

What happens to my application after submission?

Demystifying the review process

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F13 Infectious Disease and Microbiology Fellowship Panel
ZRG1 F13-Z

Outline

- **Review Timeline**
 - **Rules for reviewers**
 - **Criteria and Scoring**
 - **Critiques**

Resources for Reviewers

Secure web site accessible through ERA Commons - Internet Assisted Review (IAR)

- Meeting materials
- Fellowship criteria
- Critique template
- List of assignments
- Complete list of applications including applicants and sponsors
- Important to declare a conflict early!

Timeline

Write/Submit
Critiques

Read

Meeting

Edit

This cycle:

Notification May 30

- Review list declare conflicts
- Assignments and reviewer orientation June 6-12
- Critique due date July 13 - 7 am
- Read phase - now can see other reviewers scores and critiques
- Travel day
- Meeting - 2 full days 137 applications
- Edit

All times Eastern Time

Conflict of Interest

- Sign pre-meeting COI form indicating that you have informed the SRO of all COI or situations with an appearance of COI prior to the meeting
- Alert SRO if you identify a COI during the meeting
- Sign post-meeting COI form indicating that you have not participated in the review of any application with which you have a COI or an appearance of a COI

Confidentiality

- All meeting materials, discussions, and notes are considered confidential
- Do not discuss application or any aspect of the meeting with anyone not officially associated with the meeting
- During the meeting, do not discuss applications outside of the meeting room
- Contact SRO if anyone contacts you regarding any aspect of the review
- Do not provide any information to anyone that contacts you
- Do not store any meeting related materials on any server or unencrypted flash drive
- Dispose of all review material after the meeting

Research Misconduct

- **Under no circumstances can an issue of research misconduct be raised publicly during the review meeting**
- **Report any issues of scientific misconduct privately to the SRO, preferably prior to the review meeting**

Review

Goal

Provide thorough, fair, independent, expert & unbiased evaluation of merit of applications assigned to this panel so the best applications receive the best scores

Provide an assessment of the likelihood that the fellowship will enhance the applicant's potential for, and commitment to, an independent, productive scientific research career in a health-related field, in consideration of the scored and additional review criteria.



Evaluate the Overall Training Potential

Fellowship Mechanisms

F30: Combined MD/PhD and other dual doctoral degree training

[Parent F30 Announcement](#)

F31 and F31 Diversity: Predoctoral training

[Parent F31 Announcement](#)

[Parent F31 Diversity Announcement](#)

F32: Postdoctoral Training

[Parent F32 Announcement](#)

Guidelines for Scoring

Goal To distinguish applications by utilizing the entire 1 to 9 scoring range

- Focus on the relative scientific merit and impact of the applications.
- Try to establish, for each of your assigned applications, whether the merit warrants a top half or bottom half designation with respect to overall impact.
- Review the CSR All distribution histograms.

5 Scored Review Criteria

- **Applicant**
Does the applicant have the potential to develop into an independent and productive researcher in biomedical, behavioral or clinical science?
- **Sponsor(s)**
Does the sponsor(s) have the research qualifications, mentorship experience and adequate funds to support the proposed training?
- **Research Plan**
Is the research plan well integrated with the candidate's goals, will it expand the candidate's conceptual understanding and is the plan of high scientific quality?
- **Training Potential**
Does the proposed research project and training plan have the potential to provide the applicant with the requisite individualized and mentored experiences that will develop his/her knowledge, research and professional skills?
- **Institutional Environment and Commitment**
Are the research facilities, resources and training opportunities adequate and appropriate for the candidate's scientific development?

Criteria and Criteria Scores

Consider 5 Criteria
(weighted based on
reviewer judgement)

- Applicant
- Sponsor(s)
- Research Plan
- Training Potential
- Institutional Environment & Commitment

- All assigned reviewers provide criteria scores
- Same scale: 1 – 9
- > 4 – weaknesses?
- < 4 – strengths?
- Best Practices Document in Meeting Materials

Criteria and Criteria Scores

1. Applicant

Does the applicant have the potential to develop into an independent and productive researcher in biomedical, behavioral or clinical science?

- Academic record and research experience.
- Evidence of productivity
- Letters of recommendation
- Demonstration of commitment to an independent research career.

Avoid any comments that may disclose letter writers; breach confidentiality

Focus on qualities of the applicant rather than on qualities of the application

Criteria and Criteria Scores

2. Sponsor

Does the sponsor(s) have the following to support the proposed training?

Research qualifications

- Sponsor's record of research accomplishment
- Sponsor and training team expertise

Mentorship experience and commitment to the candidate

- Sponsor's mentoring history?
- Co-sponsor specific contributions?
- Plan for coordinated mentoring?
- Sponsors demonstration of a high level of commitment with personalized training plan? Do letters of collaboration convey commitment?

Adequate funds to support the proposed training?

Criteria and Criteria Scores

3. Research Training Plan

Is the research plan well integrated with the candidate's goals, will it expand the candidate's conceptual understanding and is the plan of high scientific quality?

- It's about the big picture; Focus more on rationale.
- Properly considered alternative outcomes or methodologies?
- Are publishable results likely? Is the work proposed feasible within the timeframe?
- Is the scope of the work proposed appropriate for the candidate's career stage?
- Will it contribute to training? Does the applicant gain new skills from it?

Criteria and Criteria Scores

4. Training Potential

Do the proposed research project and training plan have the potential to provide the applicant with the requisite individualized and mentored experiences that will develop his/her knowledge, research and professional skills?

- Consistent with applicant's career goals in a health-related field and help them advance to the next stage.
- Complementary to previous training? What new research areas/skills/ techniques will be learned?
- The sponsor's training plan and applicant's proposed activities should address any weaknesses/gaps in the applicant's background relative to their career goal.
- Non-research training appropriate to the career goals (e.g., teaching, coursework, grant-writing, presentations)

Criteria and Criteria Scores

5. Institutional Environment and Commitment

Are the research facilities, resources and training opportunities adequate and appropriate for the candidate's scientific development?

For F30s and F31s, the additional educational information is often a useful source of information.

- Availability of necessary equipment, laboratory space, computational resources and core facilities.
- Exposure to seminars, workshops and professional development activities.
- Institution's record of commitment to fostering high quality trainees

Additional Review Criteria

IRB or IACUC approval is not a review criterion nor a substitute for the 4 points

Four Points

- (1) Description of proposed procedures involving animals, including species, strains, ages, sex, and total number to be used
- (2) Justifications for the use of animals versus alternative models and for the appropriateness of the species proposed
- (3) Interventions to minimize discomfort, distress, pain and injury
- (4) Justification for euthanasia method if NOT consistent with the AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals

Biohazards

Are materials or procedures proposed potentially hazardous to research personnel and/or the environment, and if so, are adequate protections proposed?

Resubmissions

Evaluate the application as now presented, taking into consideration the responses to comments from the previous scientific review group and changes made to the project.

Additional Review Criteria

Should NOT affect overall impact score but needs a comment (if applicable)

Responsible Conduct of Research

- Contiguous with fellowship duration
- Include each of the five elements
 - Format
 - Subject Matter
 - Faculty Participation
 - Duration
 - Frequency

Select Agents (posted in Meeting Materials)

Resource Sharing Plans

Budget and Period of Support - Duration only

Scoring – Overall Impact

Overall Impact	High	Medium	Low
Score	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9
<p>Consider 5 Criteria (weighted based on reviewer judgement)</p>	<p><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></p>	<p><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></p> <p><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></p>	<p><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></p> <p><i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of low value/benefit for the candidate who shows low potential. Has some weaknesses in the criteria.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant • Sponsor(s) • Research Plan • Training Potential • Institutional Environment & Commitment 			

Overall Impact Paragraph

- All reviewers write this
- Written for program AND the applicants
- Context for why the overall impact score was given
- Critical feedback
- Clear, specific language highlighting main score driving elements
- Explain how the strengths and weaknesses were balanced to arrive at the final score.

Critique submission

- Criterion scores and Preliminary Overall Impact score in IAR using dropdown menus
- Submit/upload critique file
- Once critiques are posted in IAR, Read Phase begins (1 week before the meeting)
- This will be the first opportunity to see if your scores and rationales align with the other assigned reviewers
- The SRO generates a list of applications based on the preliminary scores of reviewers 1-3
- Only the top 50% of the applications will be discussed at the meeting

Discussed/Non-Discussed Applications

- Approximately 50% of the applications will be discussed
- Prior to the meeting, after reading the other critiques, a reviewer can request to bring an application back up for discussion or change the preliminary overall impact score by contacting the SRO
- At the meeting, after reading the critiques from the other assigned reviewers, any of the non-discussed applications that are considered high impact, **any** panel member can bring that application up for discussion

At the Meeting: Overview

- Applications are discussed in order of preliminary impact score (from best to worst in F30, F31, F31 Diversity, and F32 clusters)
- Assigned Reviewers state preliminary Overall Impact Score
- **Reviewer 1: 4 - 5 minutes**
 - Very brief summary of the project, assessment of the five criteria, and overall impact emphasizing key score driving issues
- **Reviewers 2 and 3: 2 - 3 minutes each**
 - Raise any score-driving issues that were not already mentioned or areas of disagreement
- Committee discussion
- HS, VA and BH are discussed, Chair provides summary, **the assigned reviewers state their final scores, and the committee votes**
- RCR, Budget, Select Agents, Foreign Institutions are discussed

Questions?

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