

Enhancing Peer Review: Fall 2010 Update

Peer Review of Overall Impact

- Instruction to reviewers has been revised to “Write a paragraph summarizing the factors that informed your Overall Impact score.”
- Use of bullets has been eliminated for Overall Impact on the reviewer critique template.
- Reviewers should justify comments and scores and not simply cut and paste from comments on other parts of the application.

Reminders on evaluation of Review Criteria and Considerations

- Reviewers should focus on major strengths and weaknesses for each review criterion, and should be clear and concise in comments and opinions.
- Reviewers should provide adequate context about the project or application for comments to be understood.
- Scores without comments are strongly discouraged.
- Strengths and weaknesses that do not affect determination of the Overall Impact may be included in *Additional Comments to Applicant*.

Reminders on scoring

- Criterion scores are submitted prior to the review meeting by the individuals assigned to an application, and they may reflect the reviewer’s initial assessment.
- Criterion scores are not discussed specifically at the review meeting.
- Reviewers are asked to update their criterion score(s) during or after the review meeting, if their assessment of any criterion has changed.
- Criterion scores are not averaged to calculate the overall score. There is no pre-determined formula that reviewers use for determining the overall score from the criterion scores.

More information on Peer Review

- The review criteria and considerations for many award mechanisms can be found in [Review Criteria-at-a-Glance](#). The Scientific Review Officer (SRO) and the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) may provide additional guidance or special review criteria for a particular application.
- Reviewers can find [Guidelines and Review Critique Templates](#) on the NIH website.
- [Enhancing Peer Review at NIH](#) provides more on the Enhancing Peer Review Initiative.