

The Review Process

Rules of Engagement

- K awards judged by individual institutes
- RO1's assigned to Committee on Scientific Review (CSR)
- If appropriate priority score then funding by appropriate institutes (NHLBI)
- Peer review is not guaranteed

Study Sections

1. Developed by CSR
2. Changed to be organ specific
3. You can/should request specific study sections
4. Few clinicians (fewer surgeons) populate study sections

The Process

1. Primary and secondary reviewer and a reader
2. Each assigned 6-12 grants
3. Half the grants discussed/ $\frac{1}{2}$ triaged

Scoring

1. Each grant assigned a priority score
2. Pink sheet with each grant discussing pro's and con's
3. Probably will need to score in 10th to 15th percentile to be funded

Strategies for Success (RO1's)

1. Study an important problem with significant translational potential
2. Focused interrelating hypotheses
3. Assemble a team that can do the work and demonstrate it in the grant

Strategies for Success (RO1's)

1. Realistic budget
2. Excellent preliminary work
3. History of relevant publications
4. Mechanistic rather than descriptive
5. Aim for an occasional home run (avoid hitting singles)

Strategies for Success (K Awards)

1. Judged more on environment than individual project
2. Mentor must be funded
3. You must have protected time
4. You must have potential

Don't Aggravate the Reviewers

1. Ridiculous budget
2. Typing errors, etc.
3. Unreadable grant
4. Lots of whining
5. Lack of preliminary data for RO1's

Interpreting the Review

1. Triage is not a death sentence
2. You have 3 tries on an individual grant
3. Pay attention to reviewers and address every comment in your introductory letter
4. Stay productive in interval

Specific Issues

“Unfocused” - you must organize your grant and reduce scope of investigation

Specific Issues

“Descriptive” - you will need stronger, more mechanistic hypotheses

Specific Issues

“questions about methodology”

- you must demonstrate you or your team can do what you describe. May need supportive letters from collaborators

Competitive Renewals

1. Must have been productive
2. Must have done all your aims or have a good reason you didn't
3. Your new grant must be a logical extension of your previous work

Dealing with Reviews

1. Do not treat reviewers as idiots even if they are
2. Persistence is everything
3. It's not personal
4. Significant changes are normally required. However, change only what makes sense

On Being a Reviewer

1. If asked, do it
2. You owe it to your peers
3. Terrific, educational experience
4. Reward translational potential

On Being a Reviewer

1. No grant is perfect
 - give the young investigator the benefit of doubt
2. Reward productivity
3. Reward ingenuity
4. Reward translational potential

On Being a Reviewer

1. You owe them a thorough review
2. Spend the time (2-4 hours/grant)
3. Be fair

On Being a Reviewer

1. No grant is perfect
 - give the young investigator the benefit of doubt
2. Reward productivity
3. Reward ingenuity

Conclusions

1. You must understand the system
2. The system is flawed but not impossible
3. Persistence is everything!