

Fellowship review..... behind the scenes at the NIH (or AHA, etc.)

Carol Lutz, PhD
Associate Dean for Student Affairs
SGS, RBHS-New Jersey Medical School
lutzcs@njms.rutgers.edu

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**Fellowships are training vehicles.
Science is really important,
but the “training potential” of your
experience is just as important**

Look now for upcoming opportunities!

What else gets scored, other than the science?

- * Applicant
- * Mentor/co-mentor
- * Training plan/potential for training relevant to articulated career path
- * Environment



Fellowship Applications...how to get started

- **Look for opportunities in your area of research**
- **Some local/regional (NJCCR, NJ Spinal Cord Institute, etc.)**
- **Some from professional societies (AAI, etc.)**
- ****NSF, NIH, etc.**
- **Other agencies, AHA, etc.**
- **GradFund**

So you've submitted your fellowship application. What happens next?

- Proposal gets assigned to a group based on subject matter
- Next assigned to a subgroup or subsection
- Scientific Review Officer (PhD) is tasked with organization of a “study section” or grant review panel
- He/she will assign applications to reviewers based on their expertise



Reviewers must be:

- Knowledgeable/subject expert
- Impartial, unemotional
- Fair
- Objective
- Accurate
- Critical, logical
- Reliable
- Able to write a helpful, readable review
- Able to assess “novelty”



Study Section Logistics

- Reviewers will have ~ 10-12 applications to read and write reviews
- Will have ~ 4-6 weeks to do so
- Will meet in person or via teleconference
- Each application has 3 reviewers: R1, R2, R3
- Applications are scored by all. Review panel does not determine fundability, only scoring



**Only ~50% of applications will be “discussed.”
Those applications with non-competitive scores will
receive full written reviews, but will not be discussed
in order to allow more time for discussion of the
competitively scored applications.**

50%

SCORED REVIEW CRITERIA

Fellowship Applications (F30, F31, F32)

REVIEW CRITERIA (Provide Criterion Score for each)	ADDITIONAL REVIEW CRITERIA
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fellowship Applicant2. Sponsors, Collaborators, & Consultants3. Research Training Plan4. Training Potential5. Institutional Environment & Commitment to Training	Factored into overall Impact score (<u>Don't get separate scores</u>) <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Human Subjects2. Vertebrate Animals3. Biohazards4. Resubmission (for A1 applications)
Overall Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall Impact score is NOT an average of Individual criterion scores.• It is a separate assessment of the likelihood of the fellowship to promote candidate's potential for, and commitment to, an independent scientific research career, in consideration of the scored and additional review criteria.	

Proposed Simplified Review Framework

NIH proposes to reorganize the five regulatory review criteria into three factors.

The Overall Impact Score (scored 1-9) reflects the overall scientific and technical merit of the application; **all three factors will be considered in arriving at the Overall Impact Score.**

Factor 1: Importance of the Research (scored 1-9)

Factor 1 is based on the criteria *Significance and Innovation*.

Factor 2: Feasibility and Rigor (scored 1-9)

Factor 2 is based on the criterion *Approach*.

Factor 3: Expertise and Resources (evaluated, but not individually scored)

Factor 3 is based on the criteria *Investigator and Environment*.

Reviewers would rate these as “fully capable” (Investigator), or “appropriate” (Environment) or, if gaps are identified, as “additional expertise/capability needed” (Investigator) or “additional resources needed” (Environment).

If either of the latter two are selected, a narrative explanation of the gaps would be required.

The 3-factor structure is intended to focus the evaluation of scientific merit on key questions—how important the research is and whether it is both rigorous and feasible. Contributions of the investigator/institution to scientific merit are framed in the context of the research proposed.

MERIT Assessment	IMPACT on candidate's research training and career development	SCORE
Overall research training VALUE of the application	<p style="text-align: center;">HIGH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No weaknesses or negligible weakness that will not affect training</p>	1
		2
		3
	<p style="text-align: center;">MEDIUM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A good application with some minor weaknesses</p>	4
		5
		6
	<p style="text-align: center;">LOW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Applications with moderate weakness</p>	7
		8
		9

Overall Impact Score Guidelines

Training Value and its Impact on applicant's training and development

FELLOWSHIPS & CAREER AWARDS

Overall Impact:

The likelihood that the proposed training (F) or career development (K) will enhance the candidate's potential for a productive, independent scientific research career in a health-related field.

Overall Impact	High	Medium	Low
Score	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

Evaluating Overall Impact Consider the 5 criteria (weighting based on reviewer's judgment):		<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of high value/benefit for the candidate who has high potential for developing into a productive, independent scientist. May have some or no weaknesses in the criteria.</i>	<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of high or moderate value/benefit for the candidate who has high or moderate potential for further development, but weaknesses in the criteria reduce the overall impact to medium.</i>	<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of moderate or low value/benefit for the candidate who has moderate or low potential for further development. Weaknesses in the criteria reduce the overall impact to low.</i>
Fs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant • Sponsor(s) • Research Training Plan • Training Potential • Institutional Environment & Commitment 	Ks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate • Career Development Plan/Goals* • Research Plan • Mentor(s)** • Environment & Institutional Commitment 	<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of moderate value/benefit for the candidate who shows moderate potential. May have some weaknesses in the criteria.</i>		<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of low value/benefit for the candidate who shows low potential. May have some weaknesses in the criteria.</i>
and other score influences, e.g. human subjects, animal welfare, inclusion plans, and biohazards				
*K05 and K24: Plan to Provide Mentoring **K02: Consultants/Collaborators				

5 is a good, medium-impact application. The entire scale (1-9) should always be considered.

Fellowship Review Focus Summary

- The review should focus on the training **VALUE** of the application and its **IMPACT** on applicant's scientific development
 - ✓ the applicant's **potential** for an independent, scientific research career
 - ✓ the applicant's **need** for the proposed training
 - ✓ the sponsor's **training experience, funding, and commitment**
 - ✓ the level of **integration of the Research and Training Plans** to provide productive research training
 - ✓ the quality of the **research environment** (Scientific programs, facilities)
 - ✓ **Overall Impact Score Decision:** the **potential of the application** to promote scientific development and **prepare the candidate** for research independence

Questions?

lutzcs@njms.rutgers.edu

