

CSR News Flash

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Center for Scientific Review
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Contact:
[Don Lockett](#)
CSR Press Office
301-435-1111

“College of CSR Reviewers” to More Readily Match Reviewers and Applications

Finding the best grant applications depends on getting the best experts to review them. This job will be easier now that CSR has created a new College of CSR Reviewers, which will help review NIH applications in a process similar to journal reviews. The goal is to proactively identify and “enroll” reviewers so CSR has a deep pool of expertise that can be readily matched to incoming applications.

College reviewers agree to review up to 12 applications a year during a two-year period. As in reviewing journal articles, these reviewers typically will be asked to review one grant application in their area of expertise within two weeks. College reviewers may become eligible to submit applications with no deadline; see the *NIH Guide* for more information: [NOT-OD-09-155](#).

CSR is sending invitations to about 2,500 members of the scientific community with a strong commitment to peer review and experience serving as reviewers.

Building CSR Resources, Reducing Reviewer Burdens

Joining the college will allow reviewers who find it difficult to manage the travel and commitment of being a regular reviewer to remain engaged in peer review. For CSR, the college will provide a tremendous and ready resource for matching reviewers and applications.

College reviewers primarily will provide written or “mail-in” critiques and be involved in two-stage reviews, which have successfully assessed thousands of special sets of applications, such as the Transformative R01 and Challenge grant applications as well as groups of translational applications and small business applications.

Two-stage reviews are particularly useful in reviewing translational and complex research applications, which call for both technical experts from diverse disciplines as well as scientists with a broad understanding of the science.

In these reviews, the College reviewers will serve as first-stage experts to assess each application and submit their critiques online. A second panel of reviewers with broad expertise will then examine the critiques and applications, focusing on the impact of the proposed research and assigning in a more consistent fashion final overall impact/priority scores.

About CSR

CSR organizes the peer review groups that evaluate the majority of grant applications submitted to NIH. These groups include experienced and respected researchers from across the country and abroad. Since 1946, CSR’s mission has been to see that NIH grant applications receive fair, independent, expert, and timely reviews — free from inappropriate influences — so NIH can fund the most promising research. CSR also receives all incoming applications and assigns them to the NIH institutes and centers that fund grants. For more information, go to CSR’s Web site—<http://www.csr.nih.gov>—or phone 301-435-1111.

About NIH

NIH — the Nation’s Medical Research Agency — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting

and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.