, approve or reject the PAR. You may also upload additional documents if necessary.

Active – An active PAR is routed but not yet completed. It is in the 'Pending' status at some other level.

New – A PAR that is 'New' has been created and 'Saved' but not routed. A 'New' PAR is still at the initiator's level and must be routed before any action can be taken.

Cancelled – **A PAR can be cancelled only by the initiator!** If the PAR progresses past the initiator and it is realized that it should be cancelled it needs to be rejected back to the initiator's level and then cancelled.

Completed – A PAR that has been through all the approval levels and is not awaiting any additional actions is set to the 'Completed' status.

All – This encompasses all of the previously described statuses.

Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

6. How do I approve/reject an online PAR?

When a PAR shows as 'Pending' at your level then an action is required of you. Review the PAR information and then select 'Approve' or 'Reject' as appropriate. It is always helpful to add any comments that would assist the next approver but not required when you are 'Approving' the PAR to the next level.

If you find that you must reject a PAR it is a **requirement** that comments be added in the **Processing Comments** area. You should enter specific reasons why the PAR is not being approved so that a correction can be made and the PAR resubmitted for approval.

If the PAR should be **CANCELLED** please enter an explanation and instructions to reject back to the initiator so that the PAR can be **CANCELLED** from the system. The person who initiated the PAR will have an option to **CANCEL** along with the Approve and Reject options. It is important that the initiator selects the **CANCEL** function instead of reject. The status of the PAR will change in the system to Cancelled.

The screenshot displays a web interface for processing a PAR. At the top, there is a button labeled 'Add Document'. Below this is a section titled 'Processing Comments' which contains a large, empty text input box. Underneath the input box, there are two certification sections: 'College Certification' and 'University Certification', each with a short paragraph of text. At the bottom of the interface, there is a 'REQUEST ACTION' section containing two buttons: 'Approve' and 'Reject'. Below this section are two more buttons: 'Save Changes' and 'Discard Changes'.

7. Some common questions/problems and answers:

Q: I am unable to create a PAR for a project for which I should have access. Why?

A: If you are unable to create a PAR for a specific project number check to be sure the project is in the "Active" status in Financials. Also, check your User Setup to ensure you have access to the OUC assigned to the project.

Q: The faculty in our area is unable to enter a PAR for the project even though he is listed as a PI in RADAR and PINS. What is he doing wrong?

A: The PI is not linked to the project in the appropriate table. The PI association in PARS is gathered from the same table that feeds the Faculty Accounting Reports. You can call the PAR Helpline at 3-7954 and we will correct the table.

Electronic Prior Approval Request System User Instructions

Q: My PI is unable to sign on to the system. What is he doing wrong?

A: The PI more than likely needs to complete an automated security access form and submit this form to ETSS on campus.

Q: How can I print out a copy of my online request?

A: Select 'File', 'Print' from the internet toolbar. This will print your request, along with the justification and comments, in its entirety.


Q: I entered a PAR and saved it. Now I am unable to locate my saved PAR. What should I do?

A: The status of your PAR is now "New". When you are searching for a PAR change the status to "New" and enter the project ID in the appropriate field.

Q: I have an extremely long justification already typed elsewhere and I do not wish to retype into the PAR system. What can I do?

A: For the PAR form justification enter in – "See justification in attached documents". You can upload your Word or pdf file instead of retyping.

Q: When I use the browser 'back' button my page disappears. What am I doing wrong?

A: The 'back' button does not function properly in this system. Navigate through the PAR system using the 'Main Menu' selections, or the  within the PAR form.

Q: The PI and Department Head associated with my project are out of the office. The PI emailed me and asked that I complete a PAR ASAP! What do I do?

A: Your College Research Office can enter a PAR that will route directly to C&G. This is only to be used in extreme cases. In this particular instance I would recommend you forward the email to the College Research Office and explain your situation. If the College Research Office deems it necessary they can enter the PAR, and upload the PI's email requesting the PAR, and submit directly to C&G.

Q: I need to add an OUC to my access. Who do I call?

A: Your College Research Office.

Q: I have a PAR user question. Do I call the ETSS Help Desk?

A: Not exactly! We have a PAR User Hotline set up and this is the number you should call – 3-7954.

Q: I have an idea that I would like to see in the next version on the online PAR system. Who do I tell?

A: Please tell me (Julie)!! I can be reached at 5-8008!