

# NCI FUNDING POLICY FOR FY 2012 RESEARCH PROJECT GRANT (RPG) AWARDS (02/03/2012)

## INTRODUCTION

The National Cancer Institute conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and the families of cancer patients. For more information or to view the Institute's mission statement, please go to the NCI website: <http://www.cancer.gov/aboutnci>

## BUDGET DATA

NCI's FY 2012 appropriation of \$5.071 billion reflects a \$12 million increase from FY 2011. With this modest budget increase, NCI's first priority is to fund as many new Research Project Grants (RPGs) as possible – especially to our new investigators – to enable our grantees to pursue innovative scientific research. Information on the Fiscal Year 2012 appropriation can be found on the NIH Office of Budget website: <http://officeofbudget.od.nih.gov/gbi.html>.

## FUNDING

### STRATEGY

In FY 2012, individual consideration of a broad range of competing applications will be the hallmark of NCI's selection process. Peer review evaluation of scientific merit will remain the primary consideration in these funding decisions, which will be made by NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL) following discussions with Program Staff. The NCI SPL will give special consideration to applications that fill a significant gap in the cancer research portfolio or propose an especially novel or promising scientific approach.

### GUIDELINES

#### ***Non-Competing Awards***

Consistent with the NIH policy published in the NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts on January 20, 2012 ([NOT-OD-12-036](#)), no cost of living (COLA) adjustment will be awarded to any FY 2012 non-competing grants. This means that if a 2% COLA was included in the committed level for any non-competing grant, the award will be reduced by 2% to remove the COLA. Non-competing grants that did not receive a COLA will not be reduced. The commitments for modular grants do not include a COLA, so there will be no reduction for those grants. COLAs for future year commitments will be discontinued for all competing and non-competing research grant awards issued in FY 2012, however adjustments for special needs (such as equipment and added personnel) will continue to be accommodated. This policy applies to all grants, including SBIRs and STTRs.

FY 2012 awards that were issued prior to the implementation of this policy will be revised to adjust the award level and future year commitments in accordance with these principles.

### **Competing Awards**

- **Traditional Research Grants (R01) & Exploratory Development Grants (R21s)**  
Although there will be no guaranteed paylines, Traditional (R01) and Exploratory Development (R21) applications up to the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile will be funded this fiscal year with only rare exceptions. Individual applications beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile will be considered for funding on a case-by case basis by the SPL as described in the “Strategy” section above.
- **New Investigators**  
NCI has a strong commitment to new investigators. As with the experienced investigators, R01 applications that receive scores up to the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile will be funded this year with only rare exceptions. For traditional R01 selections beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile, the SPL will give special consideration for new investigators, particularly those who are in an early stage of their careers. The current definition of new R01 investigators can be found on the NIH Office of Extramural Research website at: <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm#N4>. The definition of Early Stage Investigators can be found at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm#E>.
- **Program Projects (P01s)**  
All P01 applications will be considered for funding on a case-by-case basis by the SPL. This has been NCI’s policy for many years.
- **Small Grants (R03s) & AREA Grants (R15)**  
Most of the Small (R03) and AREA (R15) grant applications up to the priority score of 25 will be funded. Applications with scores beyond that may be selected for funding on a case-by-case basis.
- **Large Dollar Amount R01s (\$700,000 or more in direct cost requested in any year)**  
All Large R01s will be selected on a case-by-case basis by the SPL. This has been NCI’s policy for many years.
- **Request for Applications (RFAs)**  
NCI is committed to the review of applications submitted in response to RFAs previously announced and solicited for competition in FY 2012. Success rates for RFAs will depend on the scientific merit and programmatic priority of each application, the number of applications submitted, and the amount of funds available, but the NCI does not consider it obligatory to use all funds set aside for any RFA. Please consult the Program Director listed on your summary statement if you have questions.
- **Amended Applications (all mechanisms)**  
Amended applications submitted for the February/March, 2012 receipt dates (September 2012 NCAB), will be considered for funding under FY 2013 budget plans, which are not yet determined and may be different from the FY 2012 announced levels. FY 2013 begins on October 1, 2012.

- **Policy Reductions (all mechanisms)**

During FY 2012, competing renewals (type-2s) will be funded on average at the current level and the new grants (type-1s) will be funded on average at a 17% reduction from the Initial Review Group (IRG) recommended level. Any competing grants that were awarded under the reduction policy of 20% below current for competing renewals or 20% of the IRG recommended level for new grants while the Institute was under the Continuing Resolution will be restored to the full year policy level.