U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health

Grant Writing for Success

Anthony M. Coelho, Jr., Ph.D.
Review Policy Officer
Office of the Director, NIH
Office of Extramural Research

National Institutes of Health

Objective: Help You Secure Funding for Research

What is available?
How to get some?

National Institutes of Health

NIH 2003 Budget
~28 Billion

~25 Billion for Extramural Research

National Institutes of Health

Anthony M. Coelho, Jr., Ph.D.

Previous Experience:

Scientific Review Administrator and **Chief** - Clinical Studies and Training Review Section - NHLBI	**7 years**
Peer Reviewer	**12 years**
NIH Funded Investigator	**18 years**
DOE Funded Investigator	**8 years**

and Other Federal and Non-federal Funding

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Research Programs:

- Role of Diet, Exercise and Stress on Blood Pressure Regulation, Atherosclerosis and Cardiovascular Disease.
- Effects of Exposure to Electric and Magnetic Fields on the Central Nervous System

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Collaborators and Co-Investigators

2 Biological Anthropologists
2 Biostatisticians (and support staff)
2 Experimental Psychologists
3 Cardiovascular Physiologists (and labs)
3 Pathologists (and labs)
3 Lipid Biochemists (and labs)
1 Nutritionists
1 Exercise Physiologist (and lab)
2 Electrical Engineers (and support staff)
3 Veterinarians (and support staff)
Lots of technicians, Post-docs, Consultants

National Institutes of Health

Good Grantsmanship

Principles for Success:

- Understand the Agency Mission
- Understand Peer Review
- Secure collaborators for areas in which you lack experience and training
- There are no competitors in science, there are only potential collaborators.
- Grant writing is a learned skill
- Grantsmanship is a full time job
- You are in control of your life

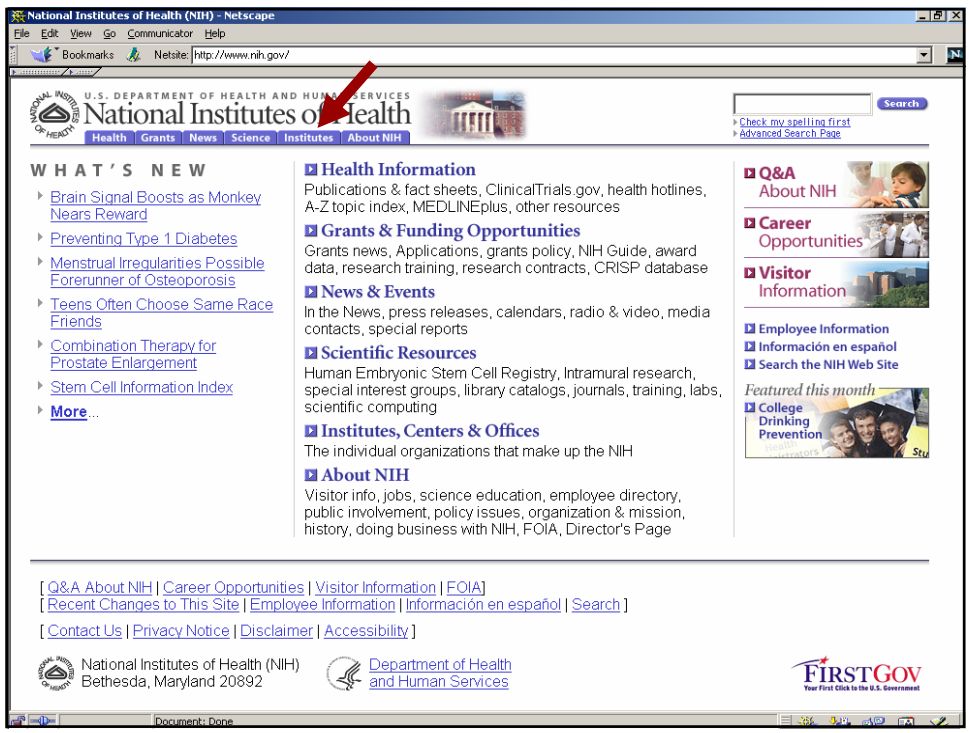
National Institutes of Health

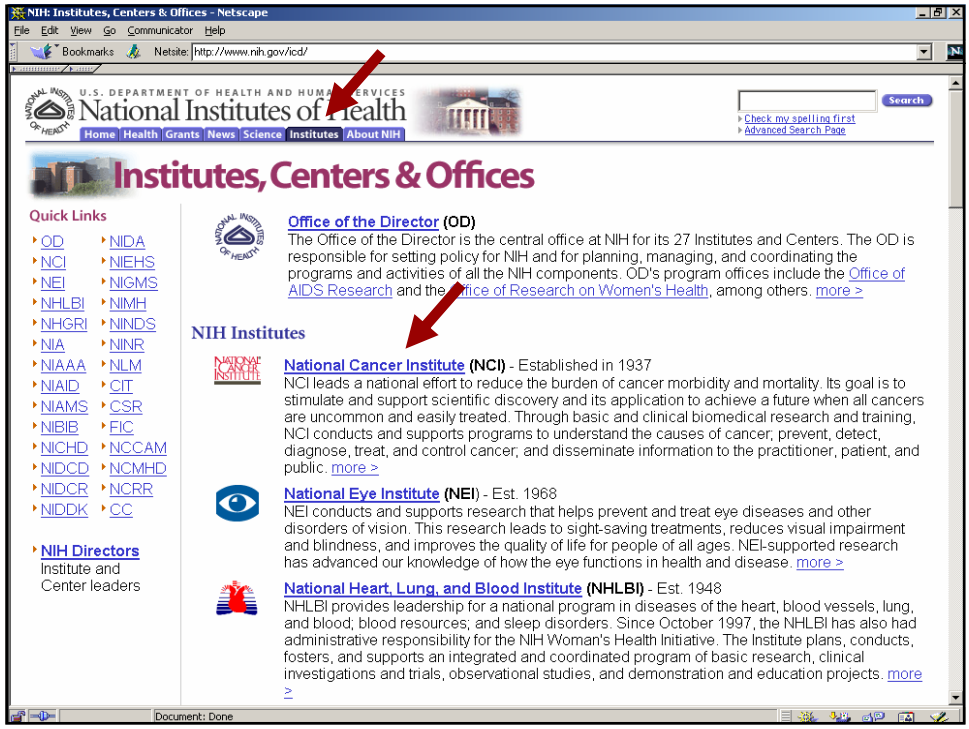
Understanding the Agency Mission

National Institutes of Health

Understanding the Agency Mission:

- NIH mission is based and defined in law
- Appropriations bills define expectations
- NIH must report to congress that it has complied with the legislative expectations
- NIH reports to congress on success
- NIH funding dependent on success and compliance with the legislative mandate
- NIH success based on the success of the scientists it supports
- NIH wants you to be a successful scientist

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NIH Institutes
National Cancer Institute (NCI) - Established in 1937
NCI leads a national effort to reduce the burden of cancer morbidity and mortality. Its goal is to stimulate and support scientific discovery and its application to achieve a future when all cancers are uncommon and easily treated. Through basic and clinical biomedical research and training, NCI conducts and supports programs to understand the causes of cancer; prevent, detect, diagnose, treat, and control cancer; and disseminate information to the practitioner, patient, and public. more >
National Eye Institute (NEI) - Est. 1968
NEI conducts and supports research that helps prevent and treat eye diseases and other disorders of vision. This research leads to sight-saving treatments, reduces visual impairment and blindness, and improves the quality of life for people of all ages. NEI-supported research has advanced our knowledge of how the eye functions in health and disease. more >
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) - Est. 1948
NHLBI provides leadership for a national program in diseases of the heart, blood vessels, lung, and blood; blood resources; and sleep disorders. Since October 1997, the NHLBI has also had administrative responsibility for the NIH Woman's Health Initiative. The Institute plans, conducts, fosters, and supports an integrated and coordinated program of basic research, clinical investigations and trials, observational studies, and demonstration and education projects. more >
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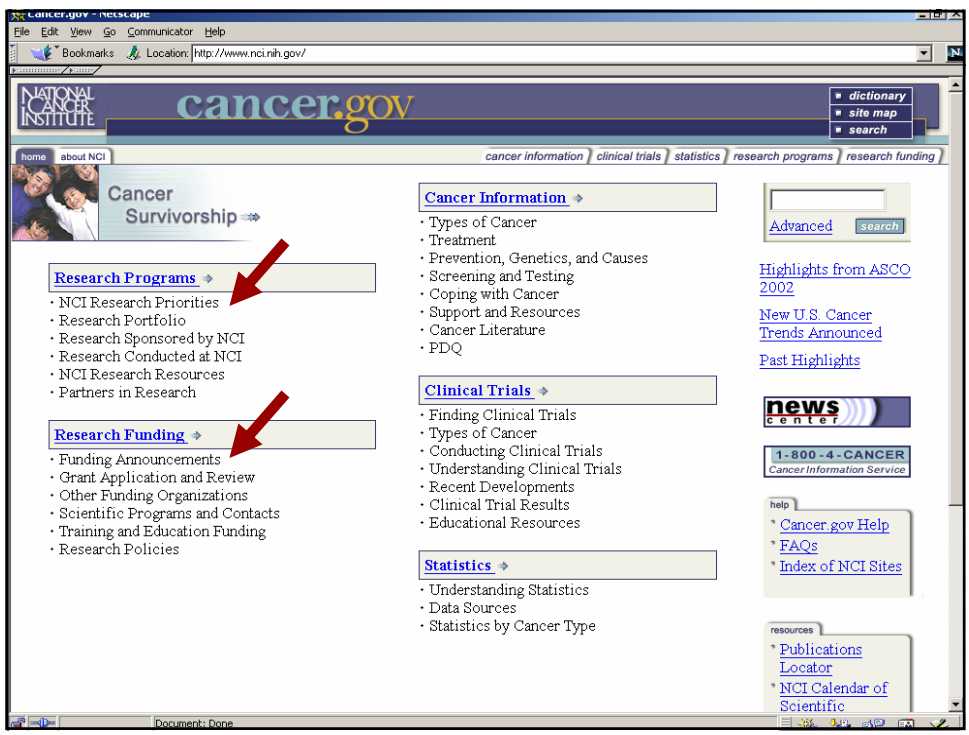
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· Directory of NCI supported research projects organized by type of cancer and scientific topic
Research Sponsored by NCI
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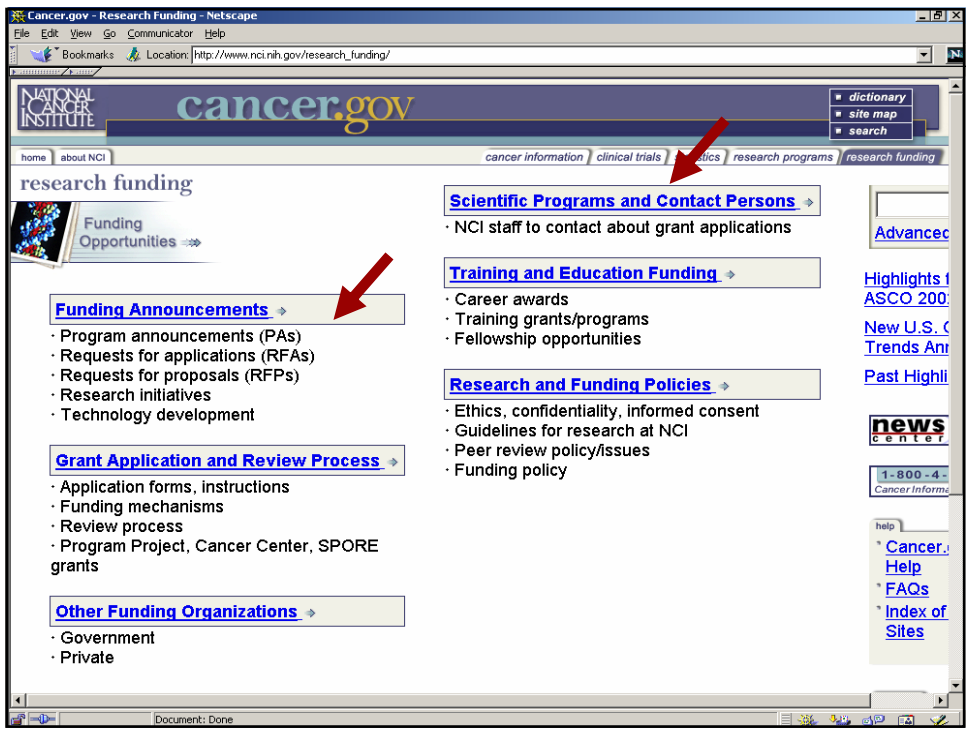
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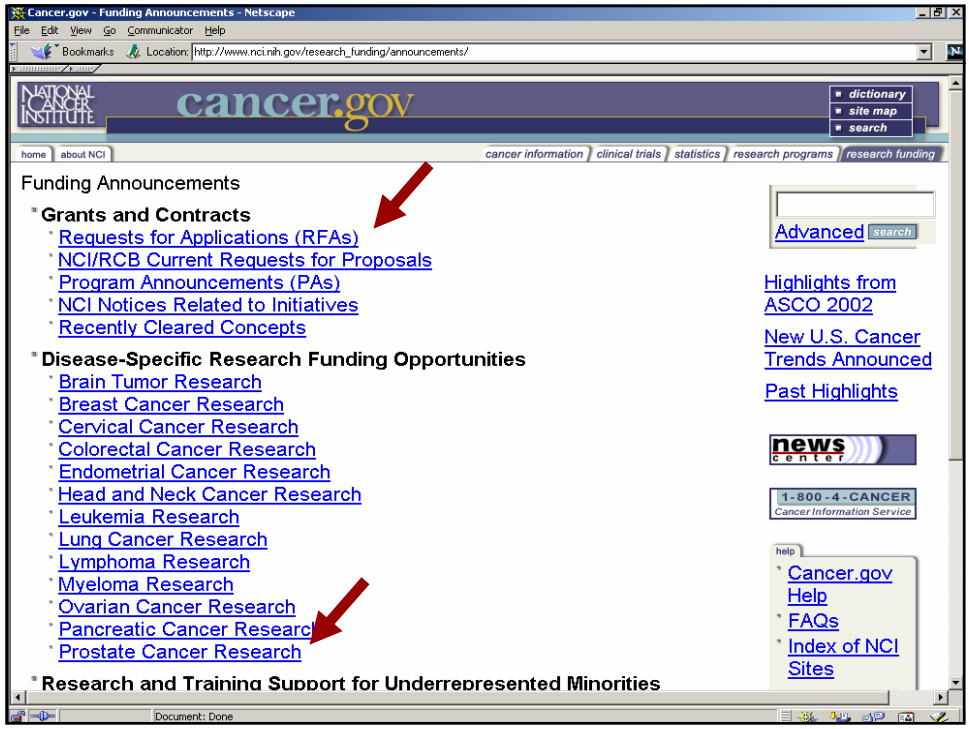
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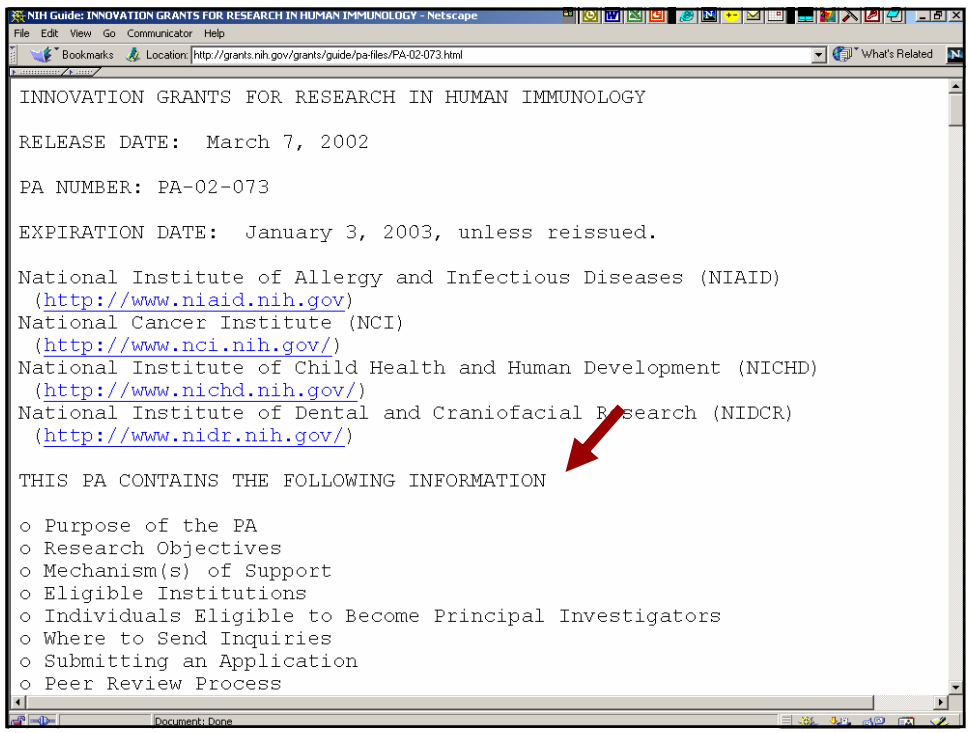
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RELEASE DATE: March 7, 2002
PA NUMBER: PA-02-073
EXPIRATION DATE: January 3, 2003, unless reissued.
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National Cancer Institute (NCI)
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National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)
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National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)
(http://www.nidr.nih.gov/)
THIS PA CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
o Purpose of the PA
o Research Objectives
o Mechanism(s) of Support
o Eligible Institutions
o Individuals Eligible to Become Principal Investigators
o Where to Send Inquiries
o Submitting an Application
o Peer Review Process
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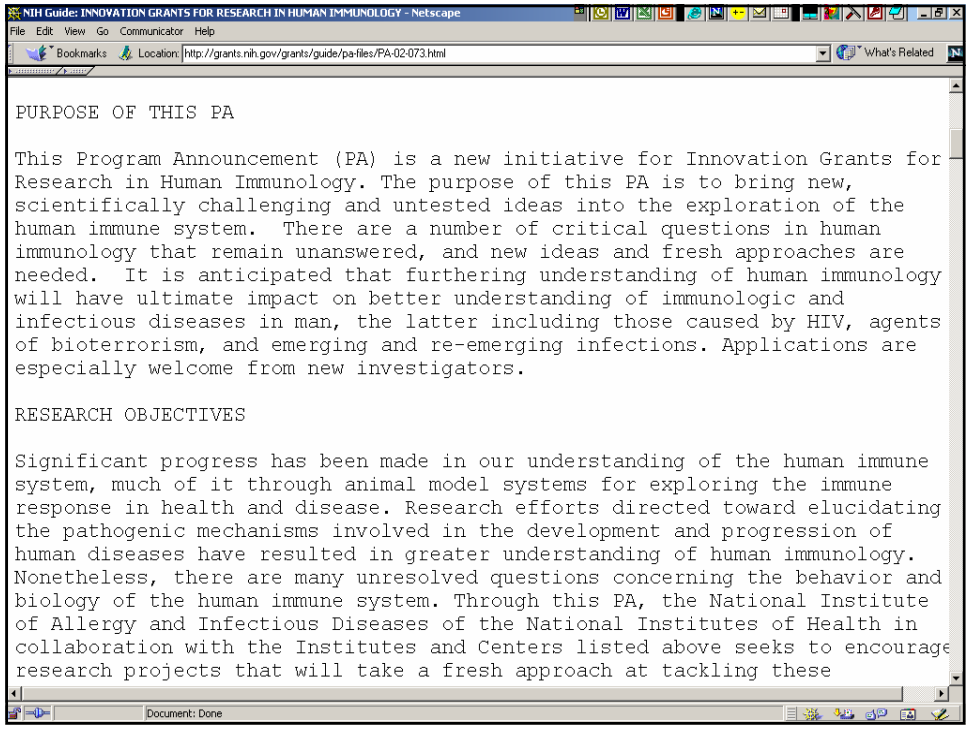
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PURPOSE OF THIS PA
This Program Announcement (PA) is a new initiative for Innovation Grants for Research in Human Immunology. The purpose of this PA is to bring new, scientifically challenging and untested ideas into the exploration of the human immune system. There are a number of critical questions in human immunology that remain unanswered, and new ideas and fresh approaches are needed. It is anticipated that furthering understanding of human immunology will have ultimate impact on better understanding of immunologic and infectious diseases in man, the latter including those caused by HIV, agents of bioterrorism, and emerging and re-emerging infections. Applications are especially welcome from new investigators.
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
Significant progress has been made in our understanding of the human immune system, much of it through animal model systems for exploring the immune response in health and disease. Research efforts directed toward elucidating the pathogenic mechanisms involved in the development and progression of human diseases have resulted in greater understanding of human immunology. Nonetheless, there are many unresolved questions concerning the behavior and biology of the human immune system. Through this PA, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health in collaboration with the Institutes and Centers listed above seeks to encourage research projects that will take a fresh approach at tackling these
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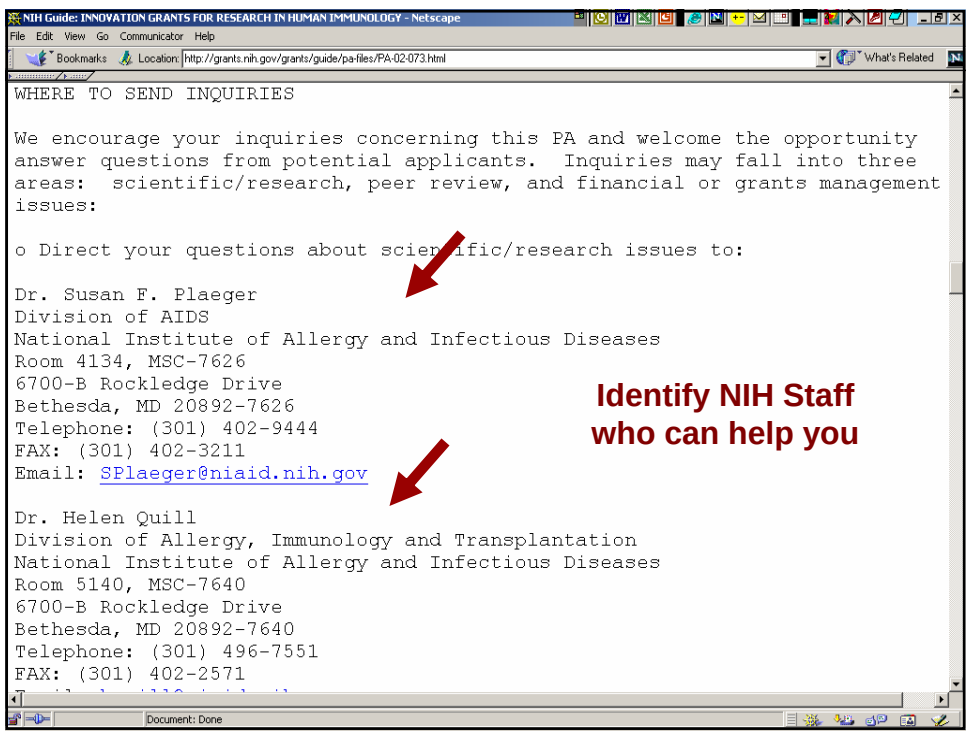
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WHERE TO SEND INQUIRIES
We encourage your inquiries concerning this PA and welcome the opportunity answer questions from potential applicants. Inquiries may fall into three areas: scientific/research, peer review, and financial or grants management issues:
o Direct your questions about scientific/research issues to:
Dr. Susan F. Plaeger
Division of AIDS
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
Room 4134, MSC-7626
6700-B Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892-7626
Telephone: (301) 402-9444
FAX: (301) 402-3211
Email: SPlaeger@niaid.nih.gov
Dr. Helen Quill
Division of Allergy, Immunology and Transplantation
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
Room 5140, MSC-7640
6700-B Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892-7640
Telephone: (301) 496-7551
FAX: (301) 402-2571
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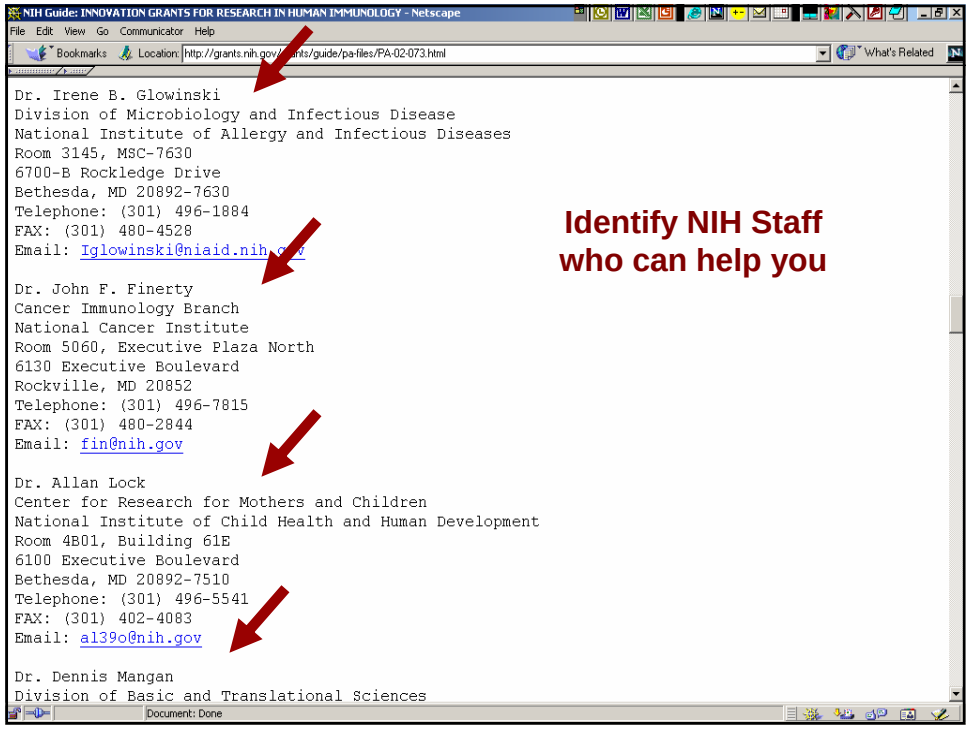
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Division of Microbiology and Infectious Disease
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
Room 3145, MSC-7630
6700-B Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892-7630
Telephone: (301) 496-1884
FAX: (301) 480-4528
Email: Iglowinski@niaid.nih.gov
Dr. John F. Finerty
Cancer Immunology Branch
National Cancer Institute
Room 5060, Executive Plaza North
6130 Executive Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20852
Telephone: (301) 496-7815
FAX: (301) 480-2844
Email: fin@nih.gov
Dr. Allan Lock
Center for Research for Mothers and Children
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Room 4B01, Building 61E
6100 Executive Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20892-7510
Telephone: (301) 496-5541
FAX: (301) 402-4083
Email: al39o@nih.gov
Dr. Dennis Mangan
Division of Basic and Translational Sciences
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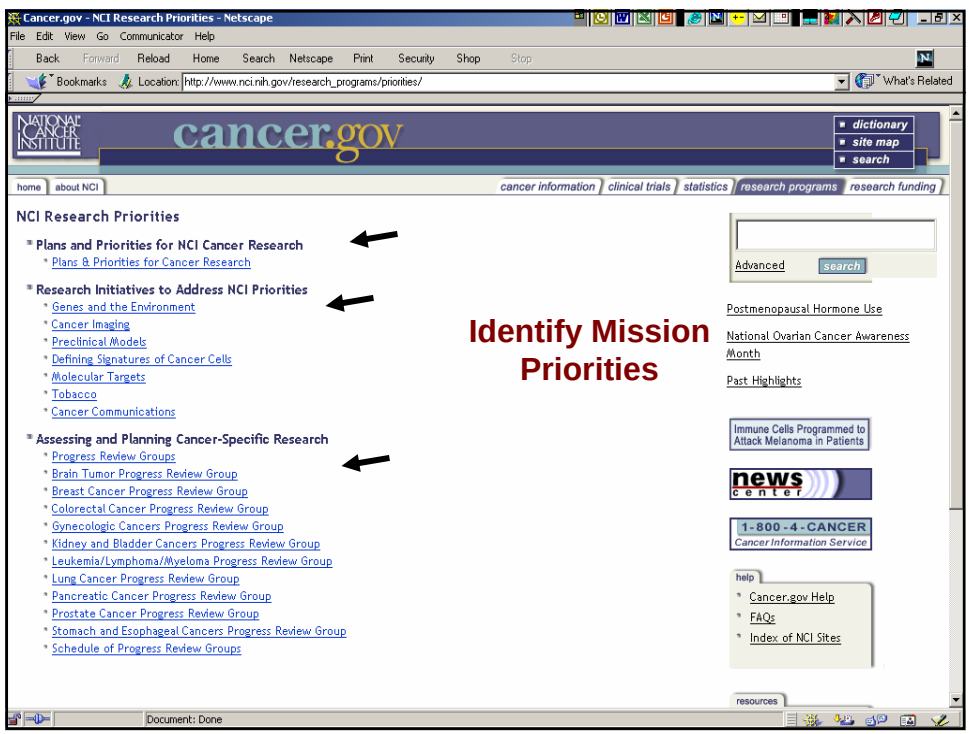
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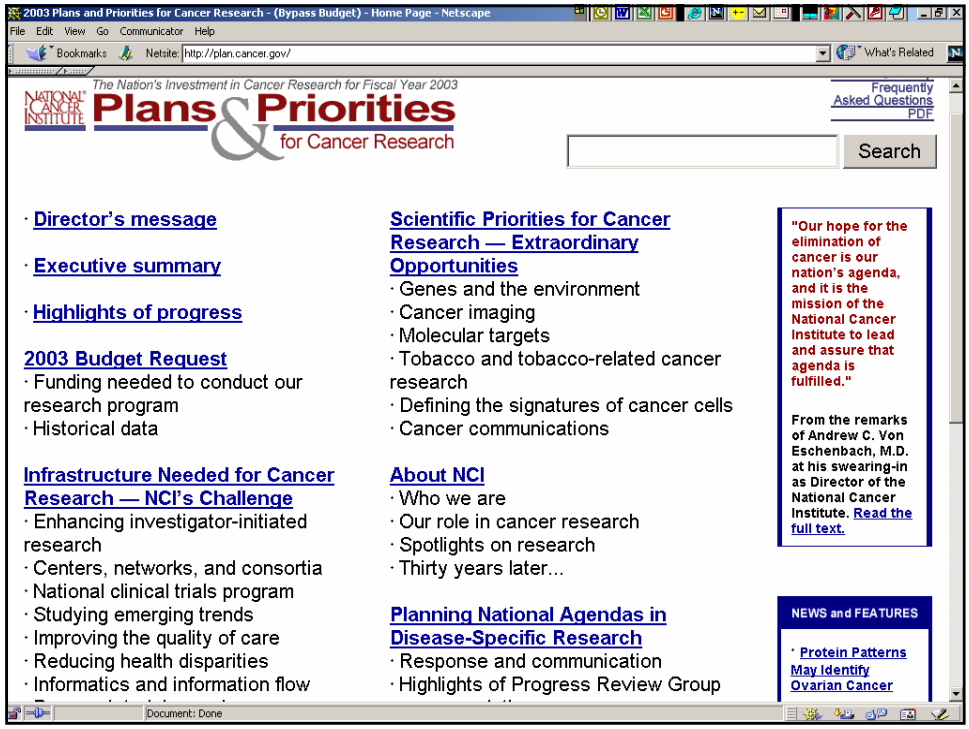
Identify Mission
Priorities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· Historical data
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· Centers, networks, and consortia
· National clinical trials program
· Studying emerging trends
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· Our role in cancer research
· Spotlights on research
· Thirty years later...
Planning National Agendas in Disease-Specific Research
· Response and communication
· Highlights of Progress Review Group
"Our hope for the elimination of cancer is our nation's agenda, and it is the mission of the National Cancer Institute to lead and assure that agenda is fulfilled."
From the remarks of Andrew C. Von Eschenbach, M.D. at his swearing-in as Director of the National Cancer Institute. Read the full text.
NEWS and FEATURES
· Protein Patterns May Identify Ovarian Cancer
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Policies and Guidelines - Policies, Notices and Guidelines:
NCI Grants Policies
NCI Extramural Notices
Funding Policy Letter, FY 2001
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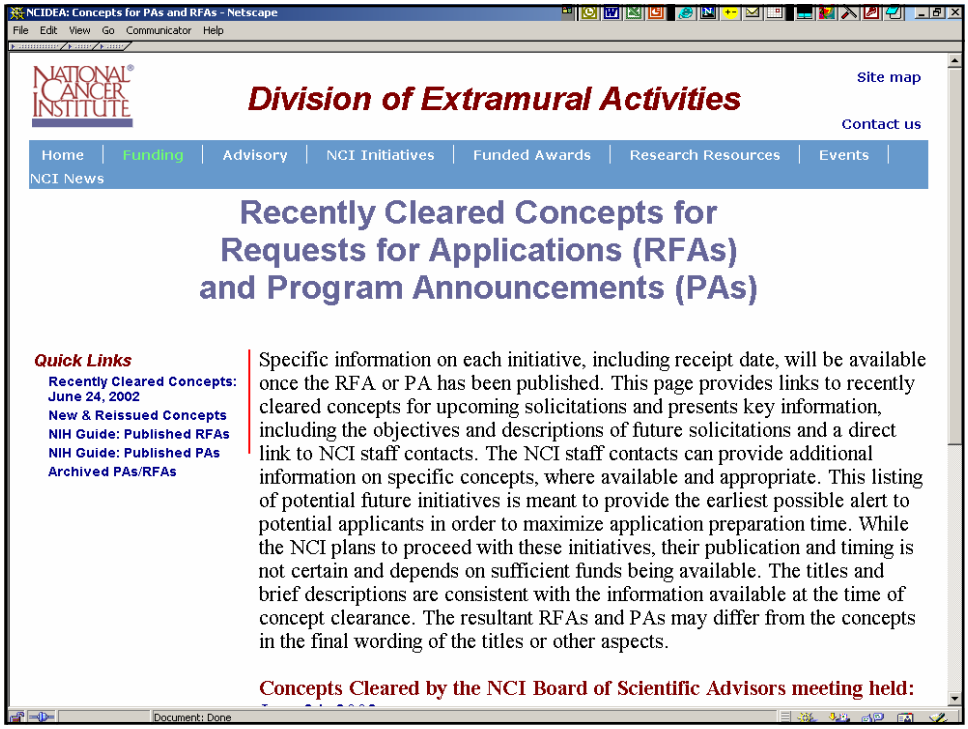

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Grant writing is a learned skill

- Writing grant applications, standard operating protocols and manuals of procedures that get approved are learned skills
- Writing manuscripts that get published in peer reviewed journals is a learned skill

Grantsmanship is a full time job.

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Elements of Grant Success

Good Ideas

Good Reviewers

Good Timing

Good Luck

Good Presentations

Good Grantsmanship

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Good Idea

SIGNIFICANT?

- Does it address an important problem?
- How will scientific knowledge be advanced?

INNOVATIVE?

- Builds upon or expands knowledge base
- Capable of making a difference

UNDERSTANDABLE?

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Are These Good Ideas?

- Develop a vaccine to prevent HIV infection
- Develop a method to prevent HIV from replicating or mutating
- Produce a drug that will raise HDL and lower LDL without any toxic side effects
- Produce a drug that will lower blood pressure without any side effects
- Study the human genome

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Are These Ideas Understandable?

What if you thought of these ideas in

1952? 1962? 1972? Are they still Good Ideas?

- Develop a vaccine to prevent HIV infection
- Develop a method to prevent HIV from replicating or mutating
- Produce a drug that will raise HDL and lower LDL without any toxic side effects
- Produce a drug that will lower blood pressure without any side effects
- Study the human genome

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Good Timing

- Will the idea be understood by others?
- Does it build upon existing knowledge?
- Does it build upon similar ideas?
- Do you have preliminary data?
- How will the idea be received?

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Good Timing is NOT

"I plan on submitting a grant application in two weeks can you tell me who might be a good program person for me to speak with before I send my application in?"

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Good Presentation

Organize the Application

- What do you want to do?
- Why do you want to do it ?
- How are you going to do it?
- What is the expected outcome?
- Why is it a good thing?

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Good Presentation: Organize the Application

- Develop a logical outline (presentation sequence)
- Use Section Heading - help reviewers "find things"
- Use both major and minor section headings
- Make it easy for reviewers - Don't make them work
- Use a detailed table of contents
- Do everything to help reviewers:
  - Understand your idea,
  - Why it is important and
  - Why it is reasonable and feasible

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Good Presentation

Address Review Criteria:

Significance

Approach

Innovation

Investigator

Environment

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Good Presentation:
Address Review Criteria

(1) SIGNIFICANCE:

- **Does this study address an important problem?**
- **If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced?**
- **What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field?**

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Good Presentation: Address Review Criteria

(2) APPROACH:

- Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
- Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

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Good Presentation: Address Review Criteria

(3) INNOVATION:

- Does the proposed research employ novel concepts, approaches or method?
- Are the aims original and innovative?
- Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?

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Good Presentation: Address Review Criteria

(4) INVESTIGATOR:

- Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work?
- Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers (if any)?

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Good Presentation: Address Review Criteria

(5) ENVIRONMENT:

- Does the scientific environment, in which the work will be done, contribute to the probability of success?
- Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements?
- Is there evidence of institutional support?

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Good Reviewers

Reviewer → Good Reviewer

- Organize and make reviewers “Happy”
- Make it easy for them to understand things
- Make it easy for them to find things
- Make it easy for them to be your advocate
- Don’t make them “work hard”

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Good Reviewers

Factors Involved in Reviewer Assignment

- Abstract
- Specific Aims
- Methods Section
- Self Referral Letter - request specific study section
- Research the background of the review committee
- Letter to SRA recommending types of reviewers

TYPES OF REVIEWERS NOT NAMES OF REVIEWERS

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Good Reviewers

Know who the potential reviewers are and do what you can to control the selection process.

Self Referral Letter - request specific study section

- **Research the background of the review committee**
  - **•CRISP Database**
  - **•Rosters of Committees**
- **Letter to SRA recommending types of reviewers**

TYPES OF REVIEWERS NOT NAMES OF REVIEWERS

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Good Luck

The consequence of:

- **Good Ideas**
- **Good Presentation**
- **Good Timing**
- **Good Reviewers**
- **Good Grantsmanship**

National Institutes of Health

COMMUNICATE WITH NIH

- **Program Staff**
- **Review Staff**
- **Grants Management Staff**

Improve your luck by preventing problems before they happen

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COMMUNICATING WITH NIH

Before Submitting, Call Institute Program Staff

- **Assess scientific interest and match**
- **What do they want to fund?**

Submit Your Application With a Cover Letter

- **Institute interest**
- **Study Section Interest - Charter**

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COVER LETTER

- **Suggest Key Areas of Expertise Required**
- **Do Not Suggest Specific Reviewer Names**
- **Suggest Institute(s) For Potential Funding**
- **Suggest Study Section(s) For Review**

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CONTACTS WITH REVIEW STAFF

Scientific Review Administrator answers

- **Questions about the review process**
- **Format and structure of application**
- **"Oops" missing material or late material**

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COMMUNICATING WITH NIH

AFTER REVIEW, CONTACT PROGRAM STAFF

Institute Program Administrator

- Questions about the discussion of your application (after you have summary statement)
- Scores and percentiles
- Questions about the fundability of application

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REVISE & RESUBMIT

Do Not Appeal Review Outcome

NIH Appeal Outcomes:

1. Council Denies Appeal (bad outcome)
2. Council Accepts Appeal: Original Application and Letter of Appeal is sent to the Same Study Section for a second examination and evaluation (bad outcome)
3. Council Accepts Appeal: Original Application be sent to a new Study Section but without the Letter of Appeal (bad outcome)

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REVISION COVER LETTER

- For Revisions, Indicate Review History
- Request Same Or Different Study Section
- Provide Justification for your request
- Don't be Argumentative ! Never!
- Don't be Abrasive ! Never!

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Q What if you know that you are "Right" and the reviewers are "Wrong", is it appropriate to argue your position in your resubmission

A NO!

Remember

- An application for funding is not about the facts of your completed research.
- It is about ideas and potential research
- Never be Argumentative !
- Never be Abrasive !
- Do not do longterm damage to yourself

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REVISING & RESUBMITTING

- Write A Clear Introduction Section
- Address All Criticisms Thoroughly
- Respond Constructively

- Accept the Help of Reviewer Comments
- Don't Be Argumentative !
- Don't be Abrasive !

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REVISING & RESUBMITTING

- Update Preliminary Results
- Remember that Properly Revised applications can received fundable scores and subsequent $$
- Maintain communications with Scientific Review Administrator and Program Administrator

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DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** Pursue original science. This is an area that study sections are most concerned about.
- **Do** Provide a well focused research plan.
- **Do not** let your ideas wander from the main theme.

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"This application is characterized by ideas that are both original and scientifically important.

Unfortunately the ideas that are scientifically important are not original and the ideas that are original are not scientifically important."

"In addition to proposing a research design that is a fishing expedition,

the applicant also proposes to use every type of bait and piece of tackle known to mankind."

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DO'S AND DON'TS (2)

- **Provide a critical approach to project.**
- **Discuss potential problem areas and alternative approaches.**
- **Never assume that the reviewers will know what you mean.**
- **Always be explicit about what you want the reviewers to know and what they need to know.**

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DO'S AND DON'TS (3)

- Read the application instructions carefully.
- Read the application instructions carefully.
- Read the application instructions carefully.

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DO'S AND DON'TS (4)

- Read the application instructions carefully.
- They may seem overwhelming but the effort is worth it and could spell the difference between success and failure.
- Supply sufficient detail.
- Stay within the page limitations.
- If you don't understand something in the instructions ask for help .
- Call the SRA call the PA.

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DO'S AND DON'TS (5)

- Do Secure collaborators for areas of research in which you lack experience and training.

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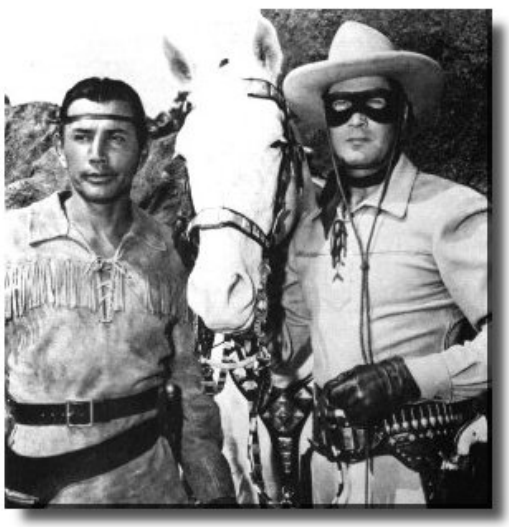
Point of View



- There are no competitors in science,
- There are only potential collaborators.

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DO'S AND DON'TS (6)

- Secure collaborations for areas of research in which you lack experience and training.
- "Independent Researcher" does not mean that you working in isolation.
- "Independent Researcher" does mean that you set the direction of the research
- Don't give the impression of being intellectually "Isolated".

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DO'S AND DON'TS (7)

- Prepare a reviewer friendly application.
- It should be well organized and clear.
- Tables and figures should be easily viewed.
- Do not hand-draw structures.
- Do not photoreduce your application to an unreasonable size.
- Remember that Reviewers work late at night.

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DO'S AND DON'TS (8)

- Do not be overly ambitious.
- Project a realistic amount of work.
- Provide a thorough literature search.
- Be sure you have found key references.
- Know your Reviewers - do literature searches of committee members.
- Minimize typographical errors.

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DO'S AND DON'TS (9)

- If you are a new investigator, ask for 5 years.
- The sentiment at NIH is to award sufficient time and funds for new investigators to establish their programs.
- Make sure that you have collaborators who can compensate for your deficiencies and who and add credibility to your innovative ideas.
- Don't appear intellectually isolated.

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DO'S AND DON'TS (10)

- If your application is a renewal or supplement request, be aware that study section members will not have the benefit of your previous application but rather only the previous summary statement.
- Be sure to explain your progress carefully in the current application.
- Publish, Publish, Publish - be productive.

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BEFORE YOU SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

- Show your application to a colleague
- Show you application to a colleague who knows little to nothing about your area of research and ask them if they understand
  - What you are proposing to do?
  - How you are proposing to do it?
  - Why you are proposing to do it?

If they do not understand Revise until they do

- Get feedback on clarity
- Get feedback on scientific merit

AFTER YOU RECEIVE SNAP-OUT MAILER

- Contact the SRA who is listed on the mailer if there are potential problems of IRG assignment.
- Avoid additional material in support of your application,
  - Speak to the SRA first.
  - Keep the material brief - 1 to 3 page letter.
  - Send it at least one month before the review committee meeting.
  - Better yet Do NOT submit additional material

AFTER REVIEW IS OVER

- The Program Administrator at the Institute to which your proposal was assigned is the new contact point. Wait for the Summary Statement
- Address any concerns on review to them.
- Appeal letters are appropriate only if review was flawed (legal and procedural).
- More constructive use of your energy is amending and resubmitting the application and incorporating reviewer comments.
- Do not take the review comments personally.

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IF YOU RESUBMIT

- Answer previous critiques completely
- Supply an introduction section which explains the changes you have made
- Leave your irritations with the review out of your resubmission
- Don't argue or be hostile
- You will not be help yourself if you force the study section into a defensive posture
- Accept Reviewers comments and suggestions as helpful and incorporate them in your revision

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IF YOU RESUBMIT

- Remember that the study section will have the previous summary statement, but not the previous application.
- Do not refer to the previous application for details.
- Remember that reviewers are generally trying to help you become a better research scientist

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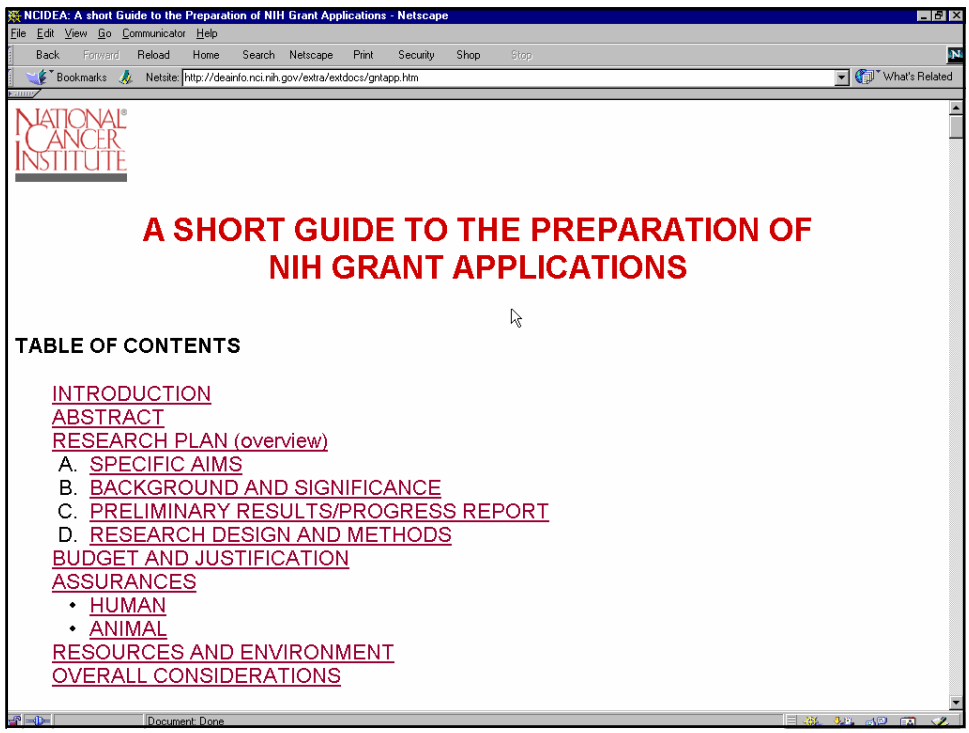
Resources



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Hints for Writing Successful NIH grants

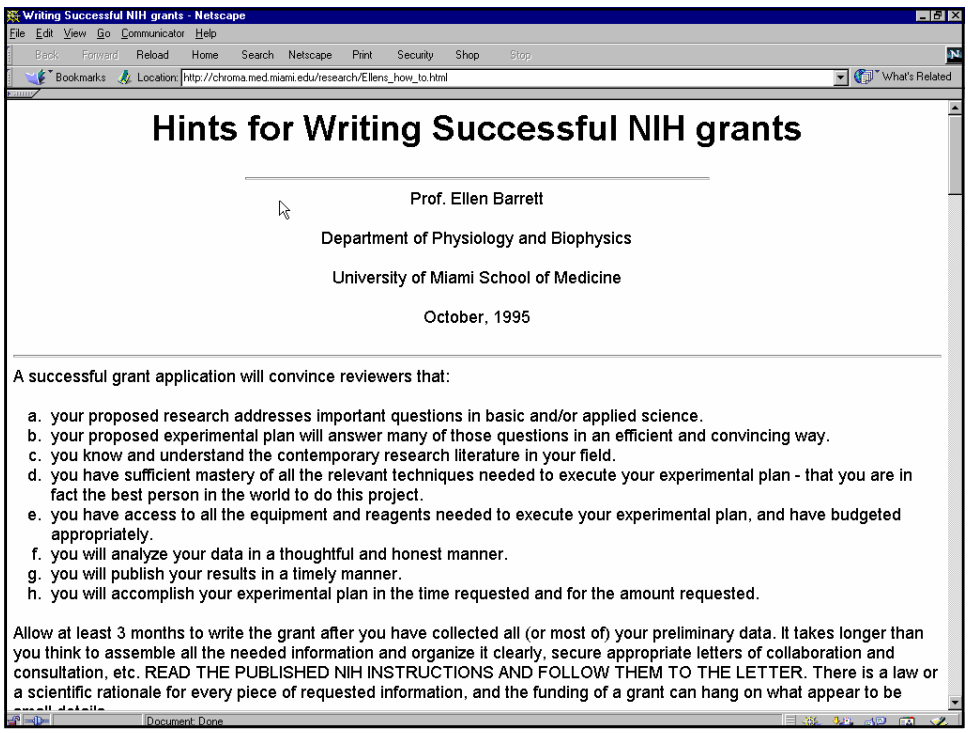
Prof. Ellen Barrett

Department of Physiology and Biophysics

University of Miami School of Medicine

October, 1995

http://chroma.med.miami.edu/research/Ellens_how_to.html

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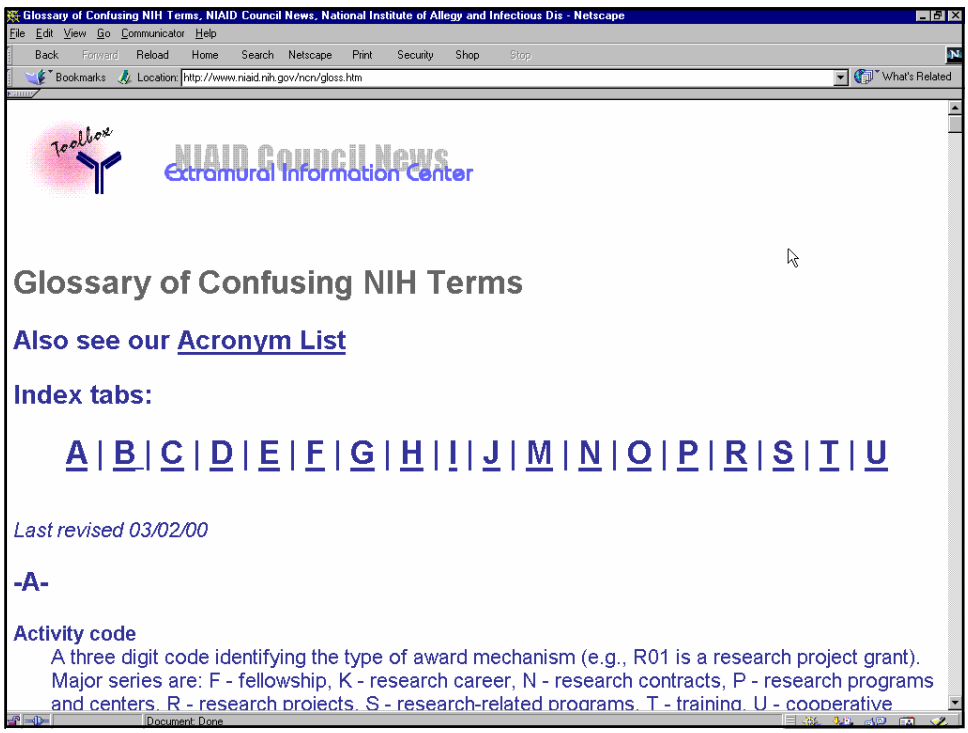
| Courses, Seminars, and Slide Presentations on Preparation of Applications |
| Comprehensive Research Funding Information |
Tips for Scientific/Technical Writing
Elements of Style by William Strunk, Jr. (Bartleby)
NIH Publications
How to Apply for NIH Funding (NICHD-slides)
Preparation of NIH Grants Applications (NIH - NCI)
How to Write a Research Grant Application (NIH - NIAID; PDF file)
Common Mistakes in Grant Applications: A Review Perspective (NIH - NIAID)
Glossary of Confusing NIH Terms (NIH - NIAID)
National Science Foundation
Document: Done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Toolbox
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Extramural Information Center
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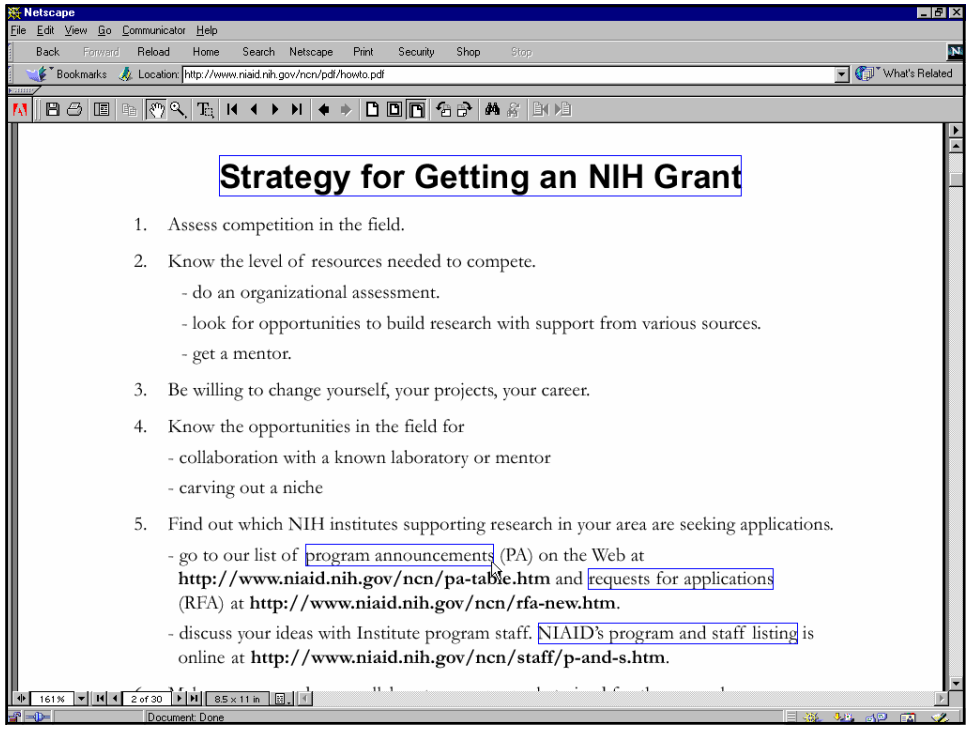
Also see our Acronym List
Index tabs:
A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | M | N | O | P | R | S | T | U
Last revised 03/02/00
-A-
Activity code
A three digit code identifying the type of award mechanism (e.g., R01 is a research project grant). Major series are: F - fellowship, K - research career, N - research contracts, P - research programs and centers, R - research projects, S - research-related programs, T - training, U - cooperative
Document: Done



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Funding Opportunities

Sites with important information:

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/index.cfm

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/welcome.htm#introduction

http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/funding.htm

http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/extra/extdocs/grantrevprocess.htm

http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/default.htm

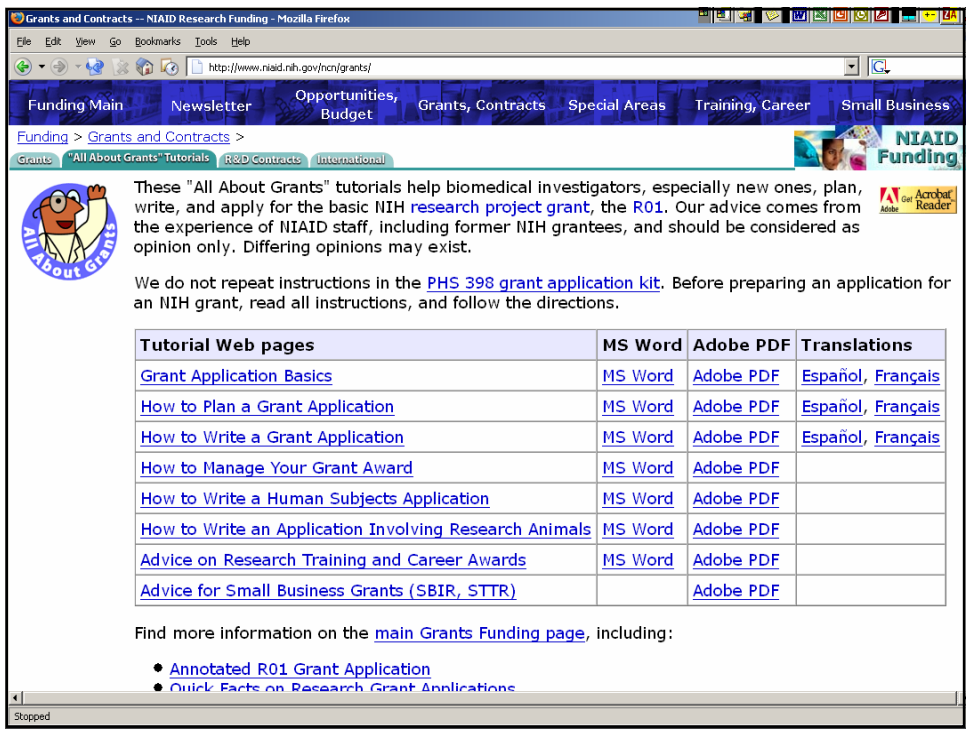
http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/charts/default.htm

http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/glossary/default.htm

National Institutes of Health

How to Write a Grant Application

http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/



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How to Write a Grant Application

http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/grant_tips.htm

http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/

http://www.nnlm.nlm.nih.gov/scr/edn/grants-resources.htm

http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/grant_tips.htm

http://www.nigms.nih.gov/funding/tips.html

http://www.nigms.nih.gov/funding/moregrant_tips.html

http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/EXTRA/EXTDOCS/gntapp.htm

http://chroma.med.miami.edu/research/Ellens_how_to.html

http://www.cfda.gov/public/cat-writing.htm

http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/research/writing.htm

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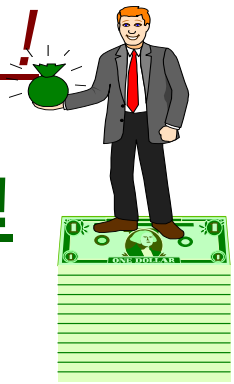
Rule #1

STUDY SECTIONS DO NOT FUND !

INSTITUTES FUND!



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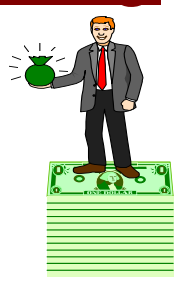
Rule #2

You must satisfy the needs of reviewers and the needs of the funding agency



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Rule #3

Reviewers are never wrong, Reviewers are never right;

they simply provide an assessment of the material that you provided to them in your application

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Rule #4

The comments in the summary statements are never about you as a person.

The comments are about the material that you provided in your application and the way in which you provided the information

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Rule #5

The comments in the summary statements only list some of the weaknesses not all of the weaknesses.

When you revise your application use the time as an opportunity to improve the entire application.

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Rule #6

Always contact NIH staff before you submit an application and preferably when you are in the planning stages.

Make sure that you give yourself and the NIH staffer enough time to work with together.

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Q. Do I really have to contact NIH *before* I submit an application?

A. Only if you want to get funded!

- Always contact program staff during application development
- Must contact & IC staff prior to a submission if you want them to agree to accept the application for any investigator-initiated competitive applications with ≥$500,000 direct cost for any single year
- Request must be at least six weeks before deadline

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Rule #7

DO NOT write the application for the "Specialist"

You MUST convince the entire review committee

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Rule #8

DO NOT write the application for Yourself unless you are going to fund it yourself

You MUST convince the entire review committee and the funding agency

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Rule #9

Secure collaborators for areas of research in which you lack experience and training and who can complement you.
Let them help you prepare the best possible application

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Rule #10

Secure a mentor
or mentors who can help you succeed

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NIH GRANT$

Formula for Grant Success

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Grantsmanship

***Knowing + Understanding**

- What to do
- How to do it
- When to do it
- What to do when things don't go as planned

***Being willing to do what is needed**

***Doing it- doing what is needed**

Understanding Peer Review

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NIH GRANT$

Formula for Grant Success


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Thank You