

Pursuing Social Work Research Opportunities at NIH

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Introduction

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NIH Opportunities for Social Work Researchers

- Introduction
 - NIH Overview
 - OBSSR Overview
- Background on Social Work Research Activities
- NIH Plan for Social Work Research
 - Recommendations & Implementation
- Current Funding Opportunity Announcements

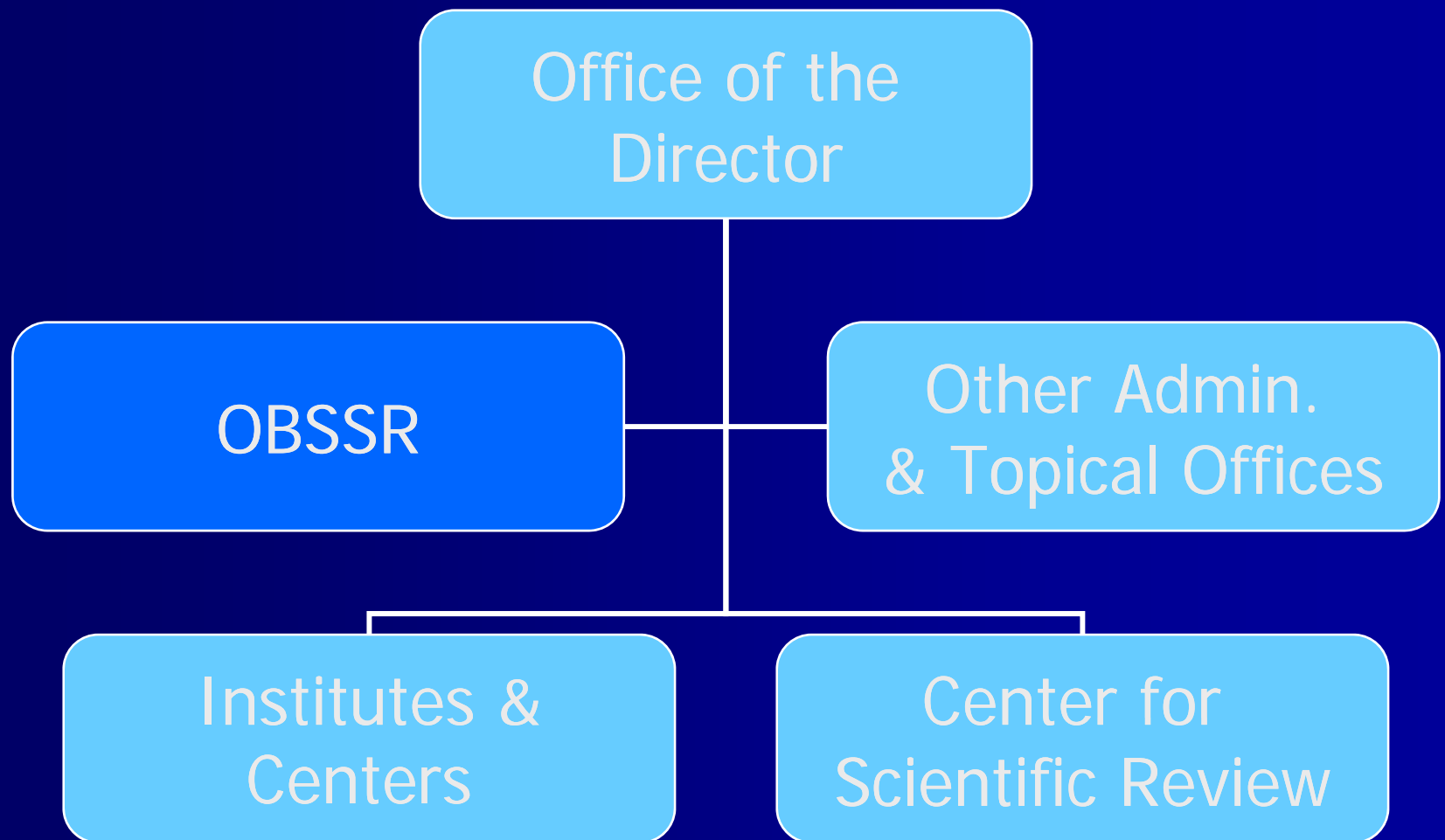
NIH's Mission is...

"...science in pursuit of fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to extend healthy life and reduce the burdens of illness and disability."

National Institutes of Health Overview

- 27 Institutes and Centers (ICs)
- \$28.7 billion in FY2006
- 80% goes to grants and contracts supporting extramural research

National Institutes of Health



OBSSR Mission

- Increase scope of and support for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (BSSR).
- Inform NIH leadership and community about BSSR.
- Represent NIH to BSSR community.
- Disseminate BSSR information to NIH and the public.

NIH/OBSSR Activities

- New OBSSR Strategic Prospectus
- NIH Plan for Social Work Research
 - Social Work Research
 - Research Infrastructure/Training
 - Information Dissemination and Community Outreach

NIH Plan for Social Work Research

Social Work Research

Propose a new PA: Research on Social Work Practice and Concepts in Health

http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa_files/PA_06_081.html (R01)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-06-234.html> (R03)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-06-233.html>

- Expand outreach to encourage grant applications on studies of SW practice and concepts
- Competitive Supplement for SW Research

NIH Plan for Social Work Research

Research Infrastructure/Training

- Develop and Implement an NIH Summer Institute on Social Work Research
 - Qualitative, and Mixed Method
 - Behavioral and Social Intervention Research
 - Community-Based Participatory Research

NIH Plan for Social Work Research

Information Dissemination and Community Outreach

- Outreach to Deans & Directors of Schools of SW
- Coordinated Outreach to Universities
- Trans-NIH Conference Showcasing SWR Results
- Explore the Possibility of a Conference on Advancing the SWR Agenda

Implementation: Next Steps

- NIH Summer Institute on Social Work Research
- Reissued PAR to Support Community-Based Participatory Research
- Trans-NIH Conference Showcasing SWR Results

Examples of PAs: Research topics

- Behavioral and Social Research on Disasters and Health
- Structural Interventions
- Developmental Infrastructure for Population Research
- Methodology and Measurement in the Behavioral and Social Sciences

Examples of PAs: Research topics

- Community Participation in Research
- Research on Social Work Practice and Concepts in Health
- Research on Mind-Body Interactions and Health
- Health Disparities among Minority and Underserved Women
- Social and Cultural Aspects of Health

How do I find out about FOAs?

- NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts
 - <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>
- BSSR Guide to NIH Grants & Contracts
 - http://obssr.od.nih.gov/Content/Research/BSSR_Guide_To_Grants_at_NIH/
 - *An Electronic News Service for announcing NIH funding opportunities in the behavioral and social sciences.*

Contact Information

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 - 240-453-6157
- Roadmap
 - Dr. Patricia Mabry

Website: <http://obssr.od.nih.gov/>

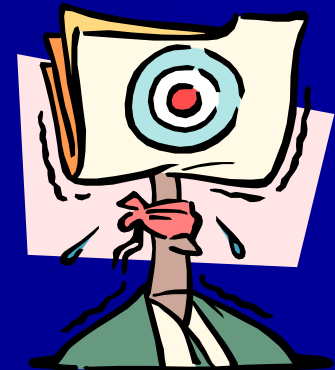
Conceptualizing a Project

Denise Juliano-Bult, M.S.W.

National Institute of Mental Health

The project should make sense in the context of...

- the Institute/Program
- the Science
- Your Capabilities and Career



Context of the Institute: the NIH Mission

- "...to acquire new knowledge to help prevent, detect, diagnose & treat disease and disability."
- To improve public health/clinical outcomes.
- To improve the lives of (older) people.

NIH Website



<http://www.nih.gov>

Priority Areas for Institutes

- Special Reports
- PAs and RFAs – now called FOAs

RFA versus PA:

	RFA	PA
Special pool of funds?	Yes	Usually not
Special application deadlines?	Yes	Usually not
How long active?	Until deadline	3 years
Special review panel?	Yes	Usually not

Priority Areas (con't.)

- Program Descriptions – go online
- *Talk to Program Staff* – one pagers

ONE-pager

1. Aims (what?)
2. Significance (why?)
3. Hypotheses (what specifically?)
4. Methods (how?)

Suggest a mechanism

Assess State-of-the-Science

- Peer Reviewed Literature
- CRISP - <http://crisp.cit.nih.gov/>
- What credible tools are available?
 - Instruments, interventions, etc.

State-of-the-Science (con't.)

- Is a pilot study needed?
- What interim steps are necessary?
 - Validity, reliability, efficacy/effectiveness, implementation, etc.
- Current issues in community

The starting point . . .

Have a good idea

- Addresses a *significant* question
- Brings something new to the table
- Is project focused?
- Is project feasible?

What is a *significant* question?

- Immediate/future relevance to IC mission
 - Disease
 - Population
- Relevance to science – will it advance...
 - fundamental understanding?
 - scientific knowledge?
 - research methods and tools?

The Context of Your Career

- Research you are passionate about
- Research you want to build on
- Research that you have the training and experience to conduct

DON'T FOLLOW THE \$\$\$\$\$!!

Assess Your Research Capability



s

Publications, mentoring,
training, clinical
experience, prior grant
experience, etc.

This is a grant for 1-5 years – not a career!

Mechanisms & Staff

Wendy McLaughlin, M.S.W.

National Cancer Institute

What kinds of support can I get? - MECHANISMS

- Training and career development
- Research
- Scientific conferences



Training & Development Mechanisms

F31 Pre-doctoral Fellowships (Diversity)

F32 Post-doctoral Fellowships

K01 Career Development Award

K23 Clinicians training for patient-oriented research

Institutes differ; check their websites

Research grants

R01: Research Project Grant

R03: Small Research Grant

R21: Exploratory/Developmental
Research Grant

R01 Regular Research Grant

- Maximum of 5 years
- Renewable
- No specified budget limitations
 - Prior approval required for >\$500,000 in any one year
 - *Usually* requires prior NIH grant experience

R03 Small Research Grant

- Limited funding/short period of time
- 1 or 2 years @ \$50K/ year

Examples:

- Pilot/feasibility studies
- Secondary analysis of existing data
- Small, self-contained research projects
- Developing new methodology or technology

R21 Exploratory/ Developmental Research

- 2 years, \$275K total
- Generally anticipates follow-on R01

Examples:

- Feasibility studies
- Unique/innovative use of an existing methodology to explore new science area
- High risk/high payoff

R13 Scientific Conferences

- grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r13/index.htm
- Each IC has own rules for
 - Topics
 - Years of support
 - Budget maximum
- Advance permission required to submit an application.

It is the job of NIH staff to....

help good research:

- get funded,
- be properly conducted,
- follow the law



Who Are the NIH Staff?

- Program Staff
- Scientific Review Staff
- Grants Management Staff



Program Staff

- Set research & scientific priorities
- Determine funding levels
- Administer research grants & contracts
- Communicate to the field
- *Solicit & Advocate for the Best Science*

Scientific Review Staff

- Check application for completeness
- Assign reviewers
- Conduct review meetings within NIH regulations and policies
- Prepare summary statements

Grants Management

- Implement funding process
- Monitor the budget
- Ensure compliance of grantee with Institute policies & regulations

Others Can Help...

- Your Office of Sponsored Research
- Other Researchers at your Institution
- Senior Researchers in your Field
- **All Research Is Collaborative – especially important in SW**

Writing and Review

Peggy Murray, M.S.W.
National Institute on Alcoholism & Alcohol Abuse

Writing and Review

Peggy Murray, M.S.W.
National Institute on Alcoholism & Alcohol Abuse

What Does NIH Want?

- Completeness
- Significance
- **Originality**
- Clarity



(A Concept Paper can help with this.)

Packaging is Important: Write Strategically

- Use the 10-25 pages wisely
- Help reviewers find what they need
- Explanatory graphics (conceptual models, time lines, etc) can be helpful
- Do not put important information in appendices
- Use brief, clear headers and sub-headers

Writing Tips

- Clarify the study's significance
- Transform idea(s) into an exciting story
- Convey your enthusiasm for the project
- Seek & accept feedback on multiple drafts
- Present dilemmas & how to address them
- Provide evidence for all your assertions

Abstract: Language is Important

- Make diagnoses clear and specific
 - "intervention development", "prevention"
 - "services research", "RCT"
 - "exploratory/developmental"
 - "efficacy", "effectiveness", "epidemiology"
 - "children ages 0-5", "transition to adulthood"
 - "risk and protective factors"

Specific Aims

- Hypothesis driven
- Clear focus
- Be realistic: Its a project, not an entire career

Background & Significance

- Strong, literature-based rationale
- Thorough and accurate citations
- **SO WHAT????**

DO Show That....

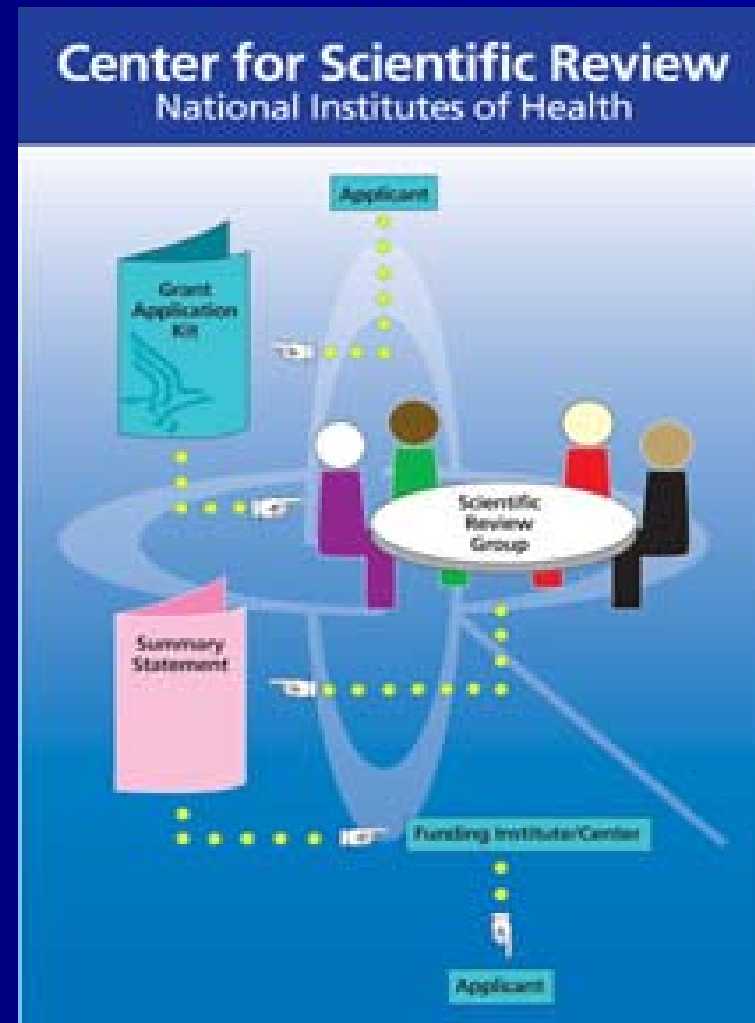
- Your methods work
- The data trends support the hypothesis
- The data analysis is sound
- Experimental design will answer the question
- You have the abilities, support, community connections, etc. to accomplish the project

DO NOT ...

- Omit a conceptual model or theory base
- Do what's already been done
- Use out-of-date methods
- Use methods that don't test the hypothesis
- Omit discussion of negative results
- Use inappropriate statistical analyses

The Center for Scientific Review

<http://cms.csr.nih.gov/AboutCSR/OverviewofPeerReviewProcess.htm>



Inside the NIH Grant Review Process

The Center for Scientific Review has produced a video of a mock study section meeting to provide an inside look at how NIH grant applications are reviewed for scientific and technical merit.

The video shows how outside experts assess applications and how review meetings are conducted to ensure fairness.

The video also includes information on what applicants can do to improve the chances their applications will receive a positive review.

Your application is assigned to a review group and an NIH Institute or Center

- One or more CSR Referral Officers examine your application and determine the most appropriate Integrated Review Group (IRG) to assess its scientific and technical merit.
- Your application is then assigned to one of the IRG's study sections. A study section typically includes 20 or more scientists from the community of productive researchers. Your application also will be assigned to the NIH Institute or Center (IC) best suited to fund your application should it have sufficient merit. (More than one IC may be assigned if appropriate.)
- Referral Officers follow established guidelines that define the review boundaries of each study section. These boundaries frequently overlap, and more than one study section may have the expertise to review your application. You may request in a cover note with your application that it be assigned to a particular study section or IC. The CSR referral office seriously considers such requests.
- The combined expertise of the scientists in a study section is intended to span the breadth and diversity of the science it covers. CSR may recruit temporary reviewers or secure mail reviews from outside consultants.

How Scientists Are Selected For Study Section Service

General Requirements

- Candidates must be recognized authorities in their field.
- Candidates must be a principal investigator on a research project comparable to those being reviewed.

Expertise Requirements

- Expertise is the paramount consideration when developing/updating a study section roster.

Study Section-Specific Requirements

- Unique characteristics of study sections must be factored into selection of members. The breadth of science, the multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary nature of the applications, and the types of applications or grant mechanisms being reviewed play a large role in the selection of appropriate member

Checking the status of your application

- As soon as your application is received and assigned to a study section, notices are appointed to your online NIH Commons account
 - http://grants.nih.gov/grants/tracking_application.htm
- You may question either your study section or IC assignment by contacting the Scientific Review Officer named in your notification or call the CSR referral office at [301-435-0715](tel:301-435-0715).
 - <http://www.csr.nih.gov/committees/rosterindex.asp>
- It usually takes weeks to refer the thousands of applications submitted each round. If a notice is not posted in your Commons account within 3 weeks of the submission date, you should contact the referral office.

Application Cycles



Submitted: October / February / June

Reviewed: Feb-Mar / Jun-Jul / Oct-Nov

Council: May-June / Sept-Oct / Jan-Feb

Award: July / December / April

Review Criteria

- Significance
- Approach
- Innovation
- Investigator
- Environment
- Budget
- Human subjects protection
- Inclusion of women, minorities, children

Your score will be

a raw score & a percentile (for Rs)

- **Unscored** means below 50% percentile
- **100-150** – good, but no guarantee
- **150-250** – good, but you'll probably have to resubmit

When you get the summary statement...

- Read it several times before you say, do, or decide anything. **Call your Program Officer.**
- Think about the comments carefully; discuss with mentors/advisors.
- Whether you get funded or have to revise and resubmit, you will have to respond to the comments.

Responding to the Comments

- Be polite/diplomatic
- Respond to all major criticisms
- Provide evidence to support your responses
- Get someone (in addition to PO) to read your responses before your resubmit

Points of Review

- Scientific Peer Review
- Program Priority Review
- National Advisory Council Review



QUESTIONS?