

AbstractID: 12028 Title: The future of NIH research funding.

The National Institute of Health (NIH) is the most important source for funding medical physics research in the US. Consequently it has a profound impact on careers in medical physics. Most medical physicists rely on NIH funding to support their research ideas and launch or maintain research projects. While innovative research ideas are a pre-requisite to attract funding, it is also important to understand the mechanisms of grant application.

For this year the NIH has made significant changes to its grant review and submission process. These changes were driven by three aims:

1. Engage the Best Reviewers

Reviewing grant applications can be a huge burden for scientists. Consequently, new reviewers will be given additional flexibility regarding their tour of duty. Further, efforts will be undertaken to improve retention of standing review members. Studies will be conducted on the feasibility of using high-bandwidth support for review meetings to provide greater flexibility and alternatives for in-person meetings.

2. Improve the Quality and Transparency of Review

A new criterion-based scoring on a 1-7 scale, using structured critiques, will be introduced. The reviewers will provide feedback through scores and critiques for each criterion in a structured summary statement. Streamlined applications will receive a preliminary score. Applications will be shortened significantly to for example a 12-page research plan for an R01 application.

3. Ensure Balanced and Fair Reviews across Scientific Fields and Career Stages, and Reduce Administrative Burden

To ensure that the largest number of high quality and meritorious applications receive funding earlier and to improve system efficiency, NIH is considering separate percentiling of new and resubmitted applications and permitting one amended application. NIH is establishing an Early Stage Investigator designation for which clustering of applications is considered. The same approach will be considered for clinical research applications.

This educational session is divided into three presentations followed by a panel discussion with questions from the audience. It will address newcomers and established researchers. The presentations will cover the following topics:

1. "Overall strategies for successful NIH grant applications."
2. "Imminent changes in the NIH grant submission and review."
3. "Impact of the changes from an applicant's point of view."

Educational Objectives:

1. Understand the new NIH grant submission and review process
2. Understand the imminent changes in the NIH grant submission and review process