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Enhancing Peer Review Initiative

Survey of Applicants

VERSION B

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Introduction

This survey of NIH grant applicants is to help examine **NIH's Enhancing Peer Review Initiative** (http://enhancing-peer-review.nih.gov/). The objectives of the initiative are to engage the best reviewers, improve the quality and transparency of peer review, and ensure balanced and fair reviews. This is the first annual "point in time" survey to gather applicants' opinions about the peer review process. This information will be useful in assessing the changes introduced by the Enhancing Peer Review Initiative and may be used to further improve the peer review process.

You have been **randomly selected** to participate in this survey from a pool of individuals who submitted at least one NIH research grant application from January 2008 through May 2009. We are interested in your opinions, regardless of whether or not the application(s) you submitted during this time period was funded. Even if you have limited experience submitting grant applications, **your opinions are very important to us.**

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. You can stop at any point and continue at another time. There are no right or wrong answers, so please give the answer that best describes your opinion. While we would like you to answer all the questions in this survey, you may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you choose to complete the survey, your responses will remain **anonymous**. Your responses will **not** be linked to your name and will **not** be made known to NIH staff or peer reviewers. They will not be used to assess the performance of individual NIH Institutes, Centers, or Scientific Review Groups. Aggregate responses will be used to guide NIH management in refining enhancements to the peer review process.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Please think of the **most recent application** you submitted to NIH (for either a single-PI or multiple-PI grant) that was:

- reviewed **and**
- for which a funding decision (either not funded or funded) was reached.

Please **do not include** applications for administrative supplements, as these undergo administrative review instead of peer review.

S1. When did you submit this research grant application?

- ○ January 2008 to December 2008
- ○ January 2009 to May 2009: **Stop! You should complete the alternate survey (Version A). Please do not complete Version B.**

Section A: Your Most Recent Experience As an Applicant

Please think of the **most recent application** you submitted to NIH (for either a single-PI or multiple-PI grant) that was:

- reviewed **and**
- for which a funding decision (either not funded or funded) was reached.

Please **do not include** applications for administrative supplements, as these undergo administrative review instead of peer review.

A1. What was the activity code for this NIH research grant application?

An activity code refers to the 3-character code used by NIH to identify a specific category of extramural research activity, applied to various funding mechanisms (e.g., R01, P01).

Enter activity code here: [ ][ ][ ]

A2. Was this the first NIH research grant application for which you were the Principal Investigator (PI)?

NIH Definition of a Principal Investigator: The individual(s) judged by the applicant organization to have the appropriate level of authority and responsibility to direct the project or program supported by the grant. The applicant organization may designate multiple individuals as PDs/PIs [Program Directors/Principal Investigators] who share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the project, intellectually and logistically. Each PD/PI is responsible and accountable to the applicant organization, or, as appropriate, to a collaborating organization, for the proper conduct of the project or program including the submission of all required reports. The presence of more than one identified PD/PI on an application or award diminishes neither the responsibility nor the accountability of any individual PD/PI.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

A3. Was this a resubmission (amended) application (A1 or A2)?

- ○ No, original, unamended application
- ○ Yes, A1 (First resubmission)
- ○ Yes, A2 (Second resubmission)

A4. Approximately how many **days** did **you** spend on the following aspects of the application process?

COMPLETE ONE COLUMN BASED ON YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION A3. PLEASE ENTER NUMBER OF DAYS IN WHOLE NUMBERS.

	Task	Original Application (Days)	A1 (First re-submission) (Days)	A2 (Second re-submission) (Days)
A4a.	Writing and editing the application (including locating, downloading, and completing the various required forms)	☐☐☐	☐☐☐	☐☐☐
A4b.	Compiling and preparing supporting documents for an Appendix	☐☐☐	☐☐☐	☐☐☐
A4c.	**If your response to Question A3 was Yes (FIRST OR SECOND RESUBMISSION):** Responding to reviewer critiques (including conducting additional laboratory experiments or analyses)?	Not applicable	☐☐☐	☐☐☐

A5. Was your application assigned a numerical priority score?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No **(GO TO QUESTION A8a)**

A6. Have you received a Notice of Award letter indicating that your application has been funded?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

A7. How helpful was each of the following in understanding the priority score assigned to your application?

		Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not at all helpful	Not applicable
A7a.	Resume and Summary of Discussion	○	○	○	○	○
A7b.	Reviewer written critiques	○	○	○	○	○
A7c.	Discussion with my NIH Program Officer	○	○	○	○	○
A7d.	General information on NIH's Web sites	○	○	○	○	○

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements. If a statement does not apply to your application, please select "Not applicable."

A8a. The Summary Statement demonstrated that the reviewers understood my proposed approach (research plan).

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

A8b. Based on the written critiques in the Summary Statement, my application was evaluated by reviewers with the appropriate expertise.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

IF YOU RESPONDED "YES" TO QUESTION A5, CONTINUE; OTHERWISE GO TO QUESTION A8e1.

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements. If a statement does not apply to your application, please select "Not applicable."

A8c. The Summary Statement was helpful in understanding the priority score.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

A8d. The priority score assigned to my application appeared consistent with comments in the Resume and Summary of Discussion section.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

A8e1. The Summary Statement helped me know whether or not to resubmit the application.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statement. If a statement does not apply to your application, please select "Not applicable."

A8e2. The Summary Statement helped me focus on problem areas in the application that could be corrected.

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Neither agree nor disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Not applicable

Section B: Your Opinions about the NIH Peer Review Process Prior to 2009

When answering the questions in this section, please think back to the **peer review process at NIH prior to 2009**, the one under which your most recent NIH grant application was reviewed.

B1. Overall, which peer review system do you prefer — the new system (with enhancements) or the old system (without enhancements)?

- ○ New system
- ○ Old system
- ○ No preference between the new or the old systems
- ○ Not applicable — no experience with new system

B2. How fair was the peer review process at NIH **prior to 2009**?

- ○ Very fair
- ○ Somewhat fair
- ○ Neither fair nor unfair
- ○ Somewhat unfair
- ○ Very unfair

B3. How satisfied were you with the peer review process at NIH **prior to 2009**?

- ○ Very satisfied
- ○ Somewhat satisfied
- ○ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ○ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ○ Very dissatisfied

Section C: Background

As a reminder, the information provided in this survey will remain anonymous. No individual respondents will be identified, and all responses will be summarized and reported in aggregate form.

C1. What type of organization do you work for? **Select all that apply.**

- ☐ University
- ☐ Research Foundation
- ☐ Private Sector/For-profit Organization
- ☐ Hospital/Medical Center
- ☐ Federal, State, or Local Government Agency
- ☐ Other Non-profit Organization
- ☐ Other (Specify): _____

C2. What is your job title or position?

- ○ Professor
- ○ Associate Professor
- ○ Assistant Professor
- ○ Adjunct Professor
- ○ Senior Scientist
- ○ Other (Specify): _____

C3. Have you ever served as a peer reviewer for NIH?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No **(GO TO QUESTION C5)**

C4. Have you reviewed any grant applications related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, such as the Challenge grants program and Grand Opportunities "GO" grants program?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

C5. When did you submit your first research grant application to NIH as a Principal Investigator (PI) for a single-PI or multiple-PI grant?

> **NIH Definition of a Principal Investigator:** The individual(s) judged by the applicant organization to have the appropriate level of authority and responsibility to direct the project or program supported by the grant. The applicant organization may designate multiple individuals as PDs/PIs [Program Directors/Principal Investigators] who share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the project, intellectually and logistically. Each PD/PI is responsible and accountable to the applicant organization, or, as appropriate, to a collaborating organization, for the proper conduct of the project or program including the submission of all required reports. The presence of more than one identified PD/PI on an application or award diminishes neither the responsibility nor the accountability of any individual PD/PI.

- ○ 2008 to 2009
- ○ 2005 to 2007
- ○ 2002 to 2004
- ○ 1999 to 2001
- ○ 1996 to 1998
- ○ 1993 to 1995
- ○ 1990 to 1992
- ○ Prior to 1990

C6. As a PI, have you ever received an R01, R03, or R21 grant from NIH? (Please include single-PI grants and multiple-PI grants.)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No **(GO TO QUESTION C8)**

C7. In total, how many years of NIH funding have you received as a PI on R01, R03, and R21 grants? (Please include single-PI grants and multiple-PI grants.)

Enter total number of years here: [ ][ ]

C8. In which of the following fiscal years did you receive **any type of NIH funding** as a PI? (Please include single-PI grants and multiple-PI grants.)

Examples of NIH funding include research grants (R series), program project/center grants (P series), career development awards (K series), research training and fellowships (T and F series), and SBIR/STTR grants/contracts. **Select all that apply.**

- ☐ FY 2009 (October 2008 to September 2009)
- ☐ FY 2008 (October 2007 to September 2008)
- ☐ FY 2007 (October 2006 to September 2007)
- ☐ Did not receive NIH funding for the fiscal years listed

C9. Please indicate the degree(s) you have. **Select all that apply.**

- ☐ Ph.D. or other research doctorate
- ☐ M.D.
- ☐ D.D.S.
- ☐ D.V.M. or V.M.D.
- ☐ Other (Specify): [ ]

C10. What is your age?

- ○ Under 35
- ○ 35 to 40
- ○ 41 to 45
- ○ 46 to 50
- ○ 51 to 55
- ○ 56 to 60
- ○ 61 to 65
- ○ 66 to 70
- ○ Over 70

C11. What is your gender?

- ○ Female
- ○ Male

C12. What is your ethnicity?

- ○ Hispanic or Latino
- ○ Not Hispanic or Latino

C13. What is your race? **Select all that apply.**

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White

Thank you very much for completing the survey!

For more information about the peer review changes that have been implemented at NIH, please visit http://enhancing-peer-review.nih.gov/faqs.html.

If you have any ideas for improving the peer review process at NIH, please enter your suggestions here:

You may select “Submit by Email” to electronically submit your completed questionnaire.
OR
You may select “Print Form” to print the pdf version of the survey.

To submit and/or print, please go back to the top of this form and select either “Submit by Email” or “Print Form.”

Please mail your completed questionnaire to the address below:

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