

NHGRI IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR
SPECIAL COUNCIL REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS
FROM INVESTIGATORS WITH >\$1.5 M Total Annual Cost OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

BACKGROUND: The language in the 2013 Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, Overall Appropriations, states:

“NIH will also establish a process for additional scrutiny and review by an Institute or Center’s Advisory Council of awards to any principal investigator with existing grants of \$1.5 million or more in total costs.”

In addition, as exemplary stewards of federal funds, NHGRI wants to encourage the highest level of scientific quality and innovation, and maximize NHGRI’s investment in ways that are responsive to the 2011 strategic plan.

PURPOSE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL REVIEW:

In response to the appropriations language, NIH has developed a policy for applications for research grants from an investigator whose funding from NIH exceeds the \$1.5M threshold. The policy calls for a Special Council Review (SCR) to determine whether there is good justification for making an additional award to that investigator.

APPLICATIONS SUBJECTED TO SPECIAL COUNCIL REVIEW:

- All competing applications in the RPG¹ line. This includes mostly, but not exclusively, applications with the following activity codes: R00, R01; R03; R15; R21; P01; UH2/UH3; DP1 and DP2.
- Competitive revisions.

A. Included in the >\$1.5M Total Annual Cost Threshold

- P01s and multiple-component and multiple-PI/PD RPGs in which **all** PI/PDs meet the threshold.
- Funded grants and applications which have been designated for funding from all NIH institutes and centers.
- Multi-year supplements included in out-year budget
- Active RPG awards (exclusive of no-cost extensions)

B. Excluded from the >\$1.5M Total Annual Cost Threshold

- Applications in response to RFAs.
- P01s, multiple-component RPGs, and multiple-PI/PD RPGs in which at least one PI/PD does not exceed the \$1.5M threshold.
- Project Leader’s funds and core costs on P01 applications.
- Diversity and re-entry supplements.

EXAMPLES OF JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CONSIDERING/NOT CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING:

Some examples of justifications for considering/not considering applications for funding include, but not exclusively, the following:

¹ RPG is defined as R00, R01, R03, R15, R21, R22, R23, R29, R33, R34, R35, R36, R37, R55, R56, RC1, RC2, RC3, RC4, RL1, RL2, RL5, RL9, P01, P42, PN1, UA5, UC1, UC2, UC4, UC7, UH2, UH3, UH5, UM1, U01, U19, U34, DP1, DP2, DP3, DP4, and DP5 .

- A new competing application that involves a highly innovative research project designed to develop a new concept, method, technology, or ways to analyze data that will substantially advance the state of the art in a particular field.
- A competing continuation application that is valuable because it continues a productive project that plays a critical role in the investigator's research program and ongoing collaborations.
- An application submitted in response to a special initiative to meet the Institute's research mission or a public health priority.
- An application that addresses a field of research that requires greater attention than most other fields at the current time.
- An application that applies existing concepts, methods, technologies, or ways to analyze data that would result in substantial advances.
- A situation in which the failure to fund would limit, restrict or prevent essential collaborative research efforts with other grantees.
- An application that would exceed the threshold because of a high institutional indirect cost rate.
- An application that involves one-time only, high dollar, special use equipment that is critical to the research.
- Other

NHGRI's IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

For each council, a report will be generated that lists all eligible applications from PIs/PDs that exceed the \$1.5M threshold. NHGRI staff will review the list for accuracy. If necessary, the report will be modified to include multiple-year administrative supplements. The grants management and program staffs will work together to finalize the list, including only applications that are likely to be considered for funding.

NHGRI has an established process for bringing special actions to Council. This same process will be used for Special Council Review of applications that exceed the \$1.5M threshold. Specifically, a Batch Staff Analysis will be prepared that will include all applications that are subjected to Special Council Review. For each application on the Batch Staff Analysis, the program director will describe the research and justify how it fulfills the criteria "consider for funding" or "not consider for funding." The staff will include a recommendation. At least two Council members will be assigned to lead the Council discussion, but all Council members will be expected to participate in the discussion. Following the discussion, a vote to "consider for funding" or "not consider for funding" will be taken. The decision will be documented in the Council Summary Statement. For SCR applications that will not be considered for funding because of the threshold, staff will notify the institutions and the PIs/PDs.

NIH will implement this policy beginning with the September 2012 Council for applications that will be paid in FY13.

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