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Enhancing Peer Review at NIH



<http://enhancing-peer-review.nih.gov/>

Dean's Teleconference

Lawrence A. Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D.
On behalf of:
ACD WG on Peer Review
SC WG on Peer Review



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Enhancing Peer Review at NIH



<http://enhancing-peer-review.nih.gov/>

**A Self-Study by the NIH
in Partnership with the Scientific Community
to Strengthen Peer Review in
Changing Times**

Principles Behind the Study

- **The increasing breadth, complexity, and interdisciplinary nature of biomedical science are creating new challenges for the system used by NIH to support biomedical and behavioral research**
- **Peer review is a key component of this system**

NIH must:

- **Continue to adapt to rapidly-changing fields of science and ever-growing public health challenges**
 - **Work to ensure that the processes used to support science are as efficient and effective as possible for applicants and reviewers alike**
 - **Continue to draw the most talented reviewers**
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The Approach to the Study

- **NIH will seek input from the scientific community, including:**
 - **investigators**
 - **scientific societies**
 - **grantee institutions**
 - **voluntary health organizations**
 - **NIH will also seek input from its own staff**
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Working Groups

External (ACD WG on Peer Review)

- Keith Yamamoto, Ph.D., UCSF, Co-Chair, ACD, Boundaries Report
- Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D., NIDCR, Co-Chair
- Bruce Alberts, Ph.D., UCSF, Chair, Boundaries Report
- Mary Beckerle, Ph.D., U. Utah, ACD
- David Botstein, Ph.D., Princeton, ACD
- Helen Hobbs, M.D., UTSW, HHMI
- Erich Jarvis, Ph.D., Duke
- Alan Leshner, Ph.D., AAAS, ACD
- Philippa Marrack, Ph.D., Natl. Jewish Med., HHMI, Boundaries Report
- Marjorie Mau, M.S., M.D., U. Hawaii, COPR
- Edward Pugh, Ph.D., U. Penn., PRAC
- Tadataka Yamada, M.D., Gates Foundation, ACD

Ex officio

- Norka Ruiz Bravo, OD/OER
 - Toni Scarpa, CSR
-

Working Groups

Internal (Steering Committee WG on Peer Review)

- **Jeremy Berg, Ph.D., NIGMS, Co-Chair**
- **Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D., NIDCR, Co-Chair**
- **Marvin Kalt, Ph.D., NIAID**
- **Story Landis, Ph.D., NINDS (Co-chair EAWG)**
- **Roderic Pettigrew, Ph.D., M.D., NIBIB**
- **Norka Ruiz Bravo, Ph.D., OD/OER (Co-chair EAWG)**
- **Toni Scarpa, Ph.D., CSR**
- **Lana Skirboll, Ph.D., OD/OSP**
- **Brent Stanfield, Ph.D., NIDDK**
- **Jane Steinberg, Ph.D., NIMH**
- **Betty Tai, Ph.D., NIDA**

Ex officio

- **John Bartrum, OD/OB**
 - **Jack Jones, Ph.D., Acting CIO**
 - **Catherine Manzi, OGC**
 - **Jennifer Spaeth, OD**
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Phases for Review

■ Diagnostic Phase

- NIH issues an RFI and creates an interactive web site for soliciting opinion (July-September 7th, 2007)



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- ▶ [Peer Review Basics](#)
- ▶ [Calendar of Events](#)
- ▶ [Information and Resources](#)
- ▶ [NIH Internal Activities](#)

Overview

The NIH enjoys a longstanding history of supporting the most promising and meritorious biomedical and behavioral research using a broad range of approaches, strategies and mechanisms. A cornerstone of the system employed by NIH to support biomedical and behavioral research is the two-tiered peer review process. The NIH invites comments concerning the agency's support of the biomedical and behavioral research—including peer review—with the goal of examining the current system to optimize its efficiency and effectiveness and ensure that the NIH will be able to continue to meet the needs of the research community and public-at-large.

Opportunity for Comment: Request for Information

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has issued a Request for Information (RFI, Notice Number: [NOT-OD-07-074](#)) to solicit comments from reviewers, applicants, and members of the public on the strengths and deficiencies of high-quality peer review, the foundation for NIH funding decisions. While there is

Phases for Review

■ Diagnostic Phase

- NIH issues an RFI and creates an interactive web site for soliciting opinion (July-September 7th, 2007)

Information Requested

NIH and the Working Group welcome your comments on these CSR's current activities; however, we would particularly like your opinion, as a reviewer, applicant, or member of the public, on how to enhance the system employed by NIH to support biomedical and behavioral research, including the peer review process. The NIH is especially interested in creative, concrete suggestions to the following questions, for strengthening over the long term any and all aspects of our system for identifying the most meritorious and innovative research for support:

1. Challenges of NIH System of Research Support

Please describe any specific challenges presented by NIH's support of biomedical and behavioral research such as the current array of grant mechanisms, number of grants awarded per investigator, and the duration of grants.

2. Challenges of NIH Peer Review Process

Please describe any specific challenges presented by the current peer review process at NIH.

3. Solutions to Challenges

Please concisely describe specific approaches or concepts that would address any of the above challenges, even if it involves a radical change to the current approach.

4. Core Values of NIH Peer Review Process

Please describe the core values of NIH peer review that must be maintained or enhanced.

5. Peer Review Criteria and Scoring

Are the appropriate criteria (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-05-002.html>) and scoring procedures (<http://cms.csr.nih.gov/NR/rdonlyres/B2CFE17E-AA1C-46E5-BADB-FDBF2FBBEE80/11892/CSRScoringProcedure090706.pdf>) being used by NIH to evaluate applications during peer review? If not, are there changes in either that you would recommend?

6. Career Pathways

Is the current peer review process for investigators at specific stages in their career appropriate? If not, what changes would you recommend?

Phases for Review

- **Diagnostic Phase**

- NIH issues an RFI and creates an interactive web site for soliciting opinion (July-August 2007)
- **Dr. Zerhouni and ACD WG co-chairs hold Dean's teleconference (July 31st; August 6th)**



Phases for Review

■ Diagnostic Phase

- NIH issues an RFI and creates an interactive web site for soliciting opinion (July-August 2007)
 - Dr. Zerhouni and ACD WG co-chairs hold Dean's teleconference (July 31st; potential second date TBA)
 - **ACD Working Group will hold a series of 5 regional town meetings (July to October 2007)**
 - **First meeting to be held with professional organizations on July 30th**
 - **Other meetings to be scheduled in Chicago, New York, San Francisco and Washington D.C.**
 - **ACD Working Group selects a series of science liaisons to enhance out-reach to stakeholders**
 - **Common Website created for liaisons and ACD members to submit feedback**
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Phases for Review

■ Diagnostic Phase

- NIH issues an RFI and creates an interactive web site for soliciting opinion (July-August 2007)
 - Dr. Zerhouni and ACD WG co-chairs hold Dean's teleconference (July 31st; potential second date TBA)
 - ACD Working Group will hold a series of 5 regional town meetings (July to October 2007)
 - ACD Working Group selects a series of science liaisons to enhance out-reach to stakehold
 - **SC Working Group Solicits from IC's**
 - **SC Working Group holds consultative meetings within NIH and creates a web-based survey for soliciting opinion (July-August 2007; additional meetings TBD)**
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Phases: Piloting

- **NIH leadership will consider input from the RFI and both working groups and determine next steps, including pilots (February 2008)**
 - **Design and initiate pilot(s) and associated evaluation(s) (March 2008)**
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Phase: Implementation

- **Development of implementation plan**
 - **Briefings for NIH staff**
 - **Briefings for scientific societies, trade press, advocacy organizations**
 - **Legislative briefings**
 - **Expansion of successful pilots**
 - **Development of new NIH Peer Review Policy**
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