

Enhancing Peer Review Update – Stay Informed January 2009

Enhancements to the NIH peer review system are now underway. We have been setting the stage for these changes with both NIH staff and the broader scientific research community through communications such as policy notices in the Guide for Grants and Contracts, briefings to NIH Councils, training for NIH staff, press releases, newsletter articles, and listserv communications. In addition to providing these resources, the Enhancing Peer Review website is continually updated with new content, such as a video presentation that will be posted in March 2009. We have also created a dedicated e-mail box for questions from the public. Scientific Review Officers have been communicating with reviewers and preparing them for the training they will receive as the spring review meetings commence.

For an overview of the implementation timetable, see [NOT-OD-09-023](#). Note that restructuring the application (shorter length and realignment of the application sections with the review criteria) will not begin until the FY 2011 funding cycle (applications submitted for January 2010 due dates and later).

The first phase of peer review enhancements are summarized below:

Recognizing Early Stage Investigator (ESI) and New Investigator (NI) Status- January 2009 ([NOT-OD-09-013](#), [NOT-OD-08-121](#), and [NOT-OD-09-034](#))

- The NIH will support applications from NIs at success rates comparable to those for new applications submitted by established investigators. ESIs are expected to comprise a majority of the NIs supported (FY 2009 funding and beyond).
- To ensure appropriate consideration for ESI eligibility, all NIs will need to update their eRA Commons profiles, and will begin seeing their eligibility displayed in eRA Commons on or after January 17, 2009.
- Beginning with the traditional R01 grant applications received for the February 5, 2009 submission dates, NIH will identify grant applications from ESIs, and where possible, these applications will be clustered for review beginning with the May 2009 review meetings.

Only a Single Amendment Accepted - January 25, 2009 ([NOT-OD-09-003](#), [NOT-OD-09-025](#))

- Beginning with original new applications (never submitted) and competing renewal applications for FY 2010 funding (submitted for the January 25, 2009 due date and beyond), the NIH will accept only a single amendment to the original application.
- If the applicant fails to receive funding after two submissions (i.e., the original and the single amendment), the project should be substantially re-designed rather than altered in response to previous reviews.

Review and Scoring Changes - May 2009 ([NOT-OD-09-024](#), [NOT-OD-09-025](#))

- Scoring changes will apply to applications under consideration for FY 2010 funding (submitted for the January 25, 2009 due date and beyond).
- Each application will receive an individual score on a 9-point rating scale on five core review criteria of significance, investigator(s), innovation, approach, and environment.
- Each application that is discussed in the review meeting will receive a final impact/priority score on a 9-point rating scale, which will be the average of the overall impact/priority score given by each eligible review committee member.

For More Information on Peer Review Changes visit
[Enhancing Peer Review Web Site](#) at <http://enhancing-peer-review.nih.gov>