



Center for
Scientific Review

The NIH Peer Review Process

Christine Piggee, Ph.D.

Scientific Review Officer

Synapses, Cytoskeleton & Trafficking (SYN) study section

Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Neuroscience (MDCN)

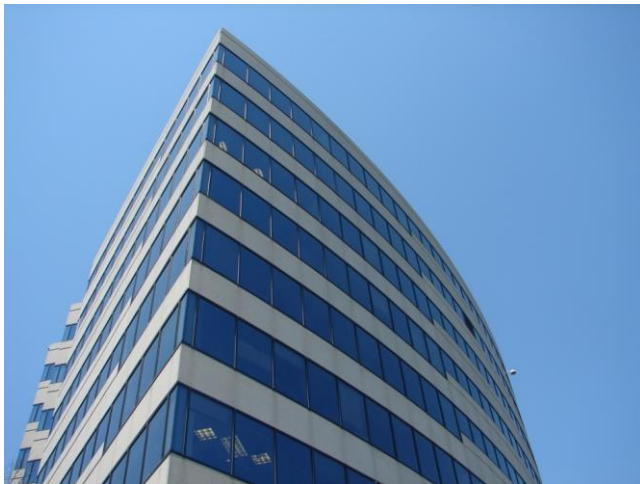
Integrated Review Group (IRG)

Center for Scientific Review

NIH

Most Applications Go to the NIH Center for Scientific Review (CSR)

Focal Point for Initial Review at NIH



- Receives
- Refers
- Reviews

NIH Peer Review System for Grant Applications

1st Level

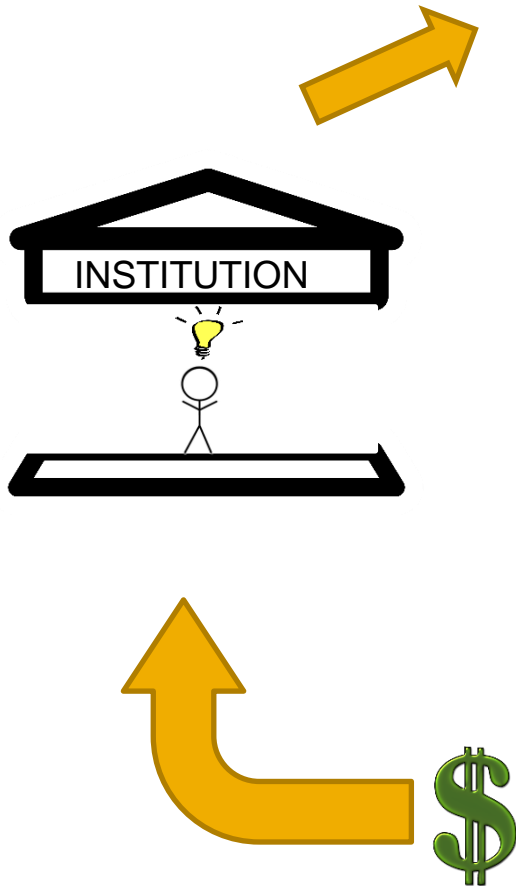
**Scientific Review Group
(Study Section)**

2nd Level

NIH Institute/Center Council

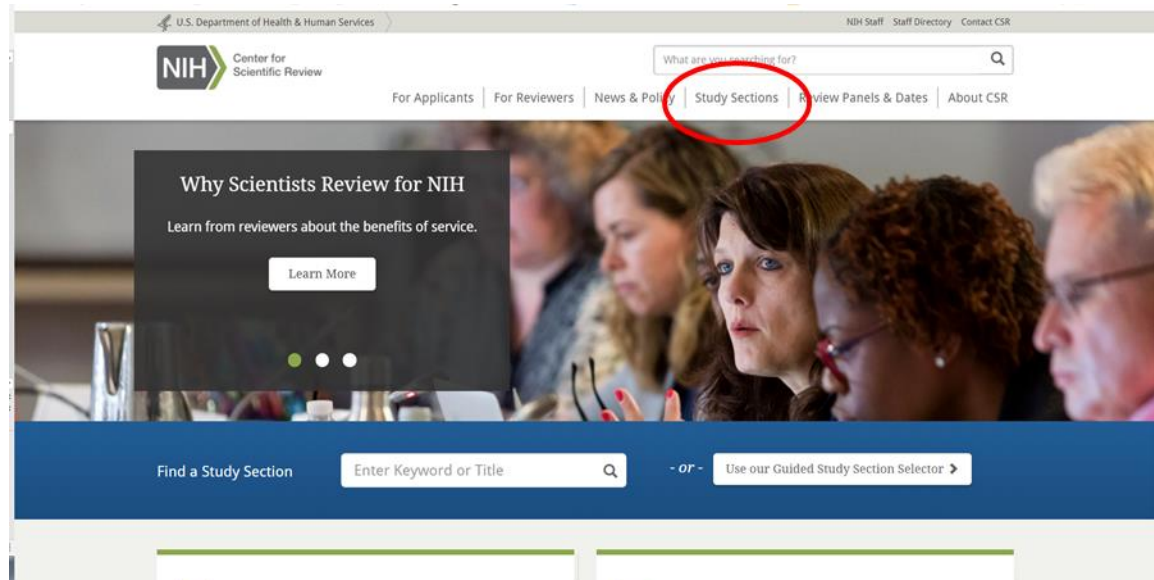


Path from Idea to NIH Funding



Help Your Application Get to the Right Study Section

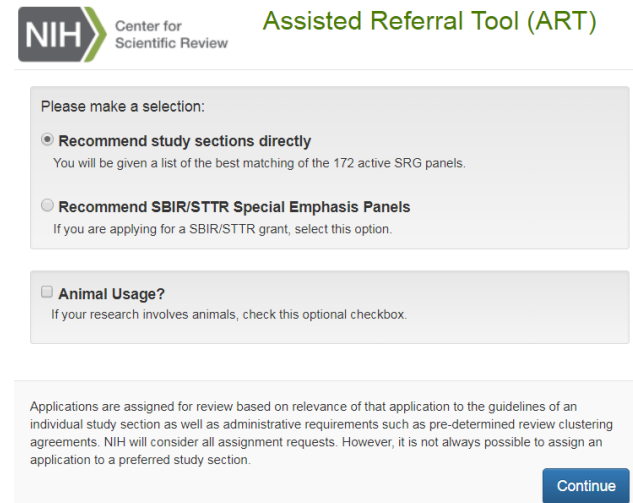
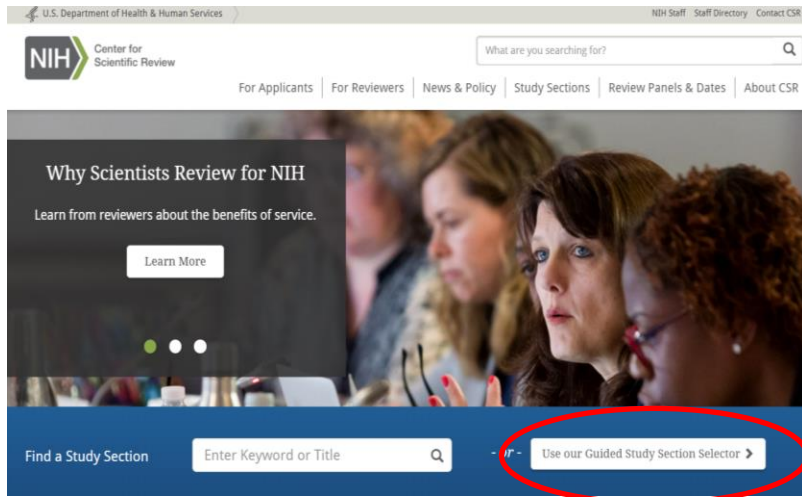
1. List of study sections on CSR website



www.csr.nih.gov → Study Sections → Chartered Study Sections

Help Your Application Get to the Right Study Section (cont.)

2. Assisted Referral Tool (ART)



www.csr.nih.gov → Use our Guided Study Section Selector

Help Your Application Get to the Right Study Section (cont.)

3. NIH RePORTER database

The screenshot shows the NIH RePORTER database query interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NIH logo and the text "Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools (RePORT)". Below this is a search bar and a menu with options like "HOME", "ABOUT RePORT", "FAQs", "GLOSSARY", and "CONTACT US". The main content area is titled "NIH RePORTER" and includes a "FIND PROGRAM OFFICIALS OR SIMILAR PROJECTS" button. The form is divided into several sections: "RESEARCHER AND ORGANIZATION" with fields for Principal Investigator (PI) name, City, State, Country, and DUNS Number; "TEXT SEARCH" with a search box and options for search logic (And, Or, Advanced) and search criteria (Projects, Publications, News, Project Title, Project Terms, Project Abstracts). The form also includes a "Fiscal Year (FY)" dropdown menu and a "SUBMIT QUERY" button.

<https://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>

Assignment Request Form (optional)

- Suggest Institute/Center assignment (+ and -)
- Study Section Requests (+ and -)
- Potential individuals in conflict (and why)
- Areas of expertise needed

[View Burden Statement](#) **PHS Assignment Request Form** OMB Number: 0925-0001
Expiration Date: 10/31/2018

Funding Opportunity Number:

Funding Opportunity Title:

Awarding Component Assignment Request (optional)

If you have a preference for an Awarding Component (e.g., NIH Institute/Center) assignment, please use the link below to identify the most appropriate assignment then enter the short abbreviation (e.g., NCI for National Cancer Institute) in "Assign to/Do Not Assign to Awarding Component" sections below. Your first choice should be in column 1. All requests will be considered, however, locus of review is predetermined for some applications and assignment requests cannot always be honored.

Information about Awarding Components can be found here: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/phs_assignment_information.html#AwardingComponents

	1	2	3
Assign to Awarding Component:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do Not Assign to Awarding Component:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Study Section Assignment Request (optional)

If you have a preference for a study section assignment, please use the link below to identify the most appropriate study section then enter the short abbreviation for that study section in "Assign to/Do not Assign to Study Section" sections below. Your first choice should be in column 1. All requests will be considered, however, locus of review is predetermined for some applications and assignment requests cannot always be honored.

For example, you would enter "CAMP" if you wish to request assignment to the Cancer Molecular Pathobiology study section or enter "ZRG1 HOMR" if you wish to request assignment to the Healthcare Delivery and Methodologies SBROSTT panel for informatics. Be careful to accurately capture all formatting (e.g., spaces, hyphens) when you type in the request.

Information about Study Sections can be found here: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/phs_assignment_information.html#StudySection

	1	2	3
Assign to Study Section: Only 20 characters allowed	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do Not Assign to Study Section: Only 20 characters allowed	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



Your SRO Convenes the Study Section Meeting

Discussions Focus on the Best Applications



- Reviewers typically discuss the top half

At the Meeting: Application Discussion

- Anyone in conflict with an application leaves the room

At the Meeting: Application Discussion (cont.)

- Anyone in conflict with an application leaves the room
- Reviewer 1 introduces the application and presents critique
- Reviewers 2 and 3 highlight new issues and differences of opinion in areas that significantly impact scores
- All panelists in the room are invited to join the discussion and then vote on the final overall impact score

Review Criteria and Considerations: K vs. R Grant Applications

	Career Development Grants (K01, K02, K07, K08, K23, K24, K25, K99)	Research Project Grants (R01, R21, R03)
Overall Impact	Overall Impact	Overall Impact
Scored Review Criteria (Scored individually and considered in overall impact score) PAR & RFA: May add questions to each scored criterion or additional criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate • Career Development Plan/ Career Goals & Objectives/Plan to Provide Mentoring • Research Plan • Mentor(s), Co-Mentor(s), Consultant(s), Collaborator(s) • Environment & Institutional Commitment to the Candidate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance • Investigator(s) • Innovation • Approach • Environment

Review Criteria and Considerations (cont.)

	Career Development Grants (K01, K02, K07, K08, K23, K24, K25, K99)	Research Project Grants (R01, R21, R03)
<p>Additional Review Criteria (Not scored individually, but considered in overall impact score)</p> <p>PAR & RFA: May add new criteria or questions to each additional criterion</p>	<p>For Clinical Trials only: Study Timeline for Clinical Trials</p> <p>All:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protections for Human Subjects • Inclusion • Vertebrate Animals • Biohazards • Resubmission • Renewal • Revision 	<p>For Clinical Trials only: Study Timeline for Clinical Trials</p> <p>All:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protections for Human Subjects • Inclusion • Vertebrate Animals • Biohazards • Resubmission • Renewal • Revision

Review Criteria and Considerations (cont.)

	Career Development Grants (K01, K02, K07, K08, K23, K24, K25, K99)	Research Project Grants (R01, R21, R03)
Additional Review Considerations (Not scored individually and not considered in overall score)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research• Select Agents• Resource Sharing Plans• Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources• Budget & Period of Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applications from Foreign Organizations• Select Agents• Resource Sharing Plans• Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources• Budget & Period of Support

Scored Review Criteria for K Applications

- Overall Impact
 - Assessment of the likelihood that the proposed career development and research plan will enhance the candidate's potential for a productive, independent scientific research career in a health-related field
- Candidate

Scored Review Criteria for K Applications (cont.)

- Career Development Plan/Career Goals & Objectives/Plan to Provide Mentoring
 - Customized
 - Research/technical skills
 - Professional training
- Research Plan
 - Well-integrated with career development plan
 - Significance

Scored Review Criteria for K Applications (cont.)

- Mentor(s), Co-Mentor(s), Consultant(s), Collaborator(s)
 - Complementary skills
 - Strong history of training PIs
 - When adding senior faculty, justifying good fit
 - For K99, what candidate can take with them
 - Check for consistency
- Environment & Institutional Commitment to the Candidate

Scored Review Criteria for K Applications (cont.)

Very strong: people+ science + plan
= competitive application

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES

See <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/critiques/k.htm> for what reviewers are asking with respect to each criterion (specific to the type of K mechanism)

<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/application-advice-research-career-development-k-awards>

Scored Review Criteria for R01s, R21s, R03s

- Overall Impact
 - Assessment of the likelihood for the project to *exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved*
- Significance
- Investigator(s)
- Innovation
- Approach
- Environment

9-Point Scoring Scale

Impact	Score	Descriptor
High Impact	1	Exceptional
	2	Outstanding
	3	Excellent
Medium Impact	4	Very Good
	5	Good
	6	Satisfactory
Low Impact	7	Fair
	8	Marginal
	9	Poor

Scoring

9-point score scale is used to provide:

- Criterion Scores
 - Candidate Career Development Plan/ Career Goals & Objectives/Plan to Provide Mentoring; Research Plan; Mentor(s), Co-Mentor(s), Consultant(s), Collaborator(s); and Environment & Institutional Commitment to the Candidate **for Ks** OR
 - Significance, Investigator, Innovation, Approach & Environment **for Rs**
- Overall Impact Score

All applications receive scores:

- Not discussed – initial criterion scores
- Discussed – initial criterion scores & avg overall impact score

Priority Scores/Percentile Rank



- Discussed applications are scored 1 (best) to 9 (worst)
- Average Final Overall Impact Score \times 10 = Priority Score
- Percentile based on application's rank

Summary Statement

Program Officer

PROGRAM CONTACT:
BARBARA CROFT PH.D.
301 496-9531
erastage@mail.nih.gov

SUMMARY STATEMENT
(Privileged Communication)

Release Date: 04/04/2008
Revised Date: 01/06/2009

Application Number:

Principal Investigator
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Applicant Organization:
Review Group: GCMB
 Gastrointestinal Cell and Molecular Biology Study Section

Meeting Date: 03/24/2008
Council: MAY 2008
Requested Start: 07/01/2008
RFA/PA: PA01-295
PCC: 2A

Project Title:

SRG Action: Impact/Priority Score: 20
 Human Subjects: 10-No human subjects involved
 Animal Subjects: 10-No live vertebrate animals involved for competing appl.

Project Year	Direct Costs Requested	Estimated Total Cost
1	250,000	291,200
2	250,000	291,200
3	250,000	291,200
4	250,000	291,200
5	250,000	291,200
TOTAL	1,250,000	1,456,000

Percentile: 29

Impact/Priority Score 10-90 range

Percentile in whole numbers

Indicator for Early Stage or New Investigators

Your Career Stage Is Considered



- If you are a New Investigator or Early Stage Investigator (R01s)
 - Less emphasis on preliminary data and publications
 - More emphasis on training



Center for
Scientific Review

Jumpstart Your Career: CSR Early Career Reviewer Program

Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program Goals

- Train and educate
- Expose to the peer review experience
- Enrich the pool



Qualifications for the Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program

- Demonstrated training and experience by:
 - A **faculty appointment** or equivalent
 - An active **independent research program**
 - At least **two senior-authored research publications** in peer-reviewed journals in the past two years
- No previous CSR review
- New Investigator

How to Apply for the ECR Program

- Instructions are at www.csr.nih.gov/ECR
- If eligible, your name is entered in ECR database
- You may be invited to serve as an ECR
- You can also email Scientific Review Officers

Personal Observations

- Planning your project
 - Program Officers
 - Preliminary studies
- Pay attention to the writing (story)

There is no amount of grantsmanship that will turn a bad idea into a good one But there are many ways to disguise a good idea.

Dr. William Raub, former Deputy Director, NIH

Personal Observations (cont.)

- Everchanging guidelines, forms, etc.

www.grants.nih.gov

- Start early
- Note extenuating circumstances in Biosketch

Personal Observations (cont.)

- Growth mindset
- Understand the randomness

Personal Observations (cont.)

- Publish!
- Get some review experience

christine.piggee@nih.gov