

Help Your Application Get to the Right Study Section



Find a Study Section

Applications are reviewed in Study Sections (Scientific Review Group, SRG). Integrated Review Groups (IRGs) are clusters of Study Sections based on scientific discipline.

<http://www.csr.nih.gov/>

Help Your Application Get to the Right Institute



TEXT SEARCH

Text Search (Logic): ?

☒ [And](#)
☐ [Or](#)
☐ [Advanced](#)

Search in ?
☒ Projects
☐ Publications
☐ News

Limit Project search to
☐ Project Title
☐ Project Terms
☐ Project Abstracts

Limit Publication search to
Start Year
End Year

Match your application to NIH:

- Projects: Related research on the same scientific topic
- FOAs: Funding Opportunity Announcements for the topic area
- Institutes: Programs that are funding research in this topic area

<http://ProjectRePORTER.NIH.gov>

Cover Letter

The cover letter should be used for a number of important purposes:

- Suggest Institute/Center assignment
- Suggest review group assignment
- Identify individuals in potential conflict and explain why
- Identify areas of expertise needed to evaluate the application
- Discuss any special situations

It is NOT appropriate to use the cover letter to suggest specific reviewers.

<http://www.csr.nih.gov/coverletter>

Sample Cover Letter

Please assign this Phase I SBIR “Drugs for Retinoblastoma Treatment” (RFA-CS-00-000) to the following:

Institutes/Centers

National Cancer Institute

National Eye Institute

Scientific Review Group

Cancer Drug Development & Therapeutics

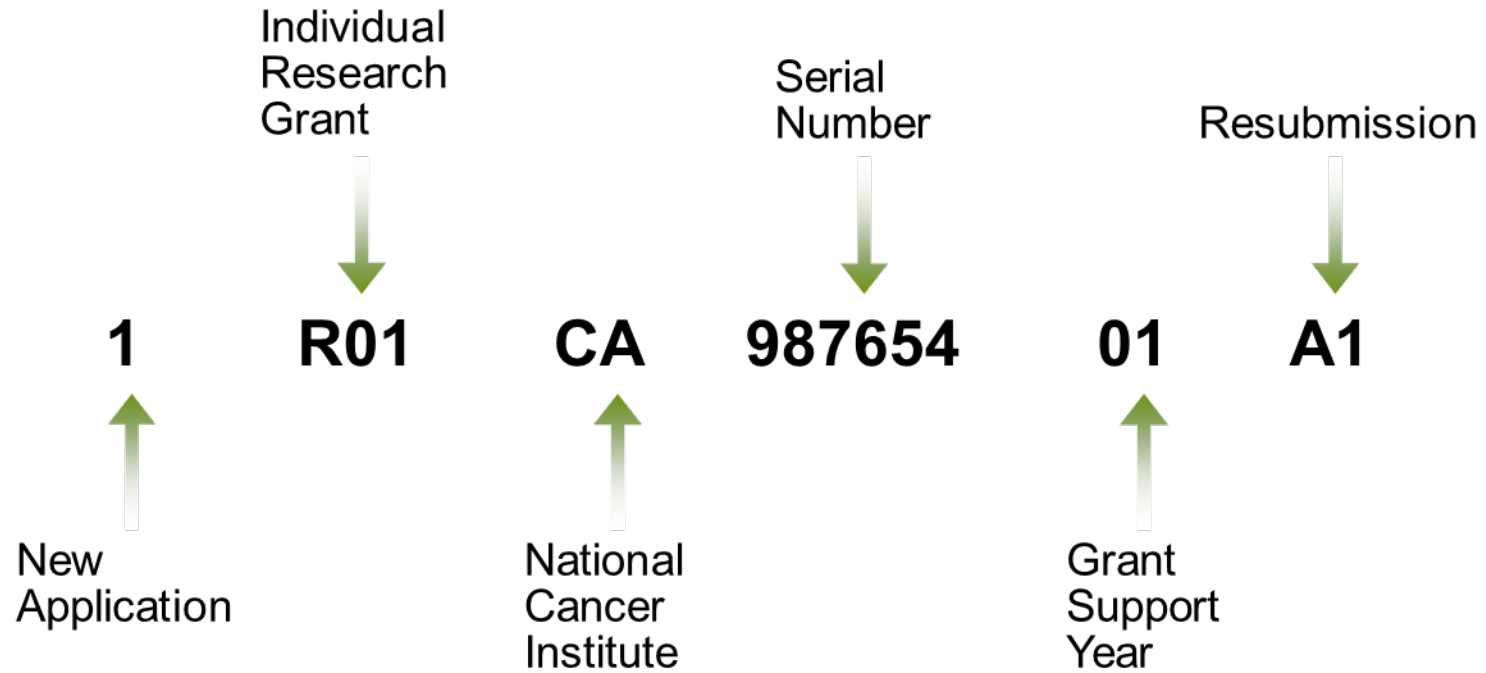
Please do not assign this application to the following:

Scientific Review Group

Biological Chemistry, Biophysics, and Drug Discovery

This study focuses on a new in vitro model for testing drugs for treatment of retinoblastoma, not the synthesis of new chemotherapeutic agents.

Sample Application Number



How NOT to Submit a Late Application

Start Early!

- Application must be accepted **TWICE**: Grants.gov and NIH

Check eRA Commons for your submitted application

(e-mails are sent but can be caught in SPAM filters)

- High volume at deadlines slows processing/validation time
- On time application = submitted error-free by 5 PM local time on due date
- **Errors** cause rejection – **Warnings** are error-free and accepted
- **No error correction window that extends deadline**

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 for each of the 5 core review criteria
- Overall Impact/Priority Score based on but not a sum of the core criterion scores plus additional criteria

All applications receive scores:

- Not discussed applications will receive only initial criterion scores from the three assigned reviewers.
- Discussed applications also receive an averaged overall impact score from eligible (i.e., without conflicts of interest) panel members.

Inclusion of Women and Minorities

Proposed clinical research must include:

- Plans for the inclusion of minorities and members of both genders, as well as the inclusion of children.

or

- A clear and compelling justification indicating that inclusion is inappropriate due to the health of the subjects or the purpose of the research.

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women_min/women_min.htm

Check the Status of Your Application in NIH Commons

Status Information			
General Grant Information		Other Relevant Documents	
Status:	Scientific Review Group review pending. Refer any questions to the Scientific Review Administrator.		
Institution Name:			
School Name:			
School Category:			
Division Name:	NONE	e-Application	
Department Name:		Additions for Review (0 documents)	
PI Name:		Correspondence	
Application ID:		Referral	
Proposal Title:		Date	Description
Proposal Receipt Date:	10/18/2013		
Last Status Update Date:	10/31/2013		
Current Award Notice Date:			
Application Source:	Grants.gov		
Project Period Begin Date:	08/01/2014		
Project Period End Date:	07/31/2017		
eApplication Status:	Submission Complete		
FOA:	[PA13-313] - Academic Research Enhancement Award (Parent R15)		
NIH Appl. ID:			
Status History		Institute or Center Assignment	
Effective Date	Status Message	Institute or Center	Assignment
10/21/2013	Application entered into system		
		NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS AND STROKE (Primary)	10/28/2013
		NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS AND STROKE (Primary)	10/21/2013
			10/28/2013
Application Information		Study Section	Advisory Council(AC) Information
Award Document Number:	RNS088123A	Scientific Review Group:	ZRG1 MDCN-R (86)
FSR Accepted Code:	N	Council Meeting Date(YYYY/MM):	2014/05
Snap Indicator Code:		Meeting Date:	03/06/2014
Impact Score:		Meeting Time:	08:00
Percentile:		Study Roster:	View Meeting Roster
Early Stage Investigator Eligible:			

Your Summary Statement

- Scores for each review criterion
- Critiques from assigned reviewers
- Administrative notes if any

If your application is discussed, you also will receive:

- An overall impact/priority score and percentile ranking
- A summary of review discussion
- Budget recommendations



Summary Statement

SUMMARY STATEMENT (Privileged Communication)		
PROGRAM CONTACT: BARBARA CROFT PH.D. 301 496-9531 erastage@mail.nih.gov	Release Date: 04/04/2008 Revised Date: 01/06/2009	
Application Number:		
Principal Investigator		
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		
ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET NOTE: The budget shown is the requested budget and has not been adjusted to reflect any recommendations made by reviewers. If an award is planned, the costs will be calculated by Institute grants management staff based on the recommendations outlined below in the COMMITTEE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS section.		
EARLY STAGE INVESTIGATOR		
NEW INVESTIGATOR		

Program Officer

Impact/Priority Score
10-90 range

Percentile in
whole numbers

Indicator for Early
Stage
Investigators

New and Early Stage Investigators

- New Investigator (NI)
 - PD/PI who has not yet competed successfully for a substantial NIH independent research award
- Early Stage Investigator (ESI)
 - PD/PI who qualifies as a New Investigator AND is within 10 years of completing the terminal research degree or is within 10 years of completing medical residency (or equivalent)

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/new_investigators/

View the Video

Jumpstart Your Research Career with CSR's Early Career Reviewer Program



www.csr.nih.gov/video/video.asp

How to Apply for the Early Career Reviewer Program

- Instructions are at www.csr.nih.gov/ECR
- If eligible, your name will be placed into our ECR database
- You will be invited to serve as an ECR when your expertise is needed for particular applications

When Preparing an Application

- Read instructions
- Never assume that reviewers will know what you mean
- Refer to pertinent literature
- Don't overstate the significance of your research
- State rationale of proposed investigation
- Include well-designed tables and figures
- Present an organized, lucid write-up
- Don't be overly ambitious
- Obtain pre-review from colleagues at your organization

Insider's Guide to Peer Review for Applicants:

<http://www.csr.nih.gov/applicantresources/insider>

What Reviewers Look for in Applications

- Significance and impact
- Exciting ideas
- Clarity
- Ideas they can understand -- Don't assume too much
- Realistic aims and timelines -- Don't be overly ambitious
- Brevity with things that everybody knows
- Noted limitations of the study
- A clean, well-written application

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Insider's Guide to Peer Review for Applicants



NIH Center for Scientific Review

To help new and established applicants submit better applications, CSR asked current and recent study section chairs to share their personal insights on producing a highly competitive NIH grant application. They responded with great enthusiasm.

Don't jump too fast into writing your application: Since the most critical parts are the summary and specific aims sections, write a one-page summary page with specific aims first and share it with someone who is experienced, has their own funding or—ideally—someone who has served on a study section. If you can't wow them, start again and use the time you saved to come up with some fresh ideas.

Propose something significant: It is a real turn-off to read an application that is basically a re-hash of a previous project with a new issue. The same goes for "me too" research. Identify an area of current controversy and importance within your field. Make it something that would interest more people than you and your coworkers. Will it be important to clinicians or other investigators? Are you dealing with key questions or controversies in the field?



Good ideas don't always sell themselves: Tell me why it's important up front in the background section, and I'll be ready to roll. Tell me what's known and what isn't known and how, after you complete your studies, you'll move the field forward or answer important questions. A lot of people really are unaware of how absolutely important it is to tell the reviewer from the beginning why it's worth doing. If you're seeking an incremental advance over what's known, it's essential to justify it.

Insider's Guide to Peer Review for Applicants

Advice from CSR Study Section Chairs

<http://www.csr.nih.gov/applicantResources/Insider>

NIH Guide

For Grants and Contracts

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- Announces NIH Scientific Initiatives
- Provides NIH Policy and Administrative Information
- Supplies links to application forms
- Available on the NIH Web Site: <http://www.nih.gov>

A Window to Your Application: eRA Commons

eRA Commons is an online interface where a grant applicant can:

- Check submitted grant application for errors and warnings and view final image
- Track review assignment, view review outcomes (score, summary statements), find contact info
- Update Personal Profile to ensure Early Stage Investigator eligibility is in place
- Submit pre-award information (just in time)
- View Notice of Award and other key documents

And much more!

<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/>

NIH Encourages Applicants to Describe their Research in Terms Easily Understood by Reviewers, Scientists, Congress and the Public

Titles, statements of public health relevance & abstracts should:

- Convey value of research in plain language
- Be understandable by both scientists and the public
- Clearly relay the potential impact of the research on health

The public accesses funded NIH grant info through

<http://ProjectRePORTER.NIH.gov>

Examples and more info: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/plain_language.htm

NIH's Resubmission Policy

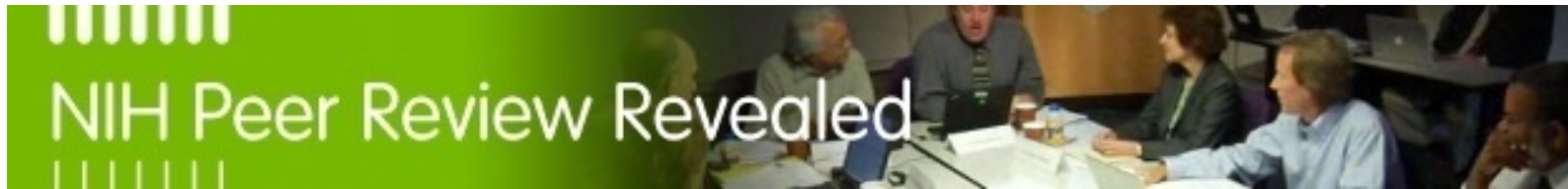
After an unsuccessful new (A0) application or an unsuccessful resubmission (A1) application, you may submit a new (A0) application with the same idea as long as your summary statement has been issued.

NIH Guide Notices

- [NOT-OD-14-074](#)
- [NOT-OD-14-082](#)

Resubmission FAQs

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/resubmission_q&a.htm



View the Videos



- **NIH Peer Review Revealed**
- **Jumpstart Your Research Career with CSR's Early Career Reviewer Program**
- **NIH Tips for Applicants**
- **What Happens to Your NIH Grant Application**

<http://www.csr.nih.gov/video/video.asp>

Meet the Experts in NIH Peer Review Webinars



For Researchers Seeking:

- R01 Grants
- Fellowship Awards
- AREA/R15 Grants
- Small Business Grants

www.csr.nih.gov/webinar

NIH Peer Review Information on the Web

National Institutes of Health: <http://www.nih.gov>

- **Office of Extramural Research**
<http://www.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm>
- **Grants Policy**
<http://www.nih.gov/grants/policy/policy.htm>
- **Electronic Submission**
<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt>

Center for Scientific Review: <http://www.csr.nih.gov>

- **Resources for Applicants**
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/ResourcesforApplicants>
- **CSR Study Section Descriptions**
<http://public.csr.nih.gov/StudySections>
- **CSR Rosters and Meeting Dates**
<http://public.csr.nih.gov/RosterAndMeetings>

Your Application Was Reviewed What Do You Do Next?

Visit NIH's Next Steps Website



Principal Investigator JOHN LENNON		Application Number: 2 R01 MH12345-06
Applicant Organization: IMAGINE INSTITUTE		
Review Group: MSLG-AARR-S (40) Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel		
Meeting Date: Council: OCT 2012 Requested Start: 12/01/2012		RFA/PA: PAR22-123 PCC: B123MS
Project Title: Music to Soothe Anxieties		
SRG Action: Impact Score: 60		
Next Steps: Visit http://grants.nih.gov/grants/next_steps.htm		
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
6	1,000,000	2,000,000
7	1,008,000	2,200,000
8	1,016,000	2,300,000
9	1,032,000	2,340,000

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/next_steps.htm

CSR Web Site

- About CSR
- Applicant Resources
- Study Sections
- Rosters and Meetings



<http://www.csr.nih.gov>

Key NIH Review and Grants Web Sites

NIH Center for Scientific Review

<http://www.csr.nih.gov>



NIH Office of Extramural Research

<http://grants.nih.gov/>



The NIH Web Site



<http://www.nih.gov>

Helpful Handouts

Insider's Guide to Peer Review

What Happens to Your Grant Application

NIH Grant Application Useful Web Links

Insider's Guide to Peer Review for Applicants



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What Happens to Your Grant Application A Primer for New Applicants

The Center for Scientific Review (CSR) receives all NIH and some other Public Health Service grant applications. Most investigator-initiated applications for NIH funds are referred to CSR review groups.

Your application is assigned to a review group and an NIH Institute or Center

One or more CSR Referral Officers examine your application and determine the most appropriate Integrated Review Group (IRG) to assess its scientific and technical merit. Your application is then assigned to one of the IRG's study sections. A study section typically includes 20 or more scientists from the community of productive researchers. Your application also will be assigned to the NIH Institute or Center (IC) best suited to fund your application should it have sufficient merit. (More than one IC may be assigned if appropriate.)

Referral Officers follow established guidelines that define the review boundaries of each study section. These boundaries frequently overlap, and more than one study section may have the expertise to review your application. You may request in a cover note with your application that it be assigned to a particular study section or IC. The CSR referral office seriously considers such requests.

The combined expertise of the scientists in a study section is intended to span the breadth and diversity of the science it covers. CSR may recruit temporary reviewers or secure mail reviews from outside consultants.

Checking the status of your application

As soon as your application is received and assigned to a study section, notices are posted to your online NIH Commons account. Information on the Commons and how to register is available at <https://commons.nih.gov/commons>. You may question either your study section or IC assignment by contacting the Scientific Review Officer (SRO) (previously called Scientific Review Administrator (SRA)) named in your notification or the CSR referral office (301-435-0715). It usually takes weeks to refer the thousands of applications submitted each round. If a notice is not posted in your Commons account within 3 weeks of the submission date, you should contact the referral office.

Reviewers are identified



Some of about 10,000 scientists who review NIH grant applications at CSR.

Your SRO will analyze the content of your application, check for completeness, and decide which reviewers can best evaluate it. Reviewers receive a copy of your application approximately 6 weeks before their meeting. Each application is assigned to three reviewers, and at least two of them provide written critiques. These assigned reviewers lead the discussions at the meeting.

Because of the multi-month period between submission and review, applicants often wish to submit additional materials. Before you do, you should contact your SRO to see if this is possible and what kinds of limitations apply.



NIH Grant Application Submission and Review

Useful Web Links

Center for Scientific Review == <http://www.csr.nih.gov> == 301-435-1115

- NIH Peer Review Revealed Video
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/video/video.asp>
- CSR's Early Career Reviewer Program
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/ECR>
- The Peer Review Process
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/ApplicantResources/The-Peer-Review-Process>
- Insider's Guide to Peer Review for Applicants
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/ApplicantResources/insider/>
- CSR Study Section Information—Descriptions, Rosters, Meeting Dates, etc.
<http://public.csr.nih.gov/StudySections>
- More Helpful Web Links
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/links>

NIH Office of Extramural Research == <http://www.grants.nih.gov>

- Overview of the NIH Grants Process
http://grants.nih.gov/grants/grants_process.htm
- NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>
- Writing Your Application
http://grants.nih.gov/grants/writing_application.htm
- Extramural Training Opportunities
<http://grants.nih.gov/training/extramural.htm>

The OER GrantsInfo service provides information and answers to general questions on funding opportunities and grant application forms, instructions, and policies. grantsinfo@nih.gov or phone 301-435-0714.



National Institutes of Health
<http://www.nih.gov>



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<http://www.csr.nih.gov/publications/>