Comments for
Peer Reviewers

B5   Other Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants

- Reduce administrative burden for the program officers

- Has reduced busy work considerably; a big benefit for the grant applicant and for the reviewer

- Save PI's time.

- It reduces the time needed to prepare a budget that may change in future years anyway, so it is more efficient for the investigator.

- Reduce the amount of each module to $20,000

- Save on administrative costs at NIH institute

- It also helps the applicants greatly to not have to itemize the budget, which was a huge waste of time.

- Reduce upfront administrative burden on applicants

- reduce burden for NIH staff

- It significantly reduces the burden of grant application preparation both for the PI and for institutional staff.

- To limit cost: PIs are discouraged from asking more than the upper limit on modular budgets, which is $250,000 To make it easier to cut budgets, reviewers typically have a more difficult time to cut specified amounts than to lop off modules.

- Encourage PIs to reduce budgets, creating eligibility for modular applications.

- Reduce the administrative burden of the NIH staff

- makes it easier for NIH staff

- It is of advantage to applicants who no longer have to fight their pre-award grant offices to justify every dollar being requested prior to getting the grant signed by the right authority.

- Simplify proposal preparation process for PIs.

- Reduce average grant budget

- eases budget plans for applicants, and for NIH administrators

- Save money.

- It makes preparing the budget easier for the PI.

- Easier of preparation for applicant. Lack of administrative anxiety.

- To reduce burden to NIH by making proposals thinner, less detailed and eliminate concerns over the budgets of many applications that likely will not even receive a score.

- Reduce administrative burden to individual investigators

B5   Other Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants

- I was told it was expected to save money

- It may help reduce the administrative burden for grant administrators at Federal agencies as well.

- Somewhat easier for PI's to calculate

- Make the application process less onerous

- streamlines a standard "package" for most R01 grants....same size of awards for most work is justified.

- Reduces the administrative burden on the principle investigator in preparing the application.

- Reduce the burden of application preparation for the PI and/or institutional staff

- There is a minor reduction in effort for the applicant in having to come up with specific costs for a variety of categories. In my experience, this might save about 4 hours out of about the 1,000 hours it takes to prepare a grant.

- less administrative burden for NIH

- Less burden on the applicant

- To create a suggested limit for the average award that is sufficient for most proposals, and to avoid automatic yearly escalations of the funds requested.

- In my experience, the modular budgets led to a dramatic and rapid increase in the amount requested for each application. Almost everyone asked for the maximum. This increase was essential for the science to advance, because budgets had gotten too small for people to get much done or to compete on difficult problems. The current shrinkage in individual budgets is a big step backward in the wrong direction. NIH will end up supporting B-team research if R01s continue to get cut back.

- much easier to prepare grants

- Obviously results in a large decrease in administrative burden for NIH, particularly as it pertains to future year budgets.

- I thought that modular grants reduced NIH's administrative load. I does not seem to reduce reviewer's load, but I feel it does allow PIs more flexibility.

- reduce burden on applicants

- Ease of preparation of application

- reduce administrative burden for proposer

- Reduce administrative burden for applicants, especially in the grant preparation phase.

- Reduces the burden in proposal preparation

- Paperwork reduction. The budget justification may have been largely a useless fantasy.

B5   Other Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants

- I wish reviewers would not apply the costs at their universities to other universities. They have NO idea of salaries and budget requirements. SRAs should cut off such discussion immediately.

- Reduce administrative burden all around

- Reduce burden in grant preparation

- Ease administrative burden for NIH

- Paperwork reduction for the individual preparing the grant and the awarding unit

- Reduce he amount of time needed for preparing grant application.

- I thought it was part of Gore's goal of reducing the size of government.

- to contain costs as budgets rise--hoping 250k cap will hold for most applications

- I think some PIs use this process to hide costs that they don't want to justify. It is a very frustrating type of grant to review.

- reduce administrative burden for PIs -- both as part of grant preparation and after funds received

- Saves work for PIs and Departmental Accountants in grant preparation

- Reduce time spent in detailed budget preparation at the institutional level

- It should be easier for Principal Investigators, although in my experience it is not.

- They greatly reduce the administrative burden on the principal investigator as well - which is a very good thing.

- To reduce "padding" a budget with extra equipment or supplies

- There probably are other reasons, but I can't think of them right now. My sense is that the modular grant application process was to reduce administrative burdens for both applicants and reviewers.

- Cost savings- it is very expensive in terms of staff time to provide detailed budgets for grants that may or may not be funded at all, or at times 1, 2 or 3 in terms of submission

- Might is NIH staff's work?

- Reduce effort of preparing detailed budgets that may not be necessary. Focus effort of applicant on scientific aspects of the proposal

- Ease of application process.

- To simplify application and review

- Reduces the amount of reviewers' time spent poring over detailed budgets in grant applications

- The system is legitimate because most itemizations and budget estimates are only approximations anyway.

B5 Other Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants

- Reduce the administrative burden on grant applicants... the modular applications are easier to prepare.

- Simplify review process in a speedy manner

- Reduces speculation about redirections of budget as research evolves during the funding period.

- In preparing the grant I can focus on the scientific aspect.

- It's much easier when submitting an RO1.

- They tend to keep budgets within a reasonable range

- simplify grant writing for applicant

- In practice, it makes it very difficult for reviewers to cut budgets which ultimately results in larger awards to investigators. It seems we argue as much about budgets in study section now as we did before modular budgets.

- Difficult to develop a 4 or 5 year budget to the nearest dollar. Avoids a lot of wasted energy and need to make assumptions that may not be correct.

- Easier for administrators

- More realistic than specifying supplies, etc. in the out years of a grant as it is a rare investigator who will be doing what was proposed in the out years.

- I SEE THIS AS A MECHANISM TO DECREASE STUDY SECTION CONCERNS ABOUT DOLLARS AND TO RELIEVE NIH FROM CONCERNS ABOUT COST ACCOUNTING

- I always figured it was done to assist NIH program officials so that awarding and monitoring of these grants would be easier.

- less work for PI and fiscal administrators

- Although it may not have been a reason, the net effect is to increase budget requests of grants that might have been made at lower levels. This may decrease the total number of grants that can be funded.

- Also speeds the time in preparing the grant; one can focus on the research instead of the budgets and the administrative burden associated with writing these for the PI.

- 1. Decrease time spent by PI preparing detailed budgets 2. Decrease micromanagement of budgets by study sections

- Decrease the burden on the applicant -- no longer necessary to fill-in detailed budget forms (which took significant time).

- eliminate dollar-for-dollar micromanagement of expensing

- The budgets in non-modular application were/are fake anyways

- Reduce the time spent by grant applicants documenting budget justifications. This was almost always wasted time.

B5   Other Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants

- pressure to keep budget under the 250K mark

- I am not a fan of the modular grant system. It is a disservice to the reviewer and to the applicant.

- In principle the modular grant should be a time saving. However, my experience is that it has led to an inflation in the amount requested.

- Simplify NIH administration of grants and stabilize expense projections

- Simple easy to understand, and does not restrict the applicant's usage of funds within reason

- Reduce the number of large grants

- Saves paper!

- easier budget process, however many including my institution require full budgets anyway!!!

- To decrease the tendency of reviewers to focus on the grant dollars awarded to a PI

- Reduce the applicant's administrative burden

- the unanticipated change of directions of a proposal

- Reduce burden on the administrators at the NIH and perhaps on the investigator preparing the grant for submission, although the latter frequently does not work because universities require detailed budgets anyway.

- The modular grant process simplifies the budget approval process at the applicant's organization.

- Reduce administrative burden for applicants

- Significantly helps the applicant focus on the scientific content without spending significant time in figuring out details of a budget.

- I think you have hit the good reasons from the peer review side. We spend much less time on the budget with modular grants. However, as an investigator, I also spend much less time focusing on the budget when I prepare the grant. If by budget were to exceed the provisions of the modular grant system, I know I always have the option to use submit a full budget.

- It should reduce the paperwork required during the application process; however, at my university, we must complete the normal itemized budget even though this does not go to NIH. This is not helping to reduce the effort needed to apply for grants

- Reduce administrative burden for NIH staff

- ease of preparation for PI

- reduce government burden

- reduce administrative burden for PIs and FOs

- I imagine it also reduces administrative work at the NIH

B5   Other Reasons for Implementing Modular Grants

- Less paperwork for academic institutions.

- Effort by NIH to reduce costs, although I do not think this has happened.

- Reduces the business office burden

- Streamline components of the grant submission process

- Estimating a dollar-for-dollar budget for a multiyear project requires a lot of assumptions that makes the whole process somewhat fictive.

- PI can focus on preparing the scientific aspects of the grant application without thinking about justification of the budget.

- Ensure to some extent PI's private info such as salary.

- To help the administrative staff at the NIH in figuring out their budgets for subsequent years

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

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- The price of science is escalating , just mice alone can be 2-3 modules.

- in many areas, the cost of research is significantly higher than $250,000. That some grants are modular and other are not introduces a potential source of inequity.

- Many projects that utilize expensive technology require more than $250K - the limit seems arbitrary.

- Some projects require resources from multiple institutions. It is difficult to provide an adequate budget for the personnel at the collaborating institution.

- Because $250,000 may not be sufficient for projects that are proposing mouse genetic experiments

- Because the cost of research keep increasing especially with regards to personnel cost which has sky rocketed in the last five years. (when the modular grants were first instituted there was fear that it would lead to inflationary grants. That probably happened to some degree. However, as things are now the ceiling may be too low and I would think that if it is not raised that grants with detailed budgets over 250K will increase. For the applicant it really does not make a difference since our institutions require us to make a detailed budget anyway)

- Since 1999 there has been inflation in both salaries and most supplies. Soon, it should be $300K to reflect that fact alone. Also in some projects with consortium/contracts it is too low now.

- The cost of doing science is increasing.

- If the goal is to encourage this application format, there may be greater receptivity if the dollar amount was more flexible

- Some projects or research programs require a larger budget and most applicants are hesitant to submit non-modular budgets. Also, the tendency of study section is to modularize non-modular budgets regardless of merit.

- I think that the dollar value should not dictate whether an application should be modular or not since the scientific objectives are so varied. In addition, it appears that P.I.'s see the 250K dollar figure as a target and therefore apply for the whole 250K even if the research project does not seem to require that sort of budget.

- Costs are increasing rapidly, particularly with the new requirements for post-doctoral researcher salaries. This is not accounted for with the current modular budget limits.

- Since the limit was introduced in 1999, research costs have increased (and will likely continue to do so), forcing progressively more applicants to either abandon the modular format to meet their true budget needs or to scale back their proposed research for the sake of expediency, to fit within the $250K limit.

- My grants tend to be in collaboration with other investigators at my university. Splitting $250,000 even two ways leaves me with insufficient funds to conduct the research I want to do.

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- The cost of doing science is going up, especially NIH recommended salary scales. The modular grant system hasn't changed from its inception. I would increase the upper limit by one modules. My experience on study section suggests that senior reviewers (i.e. senior in the academic ladder) look carefully at the amount of work to be done, and how much is being requested. Thus, there are checks and balances to ensure that the number of modules are cut if the request is too high. More junior study section members generally are less experienced in judging how much research costs. On a less related note, I am also concerned that these are a lot of junior investigators (e.g. assistant professors) on study section panels, often as ad hoc members, and that they often lack the "bigger picture" or "overall importance" of some proposals. Consequently, such proposals are sometimes picked apart on what amount to small issues.

- In population studies the direct costs are higher than basic or lab studies and this would be more applicable to my research.

- The same considerations of efficiency of review and flexibility for PIs apply to grants with higher award amounts

- It is very difficult to perform research at the quality level required within the budget guidelines of a modular grant. A more reasonable amount at this time would be $300,000.

- For some studies, the $250,000 limit is a deterrent for submitting modular budgets. A more realistic limit for many studies would be $300,000.

- Research with animals can be very expensive

- As research costs (especially for personnel) rise due to inflation, almost every applicant asks for 9 or 10 modules. Soon, it will be 10 only. Consequently, there is little or no room for gradations in overall project costs. The limit should go to 12 modules, but PIs should be warned that 11 or 12 modules will be awarded only exceptionally -- only if the project scope justifies it. Study sections, in turn, should be instructed to make carefully graded distinctions by awarding 8-12 modules (typically) according to a thoughtful consideration of the project's scope. As it is now, study sections often seem reluctant to make any distinction, since it's widely felt that the choice is between 9 and 10 modules.

- Increased costs for research projects compared to past

- - Senior investigators whose budgets exceed $250,000 could still use the modular budget mode. - A likely drawback would be having junior investigators request >$250,000 per year.

- Sooner or later this will be needed. Over a four year grant cycle inflation runs at about 8%, even in non-inflationary times. This is equivalent to one module.

- As an applicant, it would make my life easier.

- The expenses for my projects are slightly over the limit. Therefore, I must cut $$ in certain areas, especially in later years, to keep the budget under $250,000.

- The cost of doing science has increased since the institution of the modular budget. This means that several modular budgets should be renewed as non-modulars. There is a heavy bias towards non-modulars which is not in the best interests of funding the best science.

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- The costs of research have increased but the NIH continues to hold firm lines on grant funding totals. The number hasn't changed since I received my first research grant more than a decade ago.

- Since 1999, the cost associated with doing research has increased significantly while the budget for the modular grant has not.

- We were seeing more and more non-modular budgets. Many projects, especially from established labs, now cost more than 250k

- Some projects, particularly those with animal budgets, require additional amounts.

- The focus of the review should be on scientific merit. Budget items should only be debated for grants that are likely to be funded. It is a waste of time to discuss budget for a grant application that is unlikely to be funded.

- Many of the grants I review could have been modular if it were only $50,000 higher. For most medication development work and that involving human subjects, the PI's can't do it for $250,000. As reviewers, we would save more time if the amount was higher.

- There are situations where higher limits seem justified, particularly when animal costs or collaborations are required. As long as there is a place where "unusual" costs can be justified to the reviewers, higher modules would seem reasonable. The down side is that fewer grants would be funded if high limits were allowed.

- Especially for competing renewal applications, since many of the original awards are for $200-250K, any increase in budget requested will take the application out of the modular range.

- it is very difficult to propose clinical studies less than $250,000. the modular grant for clinical studies should be set higher

- I have never been able to submit a modular grant application

- My university requires development of a detailed budget for all applications. It would shorten the administrative aspects to simply apply the same rules to applications for all amounts.

- Because the cost of research has increased since modular grants were introduced and 250K is no longer an appropriate limit.

- Almost all work of the type I do requires a larger budget, so if not modular then gets more scrutiny so less likely to be funded (becomes considered expensive)

- 1) inflation 2) too many people go modular to get funded and then can not get their work done

- This amount does not reflect the needs of many investigators in the current era of collaborative research. Consortium and contractual costs require that F&A be included in direct costs, which makes it difficult to use the modular approach. I believe I am seeing many more grants with a full budget this year for this reason.

- 250 seems like an artificial cut off

- Research costs have increased

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- There should be no limit. Now most PIs indicates 250K which forces the study section to modify it. If there is no limit the PI will have to better consider costs.

- Because research has gotten a lot more expensive. Students and postdocs need to be paid much more and the cost of supplies has also gone up. If the idea is to have most grants be modular, then the limit should be higher.

- 250,000 is insufficient for many research projects

- Costs have gone up. Time to prepare applications is extensive enough already. Reviewers are better left dealing with scientific issues; program staff can better work with budgets, based on general reviewer recommendations.

- It would be easier to accommodate for inflation

- With increased costs associated with postdoc salaries, animals, as well as administrative costs, the current limit is not realistic (max of ~$200,000).

- Not high enough to fund clinical trials.

- Some studies require that level. e.g. - lab tests, measurements, procedures.

- Costs are increasing and many universities are now demanding that more costs be paid for out of grants (e.g. graduate student tuition).

- About 70% of any budget cover personnel and it is now very difficult to compete with industrial to attract good scientists. Even the concept of "Grant-n-aid" applies, $250,000 seem to be too small a budget to have the right resource for research.

- Why not make them all modular?

- With the enormous increase in student and postdoc payscales, it is much more expensive now to do the same amount of research, so there should be an adjustment (up 1-2 modules).

- Animal care costs are significantly escalating

- Research is getting more expensive. If you want to retain a competitive research team then you have to be able to pay competitive salaries to research track scientists. The notion of a revolving door lab staffed by students and postdocs with no permanent core to the lab, does not, in my opinion make for a competitive lab. You need $$$ to maintain your core.

- Most research institutes are located in larger metropolitan areas where the cost of doing research appears to have exceeded the increase in cost of living. Therefore, in my view the average grant using complex biologic systems is barley accomplished at the $250,000 year/limit

- An increasing number of grants are exceeding the threshold. should be increased at some point.

- since many projects require 250-500 This would even review process in this range. Over 500K has traditionally required detailed budget and this should remain so. AS an applicant since the institution require complete budgets any way - an alternative is to include both for submission and provide detailed budget if reviewers request them

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- everything costs more now

- investigators can focus more on the design and scientific merit of the proposal and not be limited by budget issues

- The $250K figure is now 5 years old and needs to be increased to reflect the increased costs of doing research. A cap of $300K seems reasonable.

- The current limit restricts the kinds of grants that can be submitted -- survey projects could never be submitted modularly

- Cost of doing research has increased. Some projects require larger budgets.

- Research in my field often requires more than 250,000. Also with higher salaries for post-docs, grad students, higher and rising animal costs and no escalation in modular grant, you often run short in later years.

- The costs of research are increasing at a fast rate. Government perceived cost s are based on a inflation index which is unrealistic.

- There is a great scientific need to be bigger.

- In spite of the shortcomings to some aspects of peer review (budgetary, NOT scientific), I sure think the modular grant approach DOES yield the benefits identified by you above, and these days $250K ain't much!

- For competitive renewals of long-term grants (10 years or more), this is too small an amount. This amount is fine for first grants, however.

- For competitive renewal applications, this would avoid a detailed budget.

- Salaries are escalating and the limit should grow with it, as the personnel makes up the highest cost factor.

- It needs to keep up with the increasing costs of research in the past few years. There is a high inflation rate in research supplies and equipment, etc.

- As an applicant who proposes expensive studies, e.g. clinical trials, I would prefer to have access to the simpler format

- With costs increasing generally, one more module would help ($300,000) keep more grants as modular

- costs have risen substantially since the program was instituted, especially salaries. And we are currently paying much less that comparable positions in industry, so that it is difficult to recruit the best people.

- Eventually it will have to go up, but then everyone will ask for that higher amount.

- The incremental yearly costs of most kinds of clinical research have gone up significantly and in 4-5 years, $250,000 will not go very far.

- Animal costs, personnel costs, most other costs have gone up.

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- The $250,000 limit has been around for a while and may be outdated. We are seeing fewer R01 grants below that limit.

- I rarely see modular grants that are R01s. To have a more significant impact, the funding cap needs to be lifted. On the other hand, for higher cost proposals the detailed budget justification information contributes more to understanding the research activities.

- Currently, only a few of the grants are within the range. Rarely does this include R01's which make up the bulk of our projects.

- To account for inflation. After several years at a 250 K ceiling, its time to increase

- At present, the range of amounts requested is very narrow. A larger range is important. Some research is particularly expensive, either because of the field, because of consortium agreements or the applicant is at institution where they have to raise a large fraction of their salary.   Because reviewers are biased against non-modular requests, these projects end up at a significant disadvantage. This has led to the situation where many investigators are forced to write multiple applications to support work in a single basic area. This is a waste of time and resources. Higher modular requests would allow expensive research to be funded more efficiently and reduce the burden on investigators doing larger projects.

- Because it is a superior system, and in my experience works soundly.

- Yes, but only if they list out (no detail) dollars requested for major areas (personnel, travel, etc)

- Some highly interdisciplinary projects with outside subcontracts and expensive animal work may need more funds

- Advantages are the same regardless of budget size

- Costs have gone up. It can be appropriate to ask for more. But it could be modular and still have general categories of cost (e.g. salary, supplies, etc).

- There should be a 'cost of living ' escalation of the maximum amount. All costs do increase over time.

- Salaries and lab costs have zoomed. New research methods, i.e. gene chips, are very high. It would be best if this could be in modular form so that anal reviewers would not spend their time trying to pick apart the budget and dis on what they call "big science".

- With the inflation in grants, many PI's will be forced into the nonmodular category in the next few years. After all, I see many "New Investigators" asking for 200 K -225 K per year. Hence, the next renewal could easily put them out of the modular range.

- Animal costs and personnel costs have risen.

- that amount is still relatively small and the modular format simplifies the process of justifying every budget item

- This will give some flexibility for inflationary adjustments of the yearly budget.

- That sounds like a typical cost for an average RO1

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- I think all grants should be modular as reviewer's generally know what the costs are likely to be. Any special items should e justified, and a percentage attributed to them.

- I don't see why there should be a cut-off. If reviewers are anyway just approving a general "ball-park" figure for the research, it should be the same for both small and large budgets

- Adjust based on inflation

- If more money is requested, a detailed budget justification is needed.

- animals require higher budgets. Go to $300k if animals included. Otherwise, keep at $250k

- The costs of research have increased. There should be a way to correct for cost of living in different cities. Salaries need to be higher in cities like New York or San Francisco.

- At my institution, PIs are now required to request salary. This is a new requirement. For those of us on modulars, this presents a squeeze when it comes time for competing and non-competing renewals.

- The NIH road map encourages consortiums and because of the way the direct costs are calculated (i.e., indirects for consortiums go into the direct costs) budgets look inflated but really are not.

- Even an increase to 350k would make many more applications modular

- Benefits also apply to larger grants. Most of the grants in my area are non-modular.

- many experimental programs, especially those using animal model systems are significantly more expensive than 250K/year.

- animal cost have risen at my institute significantly and 250 is not sufficient, especially given the usual 10 percent administrative cuts

- Many complex research projects do not and cannot meet that limit.

- Some epidemiological studies require a large budget due to staff and participant requirements

- costs of research have risen substantially.

- Although a reasonable amount, there should be exceptions, especially for clinical trials or new agent development.

- Because research expenses are increasing particularly at the level of Salaries and the budgets are not increasing to accommodate this.

- It should be inversely proportional to the number of grants held but start higher for the first award

- Cost of doing research has increases substantially in the past few years particularly personnel costs.

- There are situations in which more money is indicated.

- as cost have increased, so should the limit.

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- inflation

- As costs go up this needs to go up.

- With cost for everything increasing these days from personnel salaries to supplies, original $250,000 may need to be changed to perhaps $300,000.

- With the cap of 250K, one reaches the limit faster when consortia are involved. Since my perception is that non-modular grants fare worse in peer review than modular grants, I believe that the cap negatively impacts research grants involving multiple institutions not submitted in response to an RFA or PA. I would suggest that (i) the cap be removed or that (ii) the cap ONLY include direct costs and be modified to exclude the indirect costs on consortia.

- The system would apply equally well for most grants under $400K

- due to inflation since the modular grants were started. Made sense then, not now

- Limit should be increased to account for inflation since program initiated

- Should be raised periodically to reflect inflation.

- Many grants of a moderate size are now over $250,000 in budget due to the increased salaries of graduate students and postdocs.

- Allow for greater flexibility in research.

- CAN'T EVEN APPLY AS AN MD AND GET ENOUGH TIME FOR A DAY A WEEK.

- Salaries are often so much of the budget and can be quite large. I would increase it to account for normal inflation of research costs.

- The cost of research, particularly supplies and personnel, has not paralleled inflationary adjustments.

- I DON'T SEE THE RATIONALE IS ARBITRARILY CHOOSING $250,000 AS THE LIMIT.

- not enough money to do most projects

- it saves time, and costs are increasing anyway

- The major costs of most grants are due to personnel salaries. As postdoc salaries have been increasing significantly, the total budget needs to increase accordingly.

- This limit was established almost five years ago, Since cost for then everything has been increased. A better limit for modular grant would be one taking into consideration of inflation

- The limits make it difficult to use this mechanism with many clinical research projects

- Greater flexibility

- This would eliminate the stigma placed on those above the modular limit. However, MORE budget information will be critical to determine whether justified for everyone will just keep aiming for the highest level.

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- More and more applications are going over the $250K limit, because salaries and other costs keep increasing.   I think that more budget information is needed for all RO1 applications, even those within the modular grant limit, for reasons that are explained below.

- Some proposals - particularly multi-institutional consortium grants - readily exceed the current modular budget (many reviewers are unaware that both direct and INDIRECT costs for the collaborative institutions are in the PI's "direct" budget). Thus a frequent outcome is that neither institutions can successfully meet their goals and quality of the work is negatively impacted. So for this purpose alone, a higher limit is needed.

- Inflation

- The cost of research, particularly personnel is escalating. With a 3% raise per year built in over a 5-year period, the $250,000 ceiling is limiting the science that can be performed. It is too difficult and time-consuming to get approval from an institute prior to submission for a budget > $250 K

- I use monkeys. My work never costs that little

- unless info to the contrary that I do not have, there is no reason to believe modular grants will work for larger grants

- Salaries are increasing rapidly and the 250,000 limit is sometimes not sufficient.

- Research cost is increasing and 250 is just not enough for many interdisciplinary projects

- Too many applications come in over the modular limit

- The costs of research have increased dramatically over the past 5-10 years without a corresponding change in the limit.

- I'm generally opposed to limits.

- Allows ease in reviewing some of the larger grants

- inflation

- yes. It has been that number for several years.

- because these are not reflective of the costs born by an R01 application, especially if there are rodents and multiple post docs/associates involved.

- Research costs (salaries, supplies, animal costs) go up over time, just like everything else, and NIH has chosen to ignore this to keep the numbers of grants funded higher.

- Many "average" size research proposals cost more than $250,000, but could be modular in that their project scope is well defined and limited

- inclusion of indirect for a subcontract severely limits the utility of the modular format

- A typical R01 exceeds $250,000, so modular budgeting doesn't help. This means I have to have two processes for requesting funds and maintain two biographical sketches, etc.

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- The modular program has been in place for a number of years. Inflation means that $250,000 is no longer a "large" grant. Increasingly, nonmodular grants will have to be used. Given the 10% cap, competitive renewals become less attractive and that continuity of funding is lost.

- Would enable higher quality research to be carried out

- Of course; since 1999, the size of grants (max 250,000) has not changed while costs have dramatically increased (e.g. cost for postdoc salaries). The lack of increase in modular grants over 4-5 years (or more for grants that reach the amx) has a negative effect on the research

- higher costs of subsequent years

- Some applications especially those with a lot of experimental animal work will go over the limit. Also if there are a number of consortiums it pushes the total costs up. The only problem is that if the limit is increased many PI's will just go for the higher number.

- For the scientific review detailed budget is not a major focus and should not be (regardless of size of grant). However, a bit more details (perhaps a breakdown by major categories) would be helpful. So, I would favor a slightly expanded modular format (listing all major budget categories) for ALL grants.

- The costs of research continue to increase. Those of us working with nonhuman primates have seen per diems increase from $5/per animal per day to nearly $10/per animal per day.

- I conduct clinical brain imaging studies and so can never meet this low number. My applications are always in the $300-$400K range.

- Costs have gotten higher (especially salaries). Many investigators normal NIH grants are out of the modular range.

- Salary and supply cost inflation

- BECAUSE IT IS UNREALISTIC TO PLACE SUCH LIMIT CONSIDERING TODAYS COSTS OF OPERATION -- PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN PERSONEL COSTS (POST DOCS AND GRAD STUDENTS IN PARTICULAR)

- $300,000 IS ABOUT RIGHT FOR MY WORK.

- If a budget is submitted that is not modular, it is often reduced to a modular format because reviewers respond in almost a reflex manner. Many reviewers, experienced and not so experienced, fail to consider the hidden cost of living issues that are not reflected in the modular format.

- Inflation will catch up with this figure soon. Some investigators actually need more than this and short falls probably will develop. The administrators should be consulted to see if this is happening.

- There is no scientific reason to limit the budget simply because the documentation process is different.

- Best science costs money, and the cap has remained in place for some time (and no increase can be added within grant period).

E2B   Raise Modular Grant Limit Beyond $250K

- Science has become more expensive, for personnel, supplies and equipment. The maximum modular budget is no longer enough money to support many RO1 projects. Many institutions now require that PIs cover a greater portion of their salary from grants. Given that the major cost of a project is in salaries, the rising salaries for students, postdocs (as recommended by NIH) and for PIs all contribute to the fact that $250K is not sufficient to cover the cost of many RO1-sized projects.

- Restricted budget can impede research advances.

- In cases where there are multiple sites but each site is like an ordinary research project.

- It allows more flexibility. However, costly grants more easily might inflate a budget.

- For grants with subcontracts, the indirect costs of the contractee are included in the total direct costs of the grant, making it difficult to keep the budget under $250,000.

- Depends on the institution. Some places direct costs are a lot higher than others.

- The medical inflation rate has not been accounted for and a periodic reassessment of total max costs (# of modules max) would be helpful.

- The process makes sense at all budget levels. There should be a place to justify large expenses that the P.I. believes are extraordinary and not obvious.

- Should be increased to $275 or $300 due to inflation. The costs of research are increasing at a much higher rate than the nation rate of inflation. For instance, postdoc salaries and graduate stipends are dramatically increasing (and at the suggestion of the NIH)

- Postdoctoral and predoctoral salaries have increased significantly since the onset of the program.

- a reasonable alternate for certain kinds of Partnership grants

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- At some point a PI should have to justify spending taxpayer money. I think that point should probably be lower that 250K

- Most PIs do not need more than 220,000 per year per grant.

- Accountability is needed for over 250,000. I think this amount is a good limit.

- The average grant with approximately 33% of the PI's salary, two postdocs and a student results in personnel costs of approximately $175,000 (with overhead). Supplies of approximately $30K - 40K and some other expenses brings this budget to $225,000 which is within the modular range and does not call for too much analysis by reviewers. So the current limit seems reasonable. If the limit were raised, everyone would ask for the maximum (as is recommended by most institutional grants offices) and it would involve more detailed discussions of almost every application at study section meetings. With the current relatively low funding levels it would be better to fund more applications at the $225K - $250K than to give higher amounts to a very few applicants.

- I think submitted budgets are already inflated using the modular grant process and reviewers are less willing to cut modules when budget details can only be speculated. A higher grant limit permits greater inflation in submitted budgets

- Program has the final say and they make the cuts based on their budget.

- largest budgets probably need scrutiny to make sure costs are not padded

- Most grants are for less than the limit. Seems like a reasonable cutoff. May need to be readjusted over time.

- Larger grants typically involve more complex projects, and budget information can sometimes aid in understanding these projects.

- I think budget justification is valuable when you are asking for more $$; only a few grants do this, and they should be capable of making the case to the reviewers.

- The rationale and details for very large budgets would seem important to have in evaluating the use of resources to achieve the scientific goals of the study. Generally, this seems more 'transparent' with more standard budgets below $250,000

- This seems a reasonable amount

- I would actually prefer the detailed budget approach

- It seems to me that most projects can be done for that amount or less

- I do not believe it matters one way or the other whether the grant is modular or not.

- The average amount requested tended to be $200K to $250K regardless of the research application. Applications who need higher amounts can request so via a non-modular process.

- Because this will lead to higher and higher budgets for each grant application, reducing the overall number of grants the NIH is able to provide each year.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- The budgets are already inflated, so this would just encourage more inflation, if investigators did not have to justify costs in detail.

- Add to concerns about inflation as previously answered

- Above 250K deserves a detailed budget.

- The reasonable total cost of a larger, more complex study is harder to judge. Inclusion of a full budget is not a burden to the applicant because institutions need the data internally.

- higher budgets should get closer scrutiny

- At this time, the limit appears reasonable.

- Right now no. Because if they get higher. lets say by 2 modules ($300K) then many folks ask for that. I another cycle (4-5 years this might be possible).

- $250,000 seems high enough for a standard grant at this time

- There must be serious consideration of research budgets--the question is whether or not there should be significant input from peer reviewers. I think there is some merit in such input, especially for proposals with high budgets.

- I think exceeding the $250K for most R01 applications needs to be fully justified.

- In general, $250,000 seems to be a reasonable amount to award per year to fund a good majority of the research being proposed that was reviewed by the committee on which I served (about 50%).

- Amounts higher than this should be justified.

- 250K is high enough

- There will be more waste of NIH dollars. PI will always find ways to inflate the budget to meet the maximum ceiling

- It will inflate the size of grants and reduce the number that can be funded

- To easy for PI to inflate costs

- Budgets appear to be over inflated

- big grants take away from less prominent investigators

- $250,000 is an adequate cap

- I'd like to work to maintain the number of grants awarded as a higher priority than raising the ceiling of individual grants.

- at this time, the set limit is adequate, but this level should be reviewed every other year.

- Higher costs can be requested in a non-modular format.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- I'm very concerned about the problem of grant inflation. If anything, I'd like to see the modular grant limit reduced. Providing a more detailed budget, I believe, would reduce the amount of cost requested, and awarded. The end result would be more grants being funded. This is important in these times of belt-tightening.

- At the present time, this is a reasonable amount for most single PI projects. This amount should be adjusted upward occasionally over time though.

- Current limit is acceptable

- The PI should justify a grant requesting more than $250,000; there should be a good reason.

- I think this ceiling serves to keep grants at this level, which is good given the tight funding.

- I think the detailed budget and justification should be used for all grants at all funding levels.

- for most applications this cap is a good standard....if more is needed, budget could justify reasons why

- no, its my view for applications that do not involve either human or non human primates that the minimal dollar amount for a grant application is now 250k, even if not justified.

- I do not think most grants in my field need 250K

- the NIH does not have sufficient money to fund many excellent grants

- I think modular grants should be abolished.

- If you set the ceiling higher, everyone will request that higher amount and reviewers still wont know if it is appropriate

- I think this is a reasonable amount for an established investigator but too high for a junior investigator applying for an R01.   This is really not an issue since a PI can elect to not use the modular budget option.

- Most R01's propose work that can fit into a $250,000 budget; if you need more it should be justified. Fairly soon, the upper limit will need to be increased, for inflation, etc. Furthermore, in a time of retrenchment, keeping the number of grants up is important.

- Should have more information on grants that request large amounts of funding

- Promote more inflation. Clinical studies which are routinely above $250,000 should be brought into line.

- I think the limit is reasonable for most projects

- I think at some point the PI should really have to indicate the basis for their request. Perhaps a good starting point would be amounts over 250 K. However, as I wrote earlier my experience is that nearly everyone - even new investigators request the maximum. This is a serious flaw.

- Most standard research programs can be accomplished with a budget equal to or less than $250K.

- This is a good cap, after this a detailed budget should be provided

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- Modular grant process should be eliminated or revised

- Because it's challenging to reduce expenses to meet the modular grant requirements, investigator frugality is promoted.   If the ceiling is raised substantially, the opposite effect may occur: some PIs may use the 'vagueness' of the modular format to inflate budgets.

- Going beyond 250K requires a careful consideration of the costs that a PI will be responsible for spending wisely. This is smart planning and a wise investment of the PI's time.

- It will only lead to more inflation of budgets

- Having received a 5 year grant based on a modular budget and having AMPLE funds to conduct that research makes me question why or rather what are the unusual needs that warrant a grant over $250K. Therefore I would want to see a detailed budget.

- Will lead to inflation

- At this time this seems to be the right amount for an R01.

- For higher amounts, it is helpful to have more detailed justification.

- ULTIMATELY THERE WILL BE A NEED TO ADJUST FOR INFLATION. HOWEVER, IF THE UPPER AMOUNT IS INCREASED, ALL THE GRANTS WILL SIMPLY REQUEST MORE.

- Detailed budget requirements deter grants above 250K. Most scientific studies can be completed at 250K or less.

- At some point in the next ten years the level should be raised but this amount is sufficient for most research and I want to see justification if more is requested.

- I think the budgets will become more inflated to the max allowed.

- I believe it is a reasonable cap, above which I would characterize the project as requiring a special level of funding that should be reviewed in greater depth (i.e. with a detailed budget).

- most grants propose work that should be able to be performed for $250,000 or less

- If the ceiling was higher, then investigators would ask for the higher amount

- Grants for higher amounts should be more specific in terms of where the money is going to be spent.

- It would constrain detailed review of larger budgets where cuts can often be made.

- The higher you make the limit, the higher the amount requested/grant will be. Make it easier to cut modular budgets without having extensive justifications.

- >$250,000 warrants budget justification!

- until the NIH budget recovers I think this would simply encourage a trend that "the rich get richer" and a smaller total number of grants would be funded

- The default value for most applications is now 10 modules. If the modular limit was raised to >$250 K then most applications would ask for 12 or more modules.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- Above 250,000, more justification is needed.

- Keep the cost down.

- It's already quite arbitrary - why inflate it further?

- I think $250,000 is a reasonable number for the limit. If the limit is raised, I am afraid that the average requested amount would be increased as well.

- Increased limits would simply raise the cost of each grant proposal

- I believe that this is high enough for most individual projects and that higher amounts require justification and consideration individually.

- limit is currently reasonable for R01

- Encourage applications to keep costs in line -- I feel there would be inappropriate inflation in requested funds if the limit was raised.

- Based on a project that averages years, and based on the personnel and percentage effort required, a $250000 limit for personnel and supplies,etc. is more than adequate in most cases. If a PI has an extraordinary need/requirement, then he/she can submit a supplement or add a justification addendum.

- Because the PI has the option of submitting a non-modular budget, which is required by my Grants Office anyway.

- I think this amount appropriately serves the need.

- For expensive grants, we need to see the numbers. Particularly for personnel.

- Because for an R01, $250,000 is more than enough

- It would further inflate the requests. In the last panel I was on (2003) almost every grant (even new PIs) were coming in at $250,000. People didn't want to go beyond the maximum because it would generate more scrutiny by the reviewers to see if the science was worth all that expense.

- This seems to be a reasonable upper limit how much can be requested without detailing items

- Another opportunity for inflating perceived costs by PI

- If the budget is higher, we the reviewers should know exactly why. $250,000 is plenty for an RO1.

- Seems appropriate

- Most projects would not require more than $250,000, and if necessary it is possible to submit non-modular budgets as well.

- Most of the increase in the NIH extramural budget has been consumed by inflation of individual RO1 awards. This inflation is in part due to the modular format.

- $250,000 is perhaps sufficient for a year. That will leave room to fund more projects especially in the light of only limited availability of funds from the federal government for NIH.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- This level still "catches" most applications.

- It works

- As a reviewer, I prefer to see a detailed budget and justification. Would be worried about larger grant with no budget details

- budgets higher than this amount need detailed information as that limits the number of grants that we can fund.

- 250000 is a lot of money

- I feel that many grants are over-inflated; my sense is if you increase the limit than the majority of PIs will increase their request.

- This is a significant amount of funding which for the most part should be sufficient for most RO1 type awards

- Costs go up, but many PI's request $250,000 because they KNOW that budget will be cut. If the level is raised then they will just ask for even more and grants will be cut even more.

- Better to have multiple grants of smaller amounts. For larger awards more justification of budget is needed.

- Big requests require detailed justification to rule out padding.

- There are mechanisms already in place to ask for more

- Most basic science RO1 projects can be accomplished for less than $250/year. It is a reasonable cut-off.

- This would lead to inflated awards

- I think the modular process ends up with more expensive applications, and this would increase the problem.

- That would discourage grant applicants from taking time to seriously map out their projected budgets, and to weigh the relative cost-benefit to be derived from alternative projections

- I think modular grants should be done away with.

- For most proposed work that should be enough to accomplish excellent science and training of researchers . . . anything over that smacks of being more like a program project and should be evaluated a bit differently

- It is a reasonable amount for most

- Many budgets are already inflated - requesting maximum modular amount. If the limit is raised then most applicants will apply for the new limit whether it is justified or not.

- Seems like a good cutoff

- Most projects can be done with a $250,000 budget. In particular when funding is limited, a larger number of applications can be funded. However, at some point an adjustment for inflation will be necessary.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- this will inflate the applications

- funds are limited, and the modular grant process has largely eliminated giant grants from huge labs. In the past such applications might have asked for up to 500K and provided a detailed justification for this. Now, they don't even try to obtain such amounts (at least in my study section) because they know that the reviewers will not give it to them since they now have a perception that grant awards should top out at 250K.

- Maximize number of investigators supported

- I think that is a good baseline to work from

- Grant budgets are getting too large, and so fewer awards are possible. More grants of modest, rather than gigantic, budget would be the best policy.

- The largest grants are the most complex and require the most justification.

- Keep it simple for regular size grants

- just encourage more grant inflation

- grants for more than 250K often involve more complicated staffing and/or subcontracts. For these it is helpful to see details related to how the PI thinks about structuring the staffing.

- Everyone asks the limit whether they can justify it or not.

- this is a good number

- Often such high expenditures reflect personnel and equipment costs that should be clearly described and justified.

- The nonmodular mechanism covers this and is appropriate for higher amounts

- That is a sufficient cap.

- For the vast majority of projects, $250000 is more that adequate

- 250,000 per year is currently quite reasonable for an R01 application

- I believe beyond $250,000, investigators need to justify their expenses.

- Requesting more than 250K without detailed justification is unwarranted

- $250K is a good funding amount for most grants.

- I worry that the modular budgets have resulted in considerable overinflation of budgets as it is.

- I want the budgets justified

- It is adequate for most applications. Only 1 in 12 of my applications usually is large enough in scope to require detailed budgets. It could be done with a modular budget as well.

- Budget justification is needed

- Any application with a budget exceeding $250,000 should be described in details and provide better justification.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- A reasonable R01 effort has a budget in non-modular form about this same amount historically, so that this modular amount is reasonable and consistent. Those that need be higher should write a non-modular budget to justify it.

- $250,000 is a reasonable limit

- Adequate for the large majority of grants.

- This is a reasonable value for the support needed for a average to high-end grant for 5 years

- Most R01 type grants can be performed for this amount or less. We also have the option of going non-modular if we want to go beyond 250.

- Budgets are too inflated already.

- If needed a grant can still be written with full budget.

- already too high

- I have never liked the modular grant process. when writing a grant I always figure out the budget on a spreadsheet to make the modular grant. When I review the grant, I have no idea whether the amount is correct or not. A detailed budget is much better, though the investigator should be given freedom to change some categories if necessary

- Applicants (including myself) are asking for and receiving a huge amount of public funds to conduct their research. We should be willing to take the few extra hours to specify how we plan to spend that money when the total exceeds $250,000 per year. Although technically we are supposed to evaluate a grant solely on its scientific merits, we are all aware that funding is limited, and feel an obligation to have these limited funds used efficiently. As practitioners, we are in the best position to evaluate whether funds are appropriate or excessive, but even we do not always know, and cannot always know, how much is needed to fund a particular line of experimentation. This is where more detailed budgets would be very useful.

- In an era of limited funding, I think $250,000 is a reasonable maximum size. A larger size would limit the number of grants that do receive funding, and that would be a disaster.

- This is a reasonable cap for single investigator grants

- The current cap of $250,000 is more than enough to cover the costs of an average research project. Since most researchers already ask for the maximum knowing that there will be an administrative cut, increasing the cap will only lead to an increase in the requested funds.

- I think that the amount is about right for a standard grant, and that by constraining budgets slightly, it is possible to fund more of the highly meritorious grants that come to the NIH for review.

- This limit sufficiently covers most RO1 type projects.

- At some point we (NIH) are spending so much money we are obligated to do a more detailed review. For my discipline, $250K is a reasonable cutoff.

- I think this is an amount "we" researchers can live with.

Comments for Peer Reviewers

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- When an investigator receives a large amount of funding there should be some control point at which an evaluation is made about whether the costs are justified.

- Difficult to estimate the division of expenditures for >$250,000 budgets

- Would present more opportunity for inflating request with no need for justification.

- I think this is a reasonable amount for most grants, and justification can be used for higher expenses.

- This is a reasonable amount of award for a typical basic science or pre-clinical project in the current environment. I would hate to see fewer awards available for new investigators. An exception to this would be clinical grants or grants with large numbers of animals.

- It would raise awarded amounts without clear justification at this time.

- Would produce more inflation in costs.

- I prefer the non-modular system. The modular system doesn't save time for me when I write a proposal because my local grant administrator requires a detailed budget anyway. And the modular system hinders my ability to make a recommendation on the budget of grants that I review.

- Investigators need to create internal budgets for their institutions so the modular grants do not save them much time. Reviewers are constrained by not having the opportunity to evaluate the budget and to some extent the feasibility of the research plan. Often it is possible to determine how well thought out a research project is based on how they justify the budget (e.g., inclusion of funds for repeat visits to gather data, for community networking etc).

- I do not feel strongly about this. 250K/yr is a fairly hefty sum, and it is clear that one can request >250 (by including a detailed budget) if the proposed research requires additional monies. All-in-all I am quite satisfied.

- I strongly prefer to see the detailed budget which the investigator probably has had to do anyway in order to prepare a modular grant and to manage the project

- PIs always ask for the maximum. If you increase it, you will fund fewer grants.

- It is not possible, in most cases, to objectively comment on a proposed modular budget, since it lack sufficient details. Therefore, I would like to see the modular budgets discontinued.

- 250,000 is a reasonable threshold

- I see quite a few grants with requests for greater than $250,000. For such grants a detailed budget is required and I agree that a detailed accounting should be provided for these larger amounts.

- Most investigators will immediately increase the size of their budget to maximum allowable

- If the limit is higher, then the average requests will be higher. The budget estimates are often inflated.

- Most awards are high enough. Additional details and justification should be required for higher awards.

E2C Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- Requested budgets are inflated and should be looked at closely.

- I think it would just inflate applications. Nearly all RO1 studies can be conducted under this cap.

- Want to be able to review the proposed expenditures more closely. Institutes could benefit from input from experienced researchers in determining how much and when to cut budgets that may be inflated.

- This amount of money is adequate for most programs.

- Instances of budget inflation would increase. For single PI grants $250,000/yr is usually adequate. It is not unreasonable to expect more detailed budget explanation for requests greater than $250,000.

- More than $250,000 is too much to award without any input on how it will be spent.

- I think that it is reasonable to keep it at this cap.

- for larger grants I would like to see what the extra money is needed for.

- For applications I review, $250K is generally adequate for many projects. Keeping the limit at $250 often means more investigators can successfully compete for funds.

- More money is worth justify as a special grant.

- It is already inflated .

- Large dollar amount grants are often more complicated; the details with the budget explanation are necessary to evaluate what the PI is proposing and if it seems reasonable to meet specific aims

- We need budget details for large amounts of funding.

- Higher amounts should require a more detailed justification.

- As grants get larger, more is gleaned about the feasibility and science from the budget details.

- In my experience, the modular grant process is extremely frustrating to reviewers. In this time of fiscal restraint, PIs should justify their budgets MORE not LESS.

- it will to cost inflation. Reviewers need detailed information for grants of this size. It also makes the PI more thoughtful.

- They are already inflated.

- Depends on what is being proposed

- I don't think the modular process serves the applicant or the reviewers very well. I would like to see it eliminated. All applicants should justify there need for specific funds. The greater the justification the better the peer review process.

- Raising the limit would be likely to decrease the number of grants awarded.

E2C   Keep Modular Grant Limit at $250K

- I think most RO1s are in this range, and if they are not, that a more detailed budget should be considered for review. I would not be adverse to raising it to $300,000 but it should not be lower than $250,000

- This represents a "fair" cutoff

- I would prefer that the grant limit be lowered to approximately $100,000.

- This is inflated the award even more.. and that is NOT the best way to spend tax-dollars.

- It seems to me that for most RO1'$250,000. is adequate

- Higher modular grants will cut down the number of grants funded

- At the present time most (75%)of the grants can be completed for well under $250,00/year

- I think it's sufficient

- This would increase the consideration of the budget and inflate the requested amounts

- For most purposes $250,000 is an adequate sum that permits rapid progress

- Most of the projects described in R01s can be accomplished with 250K or less. If the ceiling is higher some people will ask for, and get, more money than they need.

- If you need more than 250k, then you should have to say why in sufficient detail for reviewers to evaluate

- I think this is adequate for most grants

- Requests for over $250,000 should be justified.

E3   Reasons for Liking Modular Grants

E3   Reasons for Liking Modular Grants

- The focus on science rather than focus on cost of individual items which vary greatly from institution to institution also the salary discrepancies between private and state institutions have less impact). This has redirected the study section discussions to the science with hopefully -not certain of data to support this - improved quality of reviews.

- - easier to prepare these budget pages
  - should allow greater concentration on scientific aspects

- ease

- Decreases the emphasis on the budget during the review.

- Theoretically, not having to deal with small details of budgets.

- More efficient. In the old days, our study section would often spend enormous amounts of time arguing about small budget details.

- flexibility; one can not predict how research will advance, particularly not that of other labs. Changes in direction and needs can be addressed in the annual progress reports.

- Time savings.

- Flexibility to PI

- less time required for budget justification allowing for emphasis to be placed on the science.

- Easier to review, easier to write

- Less time justifying small items (we used to have to list the cost of chemicals!)

- it is quicker to analyze and discuss

- less dead trees

- As an investigator, it simplifies budgeting.

- save time and effort for everyone concerned.

- Shortens the time of consideration of the budget

- I like the flexibility it gives the applicant and their ability to focus on their scientific proposal. I feel strongly about this and feel that modular grants below 250, 00 is an excellent idea. I want to se it continued

- It does not make much difference for me as the reviewer, I look for scientific quality. Budgets are not a major concern in my study section, either.

- As investigators, we need to calculate actual expenses to the nearest dollar, in order to know how many modules to request. But the flexibility is helpful, as it's easy to overlook or omit an expense inadvertently.

- Reduced discussion of the budget - we spend little time trying to second guess the applicant regarding what is needed to complete the project.

E3   Reasons for Liking Modular Grants

- Flexibility

- There is less wrangling over specific budgets items during review.

- As a reviewer--not getting caught up in decisions about specific expenditures. We can examine a grant on scientific merits.   As an applicant -- flexibility and estimation instead of making up budget numbers that may not relate to reality.

- Time savings for both the applicants and the reviewers

- As an applicant, it is easier to pull things together when your running late on a submission deadline. As a reviewer, I like nothing about it.

- Saves time in writing the application

- Streamlined review, flexibility for PI

- Not having to spend time (a) writing detailed budget justifications (for my proposals) or (b) evaluating detailed budgets for proposals I review.

- It makes putting a budget request less cumbersome.

- Easy to prepare, easy to review

- I like flexibility to move dollars between budget categories and to carry money over from year to year.

- Flexibility

- It makes the writing of grants and review of grants less tedious.

- The convenience in submitting a grant and a modest reduction in time to review the budget of a submitted grant.

- not having to provide detailed reductions in a budget that is deemed too large; just reduce modules is a nice feature

- simple, save time for both ends, cut unnecessary labor costs

- less paperwork

- Time saved in reviewing budget

- Easier to review/discuss in study section.

- Provide most flexibility for the applicants.

- Easier to set up budgets for an application

- de-emphasizing the budget and easing the burden on the PI

- Until fund you do not need a detailed budget. however our institution requires a detailed budget before they will sign-off on it.

- Simpler to write and simpler to review.

E3   Reasons for Liking Modular Grants

- It is easier to write a grant.

- simplicity, slight time savings in writing and review

- Ease of review and focus on the science for many of the grants.

- Simpler for submission and for review.

- Easier to prepare budget

- Easier to read and to prepare

- a little less time to review

- Its simple to understand category subtotals and overall grant totals

- Ease and simplicity

- Simpler. Deemphasizes picky debates about line items.

- I have not benefited from this as an applicant since education grants require detailed budgets.   As a reviewer, I appreciate not having to focus a lot of attention on the budget.

- For the most part discussions of budgets have been reduced.

- Less time is spent on taking about minor amounts of funding and justification issues

- less time spent on budget process and preparing budget. flexibility of use of funds if funded

- The flexibility available to the investigator to re-budget within the modular amount. The simpler review process.

- Simplicity

- it saves time for both applicant and reviewer

- Do not need to review a budget, do not focus on the budget, I think it constrains investigators to keep their expenses down.

- Writing the budget is easier.

- greater focus on the scientific merit of an application

- Simplicity makes it easier for the reviewer.

- easier to write

- It reduces the nit-picking over small dollar amounts. we used to argue endlessly about reducing PI travel budgets by amounts as little as $500.

- Simplification

- Simple

E3   Reasons for Liking Modular Grants

- I think one good aspect of the modular grant is that it increases flexibility so that investigators do not have to agree on an exact % of effort for each key personnel before submitting a grant, since only a bulk figure is needed to come up with a budget.

- It makes it much easier to prepare a grant application.

- Focus on Science, simplicity of operation

- Simplicity of application and review, and flexibility for PI to assign the funds where needed for the project.

- Streamlined budget preparation for applicants

- Ease of completing the application

- Simplicity of review and preparation of proposals.

- As an applicant, it is much easier to submit

- This gives the PI flexibility to operate within a fixed budget.

- It is a bit easier to review.

- I focus more on the science and less on the comparison between my salary and the PI's salary.

- Less time spent on the budget

- It makes reviewing the grant quicker--reduces time.

- Do not have to deal with budget nit-picking by some of the reviewers

- Easier to make up

- Easier to write, easier to review.

- perhaps easier for the applicant

- Help reviewers concentrate on the scientific aspect of applications.

- Efficiency of the review and efficiency in preparing the application. The strengths of this approach far outweigh the lack of budget information, which has no bearing on significance, novelty or quality of an application. Managing the cost of research is best done by budget and finance professionals, not by researchers.

- I do not think there are any aspects that are useful.

- Easier to review

- Ease

- Efficiency.

- Keeps the reviewers' noses out of information that is none of their business. We're here to review the science, not the salaries.

- It is easier to prepare the budget.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- simpler

- Focuses review on science, allows scientist flexibility.

- its simplicity, although this is a very minor advantage. More importantly, no need to present a budget that, in any case, will very rarely be followed (flexibility)

- As an applicant, I like not having to write up a detailed budget justification, although I have to spend time calculating budget figures anyway.

- it's ease

- simpler, less paperwork.

- Not having to detail the budget; saves time

- Generally, a Reviewer can assess approximately how much a project should cost.   For example, if high animal numbers are needed, then the budget trends are higher. The problem is with first time R01's by New Investigators who I do not think should be asking for the top amount for the top amount of time.   These people should prove themselves first.   In most cases in our study section, we cut the modules to what we think is commensurate with the work.   Sometimes, however, it would be helpful to understand why the PI needs "so much" money to complete the studies.   Therefore, I think this system can be modified to include certain categories but not others.   For example, a PI should not have to explain the expenses for supplies in detail [as before].

- Not debating budgets in study section time.

- Easy to review the grants and easy to write the grants

- Ease of proposal preparation.

- There is more time for focusing on ideas and science, less time filling in the information and justifying it, and the flexibility is wonderful.

- I like the fact that a detailed budget does not have to be prepared, which allows the PI to be more flexible and is much less work.

- As a PI it gives me greater budgetary flexibility

- I really do believe it is a time-saver for applicants and reviewers; reduces paper burden and time spent discussing issues that are often best discussed elsewhere/administratively.

- Blind to salaries

- Not having to evaluate the budget reduced the verbiage required in my reports and the proposals were slightly thinner and therefore were somewhat easier to lug around the airport.

- No need to discuss budget.

- Reduces focus on budgetary minutiae during review.

- Much easier to prepare than the old method.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- providing unnecessary budget details saves time. PI has flexibility to allocate funds as required for the proper conduct of the project goals.

- Less fixation on the money and more on the scientific merit of a proposal

- concise

- easy to draft budget as a researcher

- It is simple and need for discussion is reduced in the study section.

- ease of review. ease of recommended change

- As an applicant it is easy to do the budget.

- Applicant does not have to worry about completing a budget.

- Simplicity from the perspective of submitting the grant.

- As a proposal writer, I prefer the simplicity.

- Simplifies budget preparation; keeps reviewers from nitpicking budget

- Saves a lot of time dealing with minor details that do not need to be discussed or dealt with.

- Streamlines review process.

- It focuses the writing and the review of the grant on the science.

- preparation

- simplicity

- The modular grant application does allow the review to focus more on scientific merit and reduces time spent during the review discussing budget issues.

- It simplifies the budget process.

- not having to haggle over little stuff in a study section.

- From the researcher's perspective it simplifies things.

- Less time for applicant spent on detailing budget Less time for reviewer in reading through and assessing detailed budgets

- Budgetary freedom in spending increases the ability to be opportunistic. The budget justification can focus more on the rationale for the research, rather than listing each cost, as well.

- A primary focus on the scientific quality of the grant; Flexibility for the PIs

- It is swift and relies on the knowledge all peer reviewers have of costs involved with research in their field. Flexibility is another major advantage, necessary especially for long term grants (4-5 years)

- Not so much paperwork

E3 Reasons for Liking Modular Grants

- reduces time spent on admin aspects of review

- simplicity

- Ease of application and review

- time savings both as a PI submitting grant and as a reviewer

- Think budget in blocks with wasting time in details.

- It provides a cap most folks don't exceed.   Don't have to spend time during review process providing a detailed list of what cost's should be deleted. Can generalize the reason for reducing a module, e.g., "Number of FTE's not justified by amount of work proposed, etc. Reduce by one module"

- Flexibility for the investigator

- The increased focus on the scientific substance of the proposal, both by the applicant and the peer review committee.

- the review and grant are more focused on the science

- Speed from the standpoint of investigator and reviewer.

- The simplicity is very appealing and it also reflects the flexibility necessary to run a grant.

- reduces review and discussion time

- Ease of review - only need to focus on personnel qualifications/appropriateness as part of research team and ability of institution to support proposed research as well as scientific merit of the application.

- More time for scientific discussion

- Eliminates the need to itemize M&S

- Do have to go through the detailed initial year and 5-year detailed budget. It is also good for applicants.

- simplicity

- Ease of grant review and ease of grant preparation.

- as a reviewer (still have to make detailed budget for university)

- As an applicant, it provide much needed flexibility and allow me to concentrate on the science. As a reviewer, similar benefit are that I don't have to waste time on each little item that is being justified.

- All of them. I really think it saves operational and administrative time

- Study section does not worry about picky budget items (e.g. should a domestic trip cost $1K or $1.5K.

- Provides an overall sense of what they are trying to achieve

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- When I am the PI, the submission process is easier.

- Less work for applicant.

- Ease of review

- I think it is fine

- Saves me time as a PI

- Give PI more flexibility in managing and directing research - This is in my opinion the most important merit. For a truly innovative research project, PI should have the flexibility of redirecting resources.

- Simplifies preparation and review

- Not having to justify every dollar amount. This saves time in preparing the grant application.

- It greatly facilitates the application process

- Ease of preparation as a grantee.

- Minimizes time spent before the review itself and helps focus the review on scientific issues

- simplicity

- Now that I know its one objective is to give the PI flexibility, I like that

- Ease of preparation of application

- The modular budget process makes preparing a grant application significantly easier.

- Its easier.

- Efficiency

- As a reviewer, we no longer waste lots of time debating about how many liters of fetal bovine serum an investigator needs. As a grantee, the same applies...we don't get nickeled and dimed as has happened in the past.

- Focus on science

- It makes it much easier for the applicant and gives him/her much more budget flexibility.

- It should reduce the effort, but as I explained in response to an earlier question, my university requires the same detailed budget that we always have had to do. Thus, we don't get any benefit

- It reinforces our focus on scientific merit.

- Saves time writing them for sure! They are easier to read, and experienced reviewers don't need to see the supply cost details etc. Grant expenses are reasonably standard project to project.

- Simplified budget

E3 **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- Less time spent on budget issues

- flexibility for PI

- IT HAS REDUCED THE PAPERWORK AND ALLOWED ME TO FOCUS ON THE SCIENCE AND NOT ON BUSYWORK; IT ALSO MAKES REVIEWING GRANTS LESS ONEROUS - I AM FAR LESS CONCERNED WITH BUDGET ISSUES THAN I AM WITH THE SCIENCE PROPOSED AND DON'T WANT TO SPEND MUCH TIME LOOKING THROUGH BUDGETS; I AM REVIEWING THE SCIENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE, AND AM NOT AN ACCOUNTANT!!

- Speed

- The lack of detailed discussion of budgets at study section. Much time was wasted on this aspect prior to modular, even when the grant received a poor score.

- I like flexibility a lot - it is crucial. I also like not itemizing as in the old days.

- Flexibility for unexpected scientific needs

- The simplification of the forms and the budget. Although at my institution our Gants management still makes us prepare an internal detailed budget for them or they won't sign off on our application.

- The simplicity of budget preparation without the difficult to calculate breakdown of costs

- I like very few things. It makes little sense for R01s to use the modular format - it is best used for smaller award types.

- Simple to prepare

- Reduced focus of the peer reviewers on budget. Personally I would be happy if all budgeting were left up to program.

- Time savings

- the ease of reviewing and preparing a grant application

- As a PI, I like the flexibility and the time savings in preparing the proposal. As a reviewer, I also appreciate the time savings both in preparing the review and at the meeting. I believe that the information provided is sufficient in most cases to understand what is going to occur and who is going to do it.

- I like the concept and I think it actually works well. Especially since it is well known that study sections in the past has spend inordinate amounts of time getting a budget just right only for the budget to be cut administratively by 18% or more. The modular process helps the study section get the budget in the right ball park without excessive discussion that is ultimately needless and fruitless micromanagement.

- Simplicity and reduced administrative burden at several levels.

- The PI retains the ability to utilize the money as she/he feels is most appropriate.

- It's still relatively easy to assess what overall costs should be, salaries supplies etc. Sometimes difficult in unusual expense categories e.g. for newer technologies.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- Not dealing with specific budgets as a grant writer or reviewer.

- It allows flexibility to the PI.

- I really simplifies the grant preparation process for the investigator and probably expedites processing by the NIH.

- Ease in budget development

- speed of review

- Reduction in administrative, reviewer, and preparation time spent on evaluating details of budget

- As a grant writer it is easy to put the budget together without spending a lot of time on details when you have no idea whether, or not, the grant will be funded. As a reviewer it is easy to determine whether the budget is in the right ballpark without worrying about the specifics of the costs

- In general, it does cut time at study sections.

- Less administrative burden as an applicant or reviewer

- Lower administrative burden, increased flexibility in spending so that I can adapt to changing project goals, etc.

- As an applicant, not having to prepare a detailed (and frankly, often pretty arbitrary and speculative) budget is a huge and welcome improvement. As a reviewer, not quibbling in the study section over very subjective views of supply or equipment costs is a great relief, as is the time saved.

- The main advantage is easier preparation of the application. Filling in a detailed budget is a very contrived exercise. From running their own laboratories, reviewers are quite competent at comparing the scope of the project to the likely case of completing it.

- simpler application

- As an applicant, it does reduce the administrative burden. As a reviewer, it does simplify the review process.

- Less budget detail required before proposal ready to be funded

- Focus on research and relieving the study section of usually uninformed budget trimming.

- shorter review time and shift in effort to scientific content

- Makes grant submission easier, although our institution requires a detailed budget for internal purposes.

- Easier to write up the budget section

- I think it does reduce the focus on the budget details which is appropriate, although as I have said, I don't have lots to compare to.

- As a reviewer, I spend less time going over the budget and more time on the science.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- As an applicant, reduces overall time taken to submit an application.

- For the applicant formulating a precise budget is an exercise in futility. In the review scientific merit should be divorced from the costs.

- Ease of preparation of applications. Note that our institution always requires a detailed budget spreadsheet for the project. Thus it is the forms completion that is easier, not the budgeting, per se. And we can always justify our budgets, thoroughly.

- Flexibility in not providing every little detail and justifying it.

- As an applicant, I would prefer the simpler format

- Makes writing grants easier and provides more flexibility.

- less administration

- flexibility of budget

- The reduced burden in preparing my own grant submissions.

- As a PI, I like the flexibility. As a reviewer, I like the simplicity

- The main reason is the simplicity of the process for both the investigator and the reviewer

- Devoting more time to evaluate the scientific merit.

- streamlining and lack of any detail to criticize: sometimes details are not needed, requests are prudent and obvious.

- Ease of evaluation

- Saves time in reviewing a proposal; flexibility for PI; saves time in preparing proposal.

- Presumably less time spent on administrative details for the applicant, as reviewer they seem a little simpler to review but its a minimal difference

- Makes it easier both to apply for a grant and to review a grant.

- Flexibility for investigator

- Focus peer review on the science; flexibility for PI when award is made

- Simplified budget condensed bio, refs, other support

- It focuses the scientific review on the proposal rather the budget. It is much easier for the applicant.

- Significantly reduced time preparing application.

- Simplified process for both applicant and reviewer. The previous nigglings over budget in Study Section were a waste of time and were usually, I think, misdirected.

- Easy of completion, allowing flexibility in year to year rebudgeting

- simplicity and the cap on total funding per award.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- It greatly simplifies the budget justification aspect of writing/submitting applications, which as an author allows one to focus more on the science.

- Slightly shortened budget discussion at Study Section

- Fewer pages to review.

- Ease of application preparation and review.

- In most cases I do not need to see the budget, and it does make things faster not to see it.

- Its easier to review the budget section

- No detailed justification of budget. CV only for the key personal.

- The ease of budget preparation is great for the applicant. It saves time for the applicant and also for institutional grants administration because detailed budgets do not need to be approved unless the application is funded.

- As a PI it is easier to write the grant. As a reviewer, it is more difficult to assess the appropriateness of the costs requested.

- It's easier to prepare budgets for the application so that more time can be devoted to the scientific aspects of the application. Also, I appreciate not having to include my salary on my applications, and I suspect others appreciate my not learning their salaries during review of their proposals.

- Don't have to write a budget justification for the study section.

- It's simpler to fill out as a PI, and faster to read through and reach a decision as a reviewer (but see below).

- As an applicant, it is easier and requires less time.

- Not seeing minor budget details. Seeing the justifications for deviations from equimodular requests that explain one time equipment and personnel needs.

- Simplifying the application process

- VASTLY SIMPLIFIES THE TIME AND EFFORT SPEND BY PI AND HOME ORGANIZATION

- Simplicity of preparation and review

- Most grants don't need a detailed budget to assess the relationship of budget to proposed studies.

- Focus on the research and human subjects aspect more than the cost

- It does make reviewing easier

- not much paperwork

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- In theory, there is less time preparing the budget justification (as an applicant) and reviewing it (as a reviewer). But for the former, in order to know if I can use the modular approach, I need to completely cost out my entire budget anyway, so there is really not much savings of time. Most of the energy that I put into writing a budget justification is in the description of personnel, which must be done regardless of the use of a modular or non-modular budget.

- simplicity and it adds standardization to the process.

- Not having to spend time on details.

- Some time saving in reviews, but not a lot

- Scientific review needs to be about the science and not the costs. The modular application brings the review process closer to this goal.

- Easier preparation, avoiding focus on small details during review. (Our institution, however, requires complete budget be submitted internally before submission.

- I do not care for it because I find that I have to do the detailed analysis anyway in order to get a sense of where I am as far as needed resources. I have to do the budget for our Hospital Admin anyway. The only real advantage is that the need for some approvals is delayed. The bottom line is that when I get an award, I have to calculate the detailed budget anyway and if I did not do it when I wrote the grant, I may miss something or, as usual, the cost of some items have changed. I am more aware of that when I am putting the budget together along with the application.

- Simplicity

- Speed, emphasis on science, ease in evaluating costs.

- Theoretically takes less time to write grant

- simplicity

- less time spent discussing minute details of budgets

- Time saving when reviewing the budget

- Discussion on budget items is eliminated.

- Even though it is limited, the PI has some flexibility in administering the funds under the modular grant system.

- Less time spent on that portion of the proposal.

- When I write a proposal it is less work for me.

- When I write a grant, I have to spend less time filling out forms.

- less paper work and more flexibility

- It's fantastic from a PI perspective!

- less cumbersome administratively

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- The flexibility it provides the investigator to change directions in research as the science evolves over the course of the funding.

- Streamlined.

- the reduced paperwork

- flexibility... broad categories rather than little details having every little penny specified is a waste of time

- As a PI, I like the ability as I'm writing the grant to focus on the science and the flexibility once the money is in hand -- although our institution internally requires as detailed a budget as NIH ever did so actually the time savings is not really there As a reviewer, with smaller grants, I don't think there is a need to micromanage what they are doing -- many of my "in the middle" responses to scales above really are "it depends" -- I think it is appropriate that more information is required for larger grants

- speeds up study section meetings

- ease of preparation in writing the application

- Simplicity in preparing grant proposals and reviewing them.

- The modular grants make reviewers focus more on the science rather than the budget and free time to do this. They also speed up the review process slightly.

- Simpler for applicants and reviewers.

- Easier to write the budget justification

- Simplicity of forms in the actual application.

- It's much easier to write a grant

- Grant is shorter--easier to carry! As a reviewer, I spend very little time on the budget, so it does not have a big impact. As a grant writer, I think it is great. Really adds flexibility and decreases administrative overhead.

- It saves time in preparing the application

- It makes grants easier to prepare. It also removes criticisms of how much technicians or other personnel make at one institution versus another, such as "Why does the investigator need to pay a research assistant $40000, because at our institution research assistants only make $25000?"

- Simplicity of doing the budget

- I like the flexibility to budget the funds where they are most needed. I spend less time working on the budget section of the proposal.

- Ease of budget preparation; you don't focus on the $ but more on the science when reviewing (although nonmodular budgets do tend to rouse one's curiosity as to why the budget is so high)

- Flexibility of how money is to be spent, since research often requires unanticipated changes and needs.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- Simple to review budgets as well as prepare budgets

- It saves a lot of effort for the PI more so than for the reviewers.

- Slightly less work as reviewer, but no less work as grant writer since university still requires the details before signing off.

- simpler preparation, review

- ease of grant application through HU grants' office

- I'm neutral. I think it takes roughly the same time to write a modular grant as non, and similar time to review it

- Easy for applicants.

- I do not have to needlessly spend time drawing up or reviewing detailed budgets.

- It is easy.

- It is absurd to have to predict how much one would spend on certain items.

- easier to prepare and easier to review

- Speed in the preparation phase. Less paper to wade through on review.

- IT'S VERY SIMPLE

- simplifies details such as supply costs,

- Less bickering

- Concentrating on the science and not debating the nitty gritty costs

- As an applicant, it saves grant-writing time. However for my institution, a detailed budget and justification is still required.

- Review process moves along faster. Reviewer's don't get bogged down in the administrative process of budget review leaving less time for scientific review.

- Budgetary part.

- Flexibility

- I know how much money I need to conduct my research. Therefore, a modular budget saves me time and allows me to focus on the scientific part of the grant.

- It does make it something you don't have to deal with.

- Simplicity; it is clear that detailed budgets for work that will be done five years hence are guesses, so the precision of specific amounts in specific categories is an illusion.

- The flexibility of using the budget awarded to meet changing needs of the proposed research. Research outcomes sometimes are unanticipated. Having a flexible budget allows for redirecting resources to address new directions in developing research.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- The fact that eliminates fake budgets

- Fewer forms to complete Saves time with budget justification

- No need to waste time nit-picking budgets

- From an investigator's point of view, it gives the impression of more flexibility. From a reviewer's point of view, it speeds up the pace of review and allows more focus on the science.

- NOT HAVING TO DELVE INTO THE DETAILS ABOUT WHAT THE INVESTIGATOR NEEDS TO ACCOMPLISH THE PROJECT

- The whole process is ok with me.

- Reduction of time spent discussing minor details of budget. More uniform treatment of proposals; previously, not all reviewers scrutinized budgets at the same level.

- Ease of application process for the PI, ease of review, less nit-picking in study section over budget issues irrelevant to science.

- Specific numbers in specific categories are impossible for investigators to calculate - so the modular aspect for supplies, etc is very good. Simplifies the overall budget calculations.

- It makes easier for the reviewer in the sense that there is not much to consider when reviewing the application whereas with non-modular one always looks at the percent effort and other expenses to gauge whether they are reasonable. The reviewer is out in the field engaged in similar activities therefore it is not difficult to have a realistic idea of the cost in time, effort and dollar amount that it takes to conduct a listed task.

- Easier to prepare as an applicant.

- Does not make much difference. My institution requires me to turn in the budgets as if the application is non-modular. I think this is a good, critical element of planning research.

- unnecessary to prepared detailed budget that will change considerably as research evolves during the funding period.

- I like the fact that even though modular budgets are submitted to funding agencies for review, at the home institution, detailed budgets still need to be prepared for each study year, so that the modular budget request can be made accurately.

- Simple

- Simplicity in preparation; somewhat more flexibility with the awards.

- simple , less cumbersome, more focus on the scientific merit and research design

- I like not having to make up how much money will go towards different reagents.

- simplicity

- Eliminates the burden of nit picking over every dollar. Reduces time spent peer reviewing.

- Really focus on science

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- The ease of preparing the budget and the flexibility it provides. For many grants the Modular Budget amounts requested are within expected range of the work proposed. However, many are inflated for effort and cost that should be incurred

- Shorter review time; less discussion of budget; more flexibility for PI

- Easier to prepare the budgets for my small applications

- the simplification

- Doing the math is much simpler so that more effort is focused on the scientific part of the application

- As an applicant, the flexibility of using the funds, and time saved in not having to prepare detailed budgets.

- Ease of overall evaluation, ease of determining role and % effort of personnel.

- Administrative ease.

- there's less time spend worrying over details of the budget

- no need for a detailed budget and you can focus on science

- Ease in preparing applications.

- - Easier for grant reviewers
  - Easier for grant writers
  - Flexibility for P.I.

- As a PI, you can get more money out of NIH

- brevity for grant preparation and review, and flexibility provided to the PI

- Allows reviewers and applicants to focus more time on the science. Our institutions still required a more details budget and I think the "ball-park" calculations are accurate.

- Decreases the amount of time spent discussing very fine budget details at IRG.

- Investigator flexibility and less time needed for grant preparation and review.

- Gives the PI somewhat more flexibility.

- QUICKER, ALLOWS SOME MORE IMAGINATIVE PROPOSALS WITHOUT REQUIRING FULL BODY ARMOR.

- The ease with which a budget can be prepared.

- Its simplicity, both as an applicant and as a reviewer.

- Nothing that I can think of. As an applicant, I still have to prepare a fully detailed budget for my institution to review and approve. Then I have to prepare the modular pages in addition to that. As a reviewer, more information is needed to evaluate budget requests.

E3   **Reasons for Liking Modular Grants**

- In theory it is great not to have to itemize budget, but in spite of the modular concept my university still makes us come up with detailed personnel salary and fringe as well as vague separation of the other categories. This always becomes a problem as grants (even ones with outstanding scores) are funded but cut.

- Simplicity, flexibility for PI.

- Briefer budgets

- Simplicity of preparation of grant. Simpler, more focused review of science. Flexibility in use of funds. Inhibition of University busybodies in the grant proposal preparation process.

- I don't like the modular grant application process. To begin with , the vast majority of PIs still have to submit the detailed budget information to their institutional grants office for approval, so there is no time saved for the submitting PI.

- Reviewing time is improved, and I would not want to go back to the old system. Justifying the cost for every experiment is really not necessary to perform a good review.

- It is easier

- not a lot of focus on minor costs adjustments

- As a grant writer, I find that I have to work up a detailed budget in order to submit a proposal. It seems like a waste to not submit this budget in with the proposal.

- PI flexibility

- Good intention. Poor outcome.

- In preparing the proposal, it probably requires less work

- reduction of time spent on study section dealing with budget. has focused some reviewers away from budget to science

- Saves a little time in preparing budget figures

- 1. Preparation of budget for the modular grant application budget requires less time. 2. The modular grant application accommodates principal investigators' flexibility.

- It is certainly easier and allows more of the focus of study section to be on scientific merit. I'm not really sure that reviewers are in the best position to judge budgets anyway.

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- The average requested grant amount seems to be inflated. No knowing the detailed budget, I do feel uncomfortable to cut the budget. As a results, I believe the average grant amount is also inflated.

- As a reviewer, I dislike not being able to see details. I think that the modular budget approach works fine for most lab-oriented research (e.g.. basic sciences), since most such projects are all staffed the same way. But, for epidemiologic studies, there can be some mant differences between studies that are reasonable due to the exigencies of a particular population being studies, etc., that it is not very easy to apply a universal standard as to what research should cost.

- The tendency to inflate the budget

- As a reviewer, it's harder to evaluate the real costs of doing the research. Also, by making the PI give a justification, there is much less room for budget padding.

- For unusual projects or unusual expenses it is difficult to evaluate applications but in general these are rare.

- No way to assess overlap, commitment, double dipping, etc.

- Too easy to inflate.

- Lack of important budget information.

- THEY SEEM TO GET A PATINA OF BEING SECOND CLASS BECAUSE THEY ARE MORE DIRECT AND DON'T HAVE THE "EXHAUSTIVE" PATINA THAT SEEMS TO BE SO POPULAR IN THE STUDY SECTIONS.

- Not being able to determine if the personnel requested are realistic given the budget requested. Sometimes it seems that many researchers are added to give scientific weight, but budget couldn't support them.

- It obscures the details of some plans. Overall, budgets were outlines anyway, so I'm not sure that it makes much difference to the outcome of the review.

- I DON'T HAVE THE CHANCE TO JUSTIFY THE FUNDS REQUESTED, SO THEY ARE MORE VULNERABLE TO CUTS BY STUDY SECTION AND THE INSTITUTE

- Very difficult to make recommendations on budget because insufficient information available.

- that it does not take inflation into account. It should be made to start at a certain level and then inflationary increases need to be added to that initial modular value

- Sometimes it is difficult to accurately assess whether what is being requested is well-justified, and without that information, the more common outcome is to cut a module.

- Applicants - particularly new investigators - tend to arbitrarily insert maximal allowed levels in attempt to "fool" the system if a fundable score is awarded. Itemized budgets tend to make the applicant more "practical" about what he is proposing.

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- Reductions in funding are largely arbitrary. Budgets become rather arbitrary when reductions occur at both Study Section and then again at the Council level.

- Not taking advantage of the first hand knowledge that many experienced researchers and executive directors have regarding realistic costs for similar efforts.

- The current limit of 250K is too low to justify a regular size project as institutions are constantly transferring various costs to the PI as direct cost.

- There are occasional attempts to pad the budget. These are fortunately rare and, in my experience, reviewers are very good at catching this and requesting that the budgets either be evaluated or that modules be cut. Such requests by reviewers are taken seriously by study section members and by the SRA.

- actually takes more as all Institutions require a detailed budget

- All grants are inflated by 1 module, only some get that module cut.

- Many applicants do not carefully think about what their research will actually cost - especially new and young investigators.

- In certain cases such as non-human primate research it does not allow an investigator to justify the actual costs of doing studies.

- It does not save me time and I never seem to get a application under the $250K limit anyway. Colleagues of mine at our institution complain that it is confusing what is required and what will be required if an award is made and what, if anything, is no longer required.

- Not easier for the applicant. Most investigators, like myself have to submit an itemized budget to their administrators, then convert to modular. Also, as a reviewer, I like to know what other support an investigator has. I was on study section when the shift to modular grants occurred and my impression was that there was a big jump in the average cost.

- DOES NOT SEPARATE PERSONEL COST FROM THE REST

- Most grants have been somewhat inflated

- Lack of COLA feature. Ceiling is too low.

- Guessing where the dollars are going

- It doesn't save me that much as a reviewer or as a grant writer since I have a good grants administrator who puts them together for me. It saves the grants administrator time, but not much, since my univ requires semi-detailed budget including complete personnel + fringe info. If modular grant budgeting was eliminated I think PI's would request less money. Now everyone is programmed in the first submission of a grant to request $250,000 and then, in the resubmission, cutting one module.

- Detailed budget also shows PI's knowledge of what it takes to do study, other support shows experience. The lack of detail makes it harder to assess grant

- As a reviewer, I find it impossible to evaluate costs without a detailed budget

- Not having the opportunity fully review the applicant's proposed budget in some detail.

E4 **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- inflation of individual RO1 costs;   having general categories such as personnel, supplies, would be helpful to hold the PI more accountable.

- no increase in size of grant;

- That other support and biosketch format depends on type of grant (should be common instructions for all types of PHS398 grant apps)

- restrictive with respect to salary increases administratively dictated by our institution.

- Reviewers do not necessarily know the particular expenses for personnel at different institutions. Since personnel represent the major expense of most projects, this variation from place to place has a huge impact on the size of the budget. Supplies and equipment tend to be the same for all places. It is even more important to provide detailed budget justification for modular budgets because reviewers don't have any other information on which to base evaluation of the budget. The common misunderstanding about modular budgets is that the justification can be short or non-existent. This is absolutely incorrect. Most of the problems with modular budgets could be solved if PIs were advised to provide detailed justifications for the expenses.

- It does it harder to figure out by how much some budgets are inflated, although this is not a common problem.

- As a reviewer, it is very difficult to evaluate the modular budget and my perception is that new budgets are highly inflated as a result; i.e. if a project requires $180K, the PI can ask for $200K. Over the term of a 5-year award, this adds up! It is my perception that additional grants may be awarded if the modular budget system were not in place. It is not difficult to evaluate the detailed budget pages, as the vast majority of reviewers have significant experience with preparing such budgets. Indeed, it is much easier to make specific budgetary recommendations with the detailed format than with the modular format. I don't see any time savings at study section meetings as a result of the change to modular budgeting. I would strongly recommend that the modular budget process be discontinued.

- The cases where the budget was seemingly over what we thought, there was no method short of deducting the module- which could rise as high as 20-33% and could make the experiments impossible.

- Little room for explaining needs to reviewer or demonstration that PI grasps the cost demands of a project

- As a reviewer, it is more difficult to get a sense of whether the amount requested is reasonable.

- as a reviewer, it is impossible to determine if a budget is appropriate. Almost all applicants ask for 10 modules. Appropriateness can only be determined by knowing the salaries of key personnel and direct laboratory supply costs.

- When a whole module is cut without concern for the impact on salary, supplies etc.

- Grants have been ridiculously inflated, particularly from junior investigators, or on animal studies, since the justification isn't there, and SRA's strongly discourage reduction of budget.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- Without information it is hard to recommend reductions to put the applications in line with others. If there are 8-10 well justified modular reductions among the better applications in a study section, there can be funding available for another application.

- doesn't provide detailed information.

- The limit should be increased

- As a reviewer it is difficult to justify budget cuts

- that I think in the long run, modular grants end up costing the NIH, because the minimal budget asked for is 250k

- It makes it more difficult to be sure that the investigator has requested a fair and appropriate amount of money.

- harder to judge them

- The old budget system, while artificial, helped keep budgets reasonable. Now everyone wants $225-250K for their first grant. This has encumbered NIH budget and contributed to a decreasing percentile score for funding in the face of increasing (until lately) NIH budgets.

- There is a tendency amongst experienced Investigators to go for the maximum amount justified or not.

- that there is no budget for inflation there could be a cost of living adjustment per year

- When one wants to recommend a budget cut, it can be difficult to tell if the research can really be done with a reduced budget - although the reviewers are usually the best judges of that.

- Would prefer listing not only of overall (and justification of personnel and equipment), but also listing of major categories.

- As a reviewer, I have occasionally wondered if the budget was inflated in a new proposal. This is relatively rare, but is worrisome when the applicant has other grants with the appearance of scientific overlap.

- Tendency of many PIs to inflate their budgets

- Occasionally, more information is helpful to reviewers. For applicants, I think there is a sense that $250,000 is a budget level that they should probably not cross because it will endanger their grant. Applicants should be encouraged to ask for what they really need.

- As a reviewer, the budget is more of a black box. Minimally, the budget justification should include the percentage of time proposed for each person (I think that is required now).

- 1) The fact that my institution requires an internal budget that is just as extensive as a non-modular budget; there is no time saved for doing a modular budget. 2) Reviewers generally view non-modular budgets negatively, because only more expensive grants have non-modular budgets. As a matter of fact, this leads to discrimination against non-modular grants simply on the basis of their budget size. 3) I feel my grants have a better chance if I submit a modular grant rather than non-modular. Overall, the modular process leads to smaller budgets, more grant writing required on the side of the PI to support the same amount of research, modular budgets are more easily cut, and overall, less money is awarded per PI.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- Other than above, everything.

- Uncertainty of PI's personnel costs and other items such as core laboratory costs makes it difficult to determine whether a budget is justified.

- If you are at an institution that has unusual charges (tuition, higher animal costs, etc) or if you have more expensive personnel (senior research associates), it is difficult to clarify the justification for the specific module. IN addition, when NIH increases pay levels for postdoctoral fellows, the module levels do not automatically increase. I think that Other Support information is JUST as important for the modular budget evaluation as it is for the nonmodular. Some very arbitrary "standards" became the norm of evaluation versus what the research really costs (e.g. junior new investigators get $175,000; only really senior investigators get $250,000). There were also strategies to force nonmodular budgets to become modular.

- It is hard to judge how much is going to be spent on personnel versus other categories. Sometimes I wonder if something is unreasonable, but have no way to assess.

- the cap

- Budget items & justification often provides some useful detail to reviewers about the logistics and procedures of project. This should be in the narrative but when it's not it can't be found in the modular budget either.

- Lack of inflation supplementation.

- Applicants tend to ask for more money than they really need to do the project. The study section members do their best to correct the inflation, but are probably not always successful.

- I dislike not seeing salaries.

- I still have to prepare a detailed budget for our institutional Grants & Contracts office so my work is the same.

- The more senior investigators whose funding transitioned from non-modular to modular have been severely limited by their prior support levels (they have not reached 200,000 even after 10 plus years of continued funding). Yet new investigators with less proven output/productivity have asked for and been funded at near full level (250,000). Something should definitely be done to overcome this inequality.

- My University requires that we prepare a detailed budget anyway, so this increases the amount of time spent on budget issues. I would support a request from NIH that universities abandon this practice.

- It is difficult to tell what amounts will be spent on personnel, supplies, and the various categories.

- Since our controller's office requires a full budget from us anyway, the modular forms have not made applications any easier for us to prepare.

- Most institutions require a detailed budget anyway so it doesn't help with flexibility or time on the grant application end of thing

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- Difficult to know for sure whether budget is justified.

- I think that more budget information is needed, because with the modular format, it is too hard to be sure that the amount requested is justifiable. Some investigators clearly inflate their needs, others clearly do not.

- To difficult for reviewers to see how resources will actually be allocated. Tends to be too easy to slip in an extra module or two.

- As reviewer there are many applications that are highly meritorious that can not be supported. It is a false economy to provide inadequate funds to a supported application just as it is a loss of opportunity when one application is overfunded at the expense of not supporting additional applications. I also think that modular budgets may excuse the PI from thinking critically about just what resources are needed and really planning the research. The timeline that many applicants include is not a full substitute for this. I generally have a reasonable idea of potential cost. When the cost is higher (actually this means a lot higher) than expected, it takes me longer with a modular budget than an itemized budget to reach an opinion about the alignment between costs and project.

- I do not get as good handle as to whether the applicant really knows what he/she is doing.

- The one aspect that I do not like is that it is difficult to gauge how much of her/his time the investigator is committing to the proposed research, or for that matter anybody else listed in the application. Also it is impossible to approximate the cost of a given task.

- The evaluation of proposed budgets seems almost arbitrary. I don't think reviewers do a careful job evaluating budgets.

- It is impossible for an applicant to justify items that are particularly expensive, but which are essential for the proposed work. This results in ARBITRARY and uninformed budget reductions by the review panel. It is impossible for the applicant to justify HIGH salaries that are fully appropriate for highly experienced investigators (i.e., 10 yrs of post doctoral experience or individuals with non-tenure track faculty appointments). The worth of these individuals greatly exceeds the "apparently" high salary request. In the absence of these very appropriate justifications, the review panel makes ARBITRARY budget cuts based on typical post-doc salaries. These practices severely handicap the applicant when an award is made. You cannot fund half a of a talented individual and cannot expect to perform science without the required reagents.

- When the reviewer proposes to cut a module the SRA expects the reviewer to provide a detailed justification. Without a detailed budget this not possible to do fairly or accurately. The SRA (and the CSR) needs to accept the reviewer's judgment in the same spirit the reviewer accepts the applicant's judgment about the budget. This would probably allow reviewers to cut inappropriately large budgets more easily and would increase the number of projects funded. I usually did not bother recommending budget cuts because the subsequent discussion was protracted and often fruitless.

- Relatively little justification provided, which does not help judge the budgetary requirement in detail. This however is a minor point compared to the advantages.

- There is a tendency to slightly inflate the budget

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- PIs inflate the budget.

- As reviewers, it's sometimes difficult to judge whether the budget is 'on par' with the research plan.

- On the PI's end it is an added burden. We are required by our University to still make a detailed budget for their files. So now we have to make up numbers so that it comes out to the module value.

- Sometimes budget seem inflated and it is difficult to determining without a budget justification.

- Lack of details sometimes hurts a grant when it is difficult to correlate work proposed to what the reviewer thinks that a budget should be.

- Sometimes its difficult to figure out how monies will be spent. That is, if there is a disconnect between the personnel/items that appear to me to be needed and the budget, then I am at a lose to resolve that conflict

- It appears that every R01 grants that I reviewed was either $225,000 or $250,000 after the introduction of modular grants. Whereas, before the modular grant application was introduced, the requested amounts were lower for each grant.

- My particular problem with the modular budget approach is the lack of detail concerning personnel costs. I've seen grants with 30% of a PI, 1 postdoc, and 1 graduate student awarded the full $250,000. I really don't suspect that the salaries add to anything like that number, and the grant thus generated a slush fund for operating expenses that may not be able all required by the science. Also, I hate the tendency of study section to "cut a module" just to look as though they are doing something. We need some numbers - I very much like your compromise approach above of totals for personnel, supplies, travel, publications costs, etc.

- Reduced discussion of the budget - we have no basis, except for a vague sense of what a project costs, to recommend changes to a budget or, for example, to accommodate different salaries in different parts of the country.

- As above, sometimes it is difficult to know why a PI requests such a high funding amount. In this case one wonders what the money will be used for. Personnel categories, equipment, and animals should be required to be justified on the budget. Perhaps, the NIH can simplify the original system and keep the modular idea but require a justification in important categories as described above.

- I can't see how the applicant plans to spend the money, hard to evaluate if the budget is appropriate or not. Decisions on modules are pretty arbitrary (of course decisions on budgets with a detailed budget are also pretty arbitrary.)

- occasional ambiguity

- You should be able to request 1/2 modules when needed.

- can't tell if the budget is inflated

- The difficulty for the committee to have an informed judgment regarding the appropriateness of the cost estimates, and the lack of knowledge of other commitments of the investigators.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- My institution still requires I establish a detailed budget (with most of the classic justifications), before I fit it into a modular format. Thus, I really do work twice. From a reviewer's prospective some form of justification of the applicants needs for supply costs animal's etc., instrument need/cost, help the reviewer understand why the ask for the number of modules they do. Especially true when you an novice reviewer.

- The $ amount is too limited.

- In some cases, applicants provide TOO little budget justification.

- We are told at our institution we cannot change the amount requested. They will not let us increase the modular in the middle of a cycle.

- The worry that reviewers will not appreciate the true cost of my proposal

- It fails to take regional differences in salaries etc into account. Reviewers can recommend cuts based only upon their own knowledge of these things, which may not be the same everywhere

- As a reviewer, the personnel costs should be provided - different institutions vary greatly.

- Tendency to inflate grants

- Very difficult to justify cutting budgets of grants as a reviewer, even though a number of grants appear to have inflated budgets. When costs were specified, it was much easier to identify sources of padding that could be cut (which should save the govt money).

- It does not give me some of the information I need to provide a good judgment of budgets proposed by peers

- More difficult to justify costs that may not be understood by the reviewers

- Many investigators ask for $250,000 for grants that cost much less to do, while others ask for $250,000 for grants that should receive more.

- Less insight into way the PI is really planning to do with the money.

- As a reviewer, many times the budget appears inflated but without details this is hard to verify.

- unable to evaluate whether funds will be distributed appropriately

- As a grant reviewer, for applications with study design complexities and components, the modular provides insufficient detail to evaluate budgetary issues.

- Possibility of overinflated budgets, lack of clarity what to cut and how much.

- It is sometimes difficult to estimate how many people will work on a project. It is somewhat unfair to projects that have high supply costs (for example, transgenic mice) because the specific costs are not presented.

- Reviewers generally resist budgets over 250,000.

- $$$ limits you still have to do the detail budget to know what it's going to cost

- All in all, there is not much that I dislike.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- I think it is hard to evaluate the budget, so it is easy to accept the budget that is listed, as long at it is below the max allowed.

- I agree with the current process. It is good.

- It bothers the people here in charge of grants because they like an exact budget so you end up doing a detailed budget to satisfy the people here.

- Other support is often not clear and sometimes it feels as if there is duplication of funded efforts. Often reviewers mistake duplication when there is none on modular grants (as has happened several times for me).

- Lack of consensus on meaning of budget information

- Not knowing how the budget figure is arrived at

- The inflation of the total budget on a large number of grants. This wasn't a big problem during the time of the large increases in NIH grant funds but with the shrinking of funds available for R series grants and general tightening of NIH budget, it may be prudent to go back to detailed budgets.

- Sometimes it is a mystery exactly how the applicant will get the work done.

- I do not dislike it.

- hidden inflation

- There is still an artificial nature to whether one project gets $250,000 versus $225,000 etc. However, I still prefer the modular over the non-modular.

- sometimes the feasibility of a proposal is unclear because of lack of info on the budget

- In reviewing grants, it is not always obvious where the funds might be utilized, and if there is sufficient or too much being requested.

- STUDY SECTIONS TEND TO GRANT THE 250,000 WITHOUT MUCH THOUGHT

- Salaries vary among institutions. Since salaries are not shown in the modular grant applications, it is sometimes difficult to judge budgetary needs.   Listing dollar value totals for major categories (personnel, travel, etc.) would help in this regard.

- certain budget items are -hidden- another suggestion I- retain modular- ask for more justification!!!

- the grant amounts have increased, thereby decreasing the % funded.

- This limits the total value of the dollar amount and no increase in subsequent years. This puts a strain on the PI's functioning of the lab specially if one has a larger lab.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- It is very difficult to assess budgets since we don't know (i) whether the PI receives a salary from his/her Institution or is completely dependent on grants for salary (ii) the fringe benefit rates for personnel, (iii) local post-doc/tech salaries, and local animal costs. Identical grants (with a PI, a post-doc, and a tech which involves animal work) could vary enormously in cost between different Institutions. How is it possible for a reviewer to determine this on a modular basis?

- Absence of information on some aspects of budget justification beyond the traditional issues of normal requests for personnel, supply, and travel, such as equipment and unusual requests. An estimated % distribution for the major categories might be helpful.

- It is hard for the reviewer to determine the real cost of the project.

- No aspect

- Itemization labels a grant as "more expensive"

- It is much more difficult to review a grant without a detailed breakdown of costs. The budget plan often reflects feasibility of a project and demonstrates that the investigators have a handle on what they are doing. Often, smaller grants 250k are submitted by junior investigators in my field. Having the detailed budget helps them to demonstrate that they have sufficient time, support from mentors, etc.   Budget discussion in meetings is not expedited by modular grants. Lack of information invites speculation and counter speculation about what is going on.   A good chair will short circuit inappropriate micromanagement of a budget by an IRG. Aside from the potential for reviewers to obsess, I see no downside to require that investigators provide detailed budget. Indeed, I recommend to my colleagues that they always work out the details, even if the submission is modular, so that they can be certain that they have what they need. As chair and past chair of two study sections, I strongly recommend eliminating the modular approach.

- The fact that indirect costs for consortiums between institutions have to be included within the $250,000 - this significantly constrains the budget.

- The fact that there is little to distinguish new and established investigators in the budget decision. As I said everyone, or nearly everyone, requests 250K

- I feel that the budgets have become very inflated over recent years, and it is difficult for reviewers to dissect out the inflated parts.

- Inflation of grant requests, opens system to gouging, it harms people who are honest in their appraisal of costs for the grant, ultimately leads to reductions of grant amounts because of programmatic reductions in an attempt to stem tide of greedy scientists. This constellation of changes makes it difficult for young scientists to break into the system.

- Opaque costs. Unsure about the validity of all expenses.

- Some reviewers still try to pick apart the budget. The budget should be private. I like the fact that they cannot determine PIs' salaries.

- Difficult to know where to put equipment justification.

- occasional inflation of some costs

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- It does seem like almost everyone asks for the maximum amount of money.

- Sometimes modules are cut without adequate consideration of the effects on the research

- Sometimes makes it hard to judge whether the overall budget is reasonable.

- no real problem with it. I have only done it once.

- Budgets are highly inflated. There is less money to go around.

- We are still required to submit a detailed budget locally to Research Services - this is especially important as they track time and effort reporting. So there is very little reduction in time from the previous mechanism. The flat budget is also a problem - if you really need $250K the first year, it is quite likely that you will need $275K by year 3 - an increase requires a supplement which is almost as much work as the original application.

- I strongly believe that it has inflated many grants; the perception is that because study section reviewers are reluctant to cut modules (difficult to justify), why not ask for the whole $250K? Many grants slip by with inflated costs.

- It would be nice to think that the "old" behaviors on the part of study section members could be reduced. I found this to be poorly enforced. On the other hand, as a reviewer it was impossible to evaluate the dollar scale of a project since there was no basis for judging. This plus the masking of other R01's from a given PI made it impossible to detect "overcommitted/undercommitted" PIs. This is a substantial concern that is rightfully an aspect of feasibility.

- Can't determine unit costs of research

- A little additional verbiage/text justifying overall budget (especially in expendable costs) might help some reviewers.

- Sometimes, the budget does seem high for the activities described (but not generally). More often I perceive the budget to be high when a detailed budget is provided.

- Occasionally budget information could aid in clarifying questions about a project.

- difficult to fully evaluate whether the researcher knows what s/he is doing

- I don't dislike this system.

- sometimes difficult to know if budget is appropriate for project

- It has been inflationary and it has been a license to steal. It was designed to have staff, rather than reviewers, checking for duplications and inflation. Unfortunately, most of the time staff at various institutes do not have the time or the desire to do it. Hence the system is now based only upon the integrity and honesty of individual applicants.

- Reviewing modular grants

- I don't like being asked to evaluate a budget for which details are lacking. Since study section budget evaluations are only recommendations and modular budgets make budget evaluations a guessing game, reviewers should not be asked to routinely comment on the budget unless it seems unreasonably inflated or a reduction in specific aims is being recommended.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- 1. Inflated budgets 2. Lack of other support page- the other support page is really necessary 3. No escalation in future years

- Still have the responsibility to say whether funds are reasonable yet there is no budget justification provided.

- limit on modular grants too low, should be 300,000

- As a reviewer, it appears that budgets are inflated, but it is often impossible to know

- Would be nice to know whether there a specific reasons a larger budget is needed for some projects than might be apparent from the science description. For example, how much of the budget needs to go to the PI's salary? I would recommend that applicants be given the option of including a brief (one-half to one page) narrative justification for the total dollar amount of the modular grant. It may also help to specifically ask how much of the money will go to the PIs salary versus all other uses.

- That it is not easy to determine whether a budget of $200,000 is reasonable or too high. It appears to me that budgets above $200,000 are often cut a module or 2, but budgets of $200,000 or less are less likely to be scrutinized for potential budget padding.

- The lack of "inflationary" budget increases over the course of the grant to account for increased salaries, etc. This is particularly a problem for 5 year grants

- the absence of information on other support. This makes it difficult to cut budgets for people such as HHMI investigators who probably don't need the money. If we had a figure for how much total money was coming into each lab we could make better estimates for how many modules to cut off grant awards. I realize we are not actually supposed to make budget decisions on this basis (that is, whether we think the lab needs the money), but in practice this happens all the time.

- The lack of detailed budget makes it hard to see if costs are justified in some cases

- sometimes arbitrary numbers

- Hard to judge the costs of some unusual and newer research methods

- Some uncertainties during review process and some investigators do seem to overinflate their budgetary requests with inadequate justification, although I would not say this is "most"

- I think detailed budgets should involve personnel. It is ridiculous that modular cuts are made so that supply funds are so small the work cannot be accomplished. Administrators do not want to cost-share once the budget is cut along with the final 10% cut at funding time.

- Consortia /subcontracts are very difficult to accommodate in a modular grant application. It is preferable to increase the limit for consortial grant applications by 1-2 modules.

- Inflated budgets

- Loss of detail may leave "open" questions about the scientific activities or design.

- There are some occasions when I worry that reviewers suggest a cut in modules because they fail to consider some costs that the investigator has budgeted for but has not had the opportunity to describe in detail.

E4 **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- Seems to work OK.

- No real dislikes -- except I'd really like to be actually given the modular amount recommended by the study section, not some 15-20% decrement thereof.

- As a reviewer, it would be nice to see any substantial budget items explicitly listed.

- All requests seem to come in now at 250,000

- Makes it hard to make budget recommendations when reviewing grants.

- Too small amount to really do the research.

- It can mask shortcomings in the organization and fiscal planning of the project that could impact on the successful completion of the proposed research.

- I am satisfied with this method overall.

- Since we are asked to evaluate the budget without any detailed information, cuts are hard to make. Personnel are listed, but salaries vary, so we are left guessing most of the time. My hope is that program will negotiate any cuts and hopefully do right by the applicant in the end. In fact that's been my own experience for my own awards.

- Would be helpful to know the total dollar amount allocated for personnel and fringes.

- Salaries and fringe benefit costs and basic categories for expenditure would be helpful such as mouse costs, supplies, other expenses etc.

- That other support is not detailed. I think it is important to evaluate a given project within the total effort and resources available to a laboratory

- One disadvantage is that some young investigators have not done a detailed budget for their own use, and sometimes apply for too few modules to do the work. This can be a detriment to their score if it appears impossible to do the work at that funding level.

- Sometimes hard to judge as a reviewer

- It does allow some "padding," but this occurred in the old format as well; people just had to be more devious about it. In most cases, such padding just copes with budget reductions which can threaten scientific integrity of a project, anyway.

- No adjustment for inflation

- It has not appreciably reduced reviewer work load. It simply provides reviewers with less information to use in judging an application and tends to make budget discussions in IRG meetings more of a pro forma exercise.

- lack of data to detect waste

- I like the modular budget approach

- Our University still requires a detailed budget for their records at the time of submission. It is difficult to make a detailed budget equal a modular amount. As a reviewer it is irritating to see almost all applicants asking for $250,000 a year just because they don't have to justify the cost.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- As stated, it is difficult to properly pass judgment on the budget justification since details are not provided.

- the fact that my university still requires a detailed budget at the time of proposal for its own accounting.

- Lack of details on PI and staff support ($)

- When someone on study section feels the budget is not appropriate there is just not enough information to discuss the point.

- More applicants appear to be trying to get around it, which is wasting study section time. That should be STRONGLY discouraged.

- Only having to guess when the applicant provides minimal information in the justification.

- No opportunity for grantees to increase over the years to accommodate increases in salary or fringe benefits

- Lack of detail sometimes impairs my ability to assess whether the investigator has thought through all that is required to perform the study he/she is proposing

- In some cases clearer budget justification would be helpful

- Not having the ease of determining the overall salary money devoted to the project makes it difficult to determine if the applicant has allotted sufficient supply resources for the project.

- As an NIH review, it is difficult to evaluate the budget on modular grants. As an applicant, it is no help that I am not required by the NIH to submit a detailed budget, as our institution requires it for institution purposes.

- As an applicant, none.

- Personnel salaries and yearly inflation can not be accurately estimated for a five year grant period. Therefore, any increases in these costs need to be absorbed and/or accommodated somehow by the PI

- I believe that since this started there has been a creep upward in grant awards because while reviewing it is harder to justify cutting a module when there is no specific item to cut. This is true even when the costs seem high given the scope of the proposed work.

- When a grant seems especially expensive for the proposed research a more detailed budget helps me (as a reviewer) understand what I might have overlooked in the narrative

- inflationary and discriminatory towards younger. newer, less experienced investigators. Rewards experienced grant writers disproportionately

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- A maximum annual budget request of $250 K is too low. I realize this is a relatively meaningless statement in the current budgetary climate. Staff are making large administrative cuts in budgets approved by the review panels just meet targets for grant numbers. This is a very unsatisfactory solution. The current explosion of special, large scale programs has deeply damaged the R01 mechanism, which has been and should be the backbone of the NIH portfolio. Many deserving investigators are not funded when the payline drops below 20 or even 15%.   The need to increase R01 budgets and fund more R01s creates a need to reduce special grant programs, which in my experience, are much more wasteful and "overfunded" than individual grants.

- Budget Inflation. all recent grants at 8-10 modules.

- Reviewers reluctance to cut modules, with non-modular it seems reviewers thought it was easier to justify a cut by naming a specific item. I think minimal justification is needed for cutting--i.e. the budget does not reflect the scope of the proposal cut by x number of modules, should be sufficient.

- The pendulum swung too far. It is very difficult to judge whether the amount is appropriate. It seems reasonable to list broad categories, such as salaries, supplies, and even provide some justification if the PI wishes to (usually a good thing if costs are particularly high). This does not add a lot of time for the reviewers - in fact, can decrease time because reviewer has info in front of him/her instead of trying to figure it out. And the reviewer has the option of ignoring the justification - they never would. Reviewers consider money precious, and the right to ask for it precious! It can be good for the applicant because a budget thought to be high may not be.

- I think it's a big improvement. We've got to move to on line submissions. The mechanics of copying and collating all the forms and getting the appendix together is still a pain a too much wasted time. The major problem is things like letters of collaboration etc. that I guess would have to be scanned in by the PI and turned into a PDF. Files would be huge so there would have to be a central website to upload to. I know you are working on it put please hurry,

- The continued limitation (generally 10%) on grant award amount based on previous cycles of funding.

- difficult to estimate expenditures; other support information with abstracts should be required for all grants

- In some cases, it is easy to "pad" budget requests

- The potential for driving budgets higher.

- Not being able to see and understand the intended costs.

- I don't like the fact that there is no place to provide more detailed justification of the budget, in particular personnel costs. If only key personnel are listed, the budget may seem inflated. In fact, the PI may need to hire several research assistants, which can be costly.

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- the average award has to have increased. There is no incentive to be responsible with your budget because there is no way to determine how the money is being spent. Young investigators are likely encouraged to go for the limit because it doesn't affect the score and if you get the money, all the better for the department/institution. Having 4 categories would be ideal; salary, equipment, supplies and travel. That would allow us to determine if a project could be cut in a targeted manner rather than across the board.

- Doesn't permit an explanation of how many dollars are being devoted to personnel (i.e., salaries of key personnel can be hard to guess)

- As a grantee, the annual reporting of amount spent does not fit with the idea of flexibility. In other words, with modular grants, we need to purposely have more money left in the first two years so that there will be money available for inflational adjustment and wage increases. In my opinion, there is no need to ask the grantee for justification in modular grants.

- As a reviewer, makes it more difficult to evaluate whether the research can be conducted successfully.

- The reviewers need detailed budget information.

- Budget decisions become somewhat more arbitrary, but the reality before modular grants was probably very similar at much higher cost of time and efforts.

- $250,000 limit. It should be increased to $500,000. This way the grant applications seeking more than $250,000 are not discriminated because of the requested budget.

- There should be more flexibility when asking for additional funds for unusual costs such as equipment. Having to ask for whole modules can be both insufficient or wasteful depending on the cost of the equipment.

- Sometimes supplies breakouts are useful. It helps me see if the PI has thought out just what it will take to do this research. Sometimes the magnitude of work for a particular aim (e.g. the number of clones that will be needed) is not enumerated clearly in the research proposal but it is enumerated in the supplies budget.

- Some people probably abuse it and ask for more than they really need.

- the set budget can be a problem, especially when your institute decides to raise indirect costs and there is no venue to supplement the proposal...it must come from the direct costs, leaving insufficient funds to do the research.

- I think that everyone just asks for the maximum amount, or almost everyone.

- Our Institution requires a detailed budget anyway. A waste of everybody's time since less than 25% of applications will be funded.

- limits on funds

- budget limitation to 250K

- As a reviewer, it is harder to determine whether the cost match the activities.

- Sometimes it is helpful to see more budget detail than provided. Sorry, can't think of an example offhand. If completed this close after I had reviewed grants, I could!!

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- reductions made at the council level not reflecting recommendations of study section cuts made at council level are across the granting period, rather than in early and not later years

- As a reviewer on a training and career development IRG I did not like the absence of other support pages

- See above. In addition, some institutions (mine included) require that I submit a detailed budget for in-house purposes, so the modular format does not save me time.

- see above -- our institution takes a very conservative review and requires documentation of everything in initial budget and sometimes disallows costs that to the PI seem completely arbitrary -- need to have universities trust PI to be flexible appropriately to get the job done

- I think it is bogus that there cannot be a cost of living increase (e.g., 3% per year) for an awarded modular grant.

- The budget detail and justification provides reviewers with a lot of key information about personnel distributions and itemized project costs that are missing and very hard to evaluate in modular applications. In addition, because there are no yearly increases for salaries or inflation, the scientist must inflate early budget years to cover later costs; again making cost evaluation difficult.

- Modular budgets do not save reviewers or study sections time. They often do the PI a disservice, since the reviewers cannot judge their budgets with the same scrutiny they do with non-modular budgets. Sometimes reviewers feel that PIs use the modular format to 'hide' costs that cannot be well justified.

- the budget limit

- In reviewing, there are occasions where I cannot understand how the science will get done if I cannot see what costs will go toward certain parts of the research program. I think that it is essential that applicants put down some key costs, such as travel between locations if multiple sites, equipment costs if key to science. On the application side: as an applicant at my institution, we must prepare a detailed budget internally regardless. The only savings is in the preparation of the forms.

- Inability to determine the amounts requested for salary support and for supplies. The total amount requested in each category would be useful.

- When I review a grant and want a specific aim cut, I do not know how to cut a modular budget. Another example is that I do not know how much effort key personnel are devoting to a project without those details.

- It makes it harder to review the budget and especially hard to cut.

- constructing the budget is no easier than in a non-modular application, but I don't get to provide as much detail to reviewers.

- no annual cost increase--requires decrease in PI percent effort over time to compensate

- I believe it has added to the unnecessary inflation in grant size. I feel to some extent the doubling of the NIH budget has been squandered, because of greed. More grants could be funded if budgets were more reasonable.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- As a reviewer, it seems like budget requests are getting inflated and it would be easier to recommend cuts if more details of budgets were provided.

- as a reviewer, not having enough info to make good decisions on the budget as a PI, having to keep to the dollar limit

- In the end it is really not less work since a detailed budget is requested after the grant is awarded. My institution requires it before they allow us to submit. I also think it has inflated average grant size.

- lack of detail on budgets impedes the review process for me

- I must say I am quite fond of it as it reduces overall work, and as a reviewer I do not have any issues with "reading in between the lines" to determine if the request is appropriate. My feeling is that the caliber of people that NIH in general recruits for Study Section also fairly rapidly figure out if requests are reasonable.

- the cap does not allow for inflation in out years.

- If the budget appears inflated compared to what might be expected, it is necessary to extrapolate from the investigator's proposed workscope to try and determine what would be reasonable for expected costs (giving them some leeway) compared to what is being requested. Sometime, this can take more time than looking over an overall budget in a non-modular proposal.

- streamlining and lack of detail to criticize: sometimes, the budget is a critical element of determining feasibility (FTE of personnel, materials, equipment) or double-dipping or (frankly) unnecessary robbery. It determines how pay lines are determined at Council. Costs are real costs to everybody.

- Applicants are told that they neither need a detailed budget nor a detailed budget justification. However, they should also be told that they should include as much justification and detail as they think is necessary for reviewers to adequately evaluate the budget requested.

- Some Institutions seem to cut the budget arbitrarily even with the modular budgeting.

- The amount of money given out has increased and some is wasted. This is not good.

- Modular grant limit only $250,000

- Budget static over years of funding.

- A concern about some applications that the request for funds truly is inflated. In the end, awarding of such grants limits the total number of investigators who can be funded.

- loss of some details

- There is little thought about the actual costs of doing the research.

- It does make the discussion of the budget more difficult and somewhat arbitrary.

- Vagueness

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- Lack of information on how much is allocated towards personnel and how much towards other categories

- As a reviewer, I sometimes see budgets that seem excessive, and I have no way to evaluate.

- Most: It ends up being additional work for the applicant as I have to prepare a fully detailed budget for my institution as well as a modular budget. I really do believe that grant applications have become inflated with applicants asking for much more than they need. For reviewers, the lack of information makes it difficult to evaluate the appropriateness of the budget.

- My sense from study section is that people are willing to award a $200,000 grant pretty readily, assuming that the science is good. Because the majority of grants that come in are modular, the study section is not used to seeing larger grants. As a result, they look negatively at non-modular grants. I am seeing new investigators get a second $200,000 modular grant even though they have made little progress on their first grant. In contrast, I think a $400,000 grant gets scrutinized much more carefully even if the productivity is very high. So the lower amount of money requested with the modular grant causes people to be less concerned about making an award with the result that even low productivity PIs end up with multiple grants having a much larger cumulative total.   The need for two or more grants actually creates a greater demand on reviewers because they now have to review more grants and creates a bias against larger labs that do not want to have multiple grants. The artificial $25,000 blocks of money are treated quite arbitrarily. Because the reviewers have no idea as to what the investigator really needs, it is easy to remove one or two modules. That mentality applied to a non-modular grant can be devastating.

- It is impossible for a scientific reviewer to make good judgments and informed recommendations about the budget. Yet the reviewers are being asked to do so. This is a sham.

- Less informative about how budget is allocated.

- The current page limit (up to 25 pages) of R01 application is too long. Maximal of 20 pages should suffice.

- More money than necessary is requested and thus more than necessary is spent by NIH

- budget modifications are done blindly. the applicant should be able to explain why a but appears high (or low)

- However, as a reviewer, without inclusion of costs of major groups of expenses, budgets are often cut without justification. For example, there is a 10 fold difference in animal housing costs across the country, which is substantive. Furthermore, at private institutions, there is no salary support for PIs and the cost of other personnel differs widely across the country. Since we judge budgets based on what it would cost us to perform these experiments in our locale, we do not always judge correctly. Thus, would prefer to have costs of major categories included.

- On those occasions when the budget does seem high, it makes it much harder to create suggestions for budget cuts. My understanding was that the reviewers needed to specify a particular number of modules to cut. I was unaware that a verbal description of excesses in the budget could be proposed (as described in an earlier item); this would have resolved my main concern with the module budget system.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- As noted above, this system penalizes investigators that utilize subcontracts and consortia to perform their research.

- When I am the reviewer, it is often difficult to tell whether the costs are reasonable when they are not outlined. This would be more difficult if the grant limits were higher.

- There is clearly the potential for budgets can be inflated by the investigator.

- The modular budget process makes reviewing a grant significantly more difficult. Reviewers no longer receive sufficient information to assess productivity per grant for individuals with multiple grants, and it is very difficult to assess overlap between related grants. In general, modular grants favor larger labs with multiple closely aligned grants, rather than smaller labs supported by a single grant.

- (1) I cannot determine how much of the budget is going to excessive personnel costs in contrast to study costs (participants, lab costs etc). (2) It is unclear if the proposed work is part of a larger program of research or is a new proposal that stands on its own. This is a result of the absence of other support information. (3) It seems unfair to expect justification in the non-modular process but expect a detailed budget in the modular one. I had always thought that this was the result of NIH believing that smaller grants would "waste" less money if resources are misused, and therefore, justification was not needed. I have always thought this to be faulty reasoning -- multiple modular grants with hidden costs (some not justified) could result in greater waste of NIH financial resources.

- I think it leads applicants to shape science to fit the modular limits and ultimately to a norm of inadequately funded work. Raising limit to 100,000 would help.

- Reviewers may not appreciate the high costs of animal studies and recommend budget cuts. Perhaps NIH should recommend that the applicants submit justifications for large budget items even if a modular grant.

- The fact that I still need to submit a detailed budget to my university grant office.

- As a reviewer, I cannot make an intelligent comment about the budget. Overinflated budgets are the rule and we have no criteria for recommending cuts, because there is a lack of information in the proposal.

- Not adequate for large grants with big budgets.

- grant seem to increasing without good justification of the costs.

- less information pertinent to logistics

- Saves time in reviewing the application. It is more difficult to assess the budgetary needs of the applicant.

- Often possible to recommend cutting or increasing a budget by a fraction of a module. Full module changes are often pretty rough approximations

- the limit

- Impossible to determine whether the levels of funding requested is or is not sufficient.

- Cuts can be arbitrary.

E4   **Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants**

- Sometimes I would like more justification for the total amount and time requested

- Each module should be reduced to $20,000. The current $25,000 is high. This will help reviewers to cut budget in smaller increments and will save NIH dollars for other projects.

- Inflated budgets. I am not sure if the program administrators will appropriately cut a well scored grant, which has inflated costs embedded in the modular budget.

- I have not found that it saves me time as an investigator as it is still necessary to do detailed cost projections and I think it is more difficult to review grants with modular budgets.

- There are definitely grants where budget detail would be very helpful. One wants to know, for instance, if the PI is able to accurately estimate just how much of some item will require. OR, if the grant is very expensive, but it is because the salaries are high in that geographic region, then seeing this allows one to avoid arbitrary cuts.

- No cost of living increase.

- I prefer the non-modular system. The modular system doesn't save time for me when I write a proposal because my local grant administrator requires a detailed budget anyway. And the modular system hinders my ability to make a recommendation on the budget of grants that I review.

- As a reviewer, it seems that budget estimates in applications have increased significantly and are inflated.

- Flexibility and less paperwork.

- It does not allow future increases in a five year grant funding.

- Animal studies are by there very nature significantly more expensive and this is not always clearly rationalized in the modular budget. Green reviewers tend to want to cut studies utilizing animals without understanding why the budget is so large.

- the investigators seem to put down the highest budget limit with notion that they may allow me to get all this money.. if not, let them cut it. from the institutions' point of view may include treatment of grants as a part of money-making.   tax-dollars should be spent better by providing smaller funds to more investigators - that may encourage more in-depth and careful studies.

- sometimes, as a reviewer, I would like more information about where the money is going to go

- - Flat rate of support - P.I. should spend less in the early years, to leave more for later years, but that is hard to do - More difficult for reviewers to gauge level of support needed - Initial awards and 1st time renewals seem higher than in the past

- I do not dislike any aspect of the modular grant application.

- I still have to prepare a detailed budget for my institution's grant office.

- the fact that with the current cap clinical studies are rarely modular

- Too much is not revealed. Obviously, this is why NIH did not want to use the modular system for very large grants.

E4   Reasons for Disliking Modular Grants

- Broad disparity in salaries that will influence bottom line costs that some may not judge adequately

- Not having the flexibility of changing modules from year to year is probably the only aspect I dislike.