Questions/Answers
February 4, 2019 NIH Grantsmanship HNN 2.0 Webinar
From
Peter R. Jackson, Ph.D.

1. Is a justification for international participation needed in the application??
   Answer: Yes. After reviewers provide a final priority score for the application, they evaluate the need for conducting the research at the international site. The application should address how well the proposed research meets the following criteria.
   - Does the proposed research include talent, resources, populations, or environmental conditions not in the U.S. or that augment U.S. resources?
   - Is the research relevant to the NIAID mission?
   - Is similar research being conducted in the United States?

PLEASE SEE: Foreign and International Grants and Components SOP

2. Are the funds to other countries only granted if the research is not being performed in the United States? Answer: Yes. Please see the answer to Question 1 and, https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/peer-review#A8

3. Does NIH have "contact points" for researchers from the EU? People available to give specialized advice? Answer: Yes. Section VII of every NIH grant Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), provides information about "Agency Contacts" including Scientific/Research Contacts also known as Program Officers (POs); Peer Review Contacts, also known as Scientific Review Officers (SROs); and Financial/ Grants Management Contacts, also known as Grants Management Officers (GMOs).

   NIH provides guidance on contacting POs, SROs and GMOs. See https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/contact-niaid-program-officer and https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/resources/contacting-nih-staff.htm

4. Is there a limit to how much money will be awarded to European institutions? For example, not more than 5% of the overall funds? Answer: There is no specific limit to funds awarded to European institutions. However, funds are limited by several factors including: the type of the grant/award, funding specifics in the FOA, the recommendations of peer reviewers, the decisions of Program Officers, funds available at the time of award, and other factors. See https://www.niaid.nih.gov/research/grants-foreign-international

5. Are researchers from Associated Countries to Horizon 2020 (non EU28/27) such as Turkey for example, also eligible for NIH funding? Answer: Yes. Foreign investigator eligibility for applying for NIH funds is not associated with Horizon 2020 parameters. For eligibility details please see: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/international-applications

6. Can Swiss researchers apply under the same rules as EU researchers?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to Question 5 for details about eligibility.

7. Can an application be submitted without a US partner?
   Answer: Yes. Please refer to Question 5 for details about eligibility.

8. Individual applications only or can consortia apply?
   Answer: Depending on the type of grant and the specifics in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) applications are submitted by one, or more, individuals or by consortia.

9. Which beginning and final TRL do projects need?
   Answer: In general NIH does not use the term Technology Readiness Level (TRL) except for some FOAs/Programs. For example https://ncai.nhlbi.nih.gov/ncai/resources/techreadylevels. However, each FOA provides guidance about eligibility issues and the general goals of the grant type. Some eligibility requirements or goals may resemble TRLs.

10. Can non-US PIs become NIH reviewers?
    Answer: Yes. The NIAID provides extensive advice about becoming an NIH Peer Reviewer. See https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/serving-peer-review-committee. Also, on an annual basis, NIAID thanks the US and non-US experts who served on peer review panels. See https://www.niaid.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Thx-NIAID-PRGs-ACs-Members.pdf.

11. Are EU based researchers eligible for the Funding Opportunities for Early Career Investigators?
    Answer: Yes. There are no US citizenship or residency requirements for ESI status. See https://grants.nih.gov/policy/early-investigators/faqs.htm#5345.

12. Are there predefined calls for proposals with set deadlines?
    Answer: Yes, there are many such calls, and all are available through the NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts https://grants.nih.gov/funding/about-nih-guide-to-grants-and-contracts.htm, or Grants.gov .

13. Is it possible for European companies / industrial scientists to get funding from NIH? Are there special rules for them? Answer. Yes, European companies / industrial scientists can get funding from NIH. Please check the eligibility requirements in the FOAs of interest. FOAs appear in the NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts. https://grants.nih.gov/funding/about-nih-guide-to-grants-and-contracts.htm and Grants.gov

14. Are there training seminars for grants officers, project managers and administrative officers here in Europe on how to manage NIH grants?
    Answer:
    a) The NIH presents Regional Seminars on grant/award-related topics to US and foreign investigators and research administrators. The schedule for the regional US meetings is

here: https://grants.nih.gov/news/contact-in-person/seminars.htm. There is a Regional meeting in Baltimore, MD May 15-17 and in Phoenix, Az in November, 2019.

b) There is a schedule for NIAID International Grants Training in 2019 https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/international-grants-training

c) The NIAID Office of Research Training and Special Programs has provided grantsmanship training at international meetings. Please contact Dr. Paula Strickland for information about future meetings and other opportunities. See https://www.niaid.nih.gov/about/division-extramural-activities-director-contacts.

d) For institutions in low- and middle-income nations, the NIAID G11 Grant Mechanism provides training in NIH funds management. Contact Dr. Strickland for more information and see: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-AI-18-041.html, and https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-18-335.html

e) The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) provides training in the US and internationally https://www.ncura.edu/annualmeeting/Home.aspx

f) Some NCURA training is in the form of Travelling Workshops and some is specific for international administrators. See https://www.ncura.edu/travelingworkshops/Home.aspx https://www.ncura.edu/Global/NCURAGlobalTravelingWorkshopFaculty.aspx

g) NCURA has Global Partners who may be contacted for advice https://www.ncura.edu/Global/NCURAGlobalPartners.aspx

15. Any advice for subawards, when the funded institution is an EU institute and the sub awardees are US institutions?
Answer: Subawards for foreign Institutions are discussed here:
https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/subawards-foreign-grants
Foreign Award Management is discussed here: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/foreign-grants-management
Applicants are advised to contact the Grants Management Officer of your award for questions about the use of funds, including Subawards.

16. Do US government shutdowns affect funding?
Answer: Currently no US funding agency is shut down. However, if the expenditure of US agency funds is blocked by a shutdown, funded-research projects can be reduced in scope or stopped. Exemptions are made to continue the support of work needed to protect or maintain, human and animal health.

17. Is there a possibility for a rebuttal to reviewer comments?
Answer: Yes. The NIAID provides extensive advice on the rebuttal process:
https://www.niaid.nih.gov/research/grants-scientific-review-appeals and
https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/options-if-application-not-funded

18. Is it advisable to use the option to exclude reviewers in the assignment form during the proposal preparation?   Answer: The question refers to options an investigator has with respect to which study section and/or reviewer evaluates an application. See: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-d/general/g.600-phs-assignment-request-form.htm.

    An applicant has the right to contact the SRO and provide advice about a peer review assignment using an Assignment Request Form. The Center for Scientific Review provides extensive advice about the use of the Form.

    The Assignment Request Form also is used to request the application is not evaluated by one (or more) named reviewer(s) because of scientific differences or potential bias. However, applicants SHOULD NOT name reviewers who are appropriate. Instead, applicants should identify the area(s) of expertise needed by the reviewers in order to evaluate the application. Please follow the guidelines in the above link and ensure the Assignment Request Form is complete and timely.

19. Is it possible to send the same application to several foundations?
    Answer: Yes. There are restrictions against submitting the same, or very similar application, to more than one DHHS component, such as different NIH Institutes, https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-18-197.html. However, if the research proposed is appropriate, the same plans can be submitted to the NIH, to a different Federal Agency (such as the DoD), or to other funders (such as Foundations) for consideration. If such an application is awarded by a non-NIH funder, the PI is to inform the NIH. NIH does not support already funded research and before a meritorious application can receive an award, NIH Grants Management and Program Officers will verify the research is not already funded.

    Additionally, a recent program called OnPar (https://onpar.leidosweb.com/) provides non-US government funding sources the opportunity to consider supporting highly meritorious, but not funded, NIH applications.

20. Does NIH fund applications that bring a communication aspect to a healthcare project? Or does it have to be medical/disease related?
    Answer: New approaches to the communication of health information or improving communications in health care / health research settings are supported by several NIH Institutes. The NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts (https://grants.nih.gov/funding/searchGuide) and the NIH RePORT (https://report.nih.gov/) can be searched for appropriate FOAs and funded projects.

    Communication also is conducted through conferences, and several NIH Institutes support foreign components on Conference Grants (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-18-648.html#_Section_III._Eligibility).

The National Library of Medicine (https://www.nlm.nih.gov/) supports news ways to communicate health information.

Many clinical trial FOAs seek improved methods for acquiring, storing and transmitting clinical data / information.

The National Center for Biomedical Information Technology (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/) supports new ways to acquire, store, analyze and communicate information.

The question also may be relevant to work supported by the National Institute of Deafness and other Communicable Disorders (https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/).

Finally, the NIH itself is working on improving methods and approaches to communicate research goals and results (https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/what-we-do/science-health-public-trust/perspectives/our-redesigned-site-perspectives-tools-communicating-research-results).

21. If you are funded, is an external audit required? And, does the 750k annual cost limit for an audit include consideration of DoD awards?
Answer: In general, audit requirements are linked to the size of the award. Please see https://grants.nih.gov/grants/post-award-monitoring-and-reporting.htm for specifics. Since audits are required for grantees or sub-recipients that expend $750,000 or more in *federal* awards during the fiscal year, Department of Defense (DoD) funds would be included in that total.

22. For first time applicants, would you recommend applying with a project as a partner and with a coordinator based in the US (instead of being the coordinator)?
Answer: Foreign applicants without NIH grant experience are SRONGLY advised to collaborate and include an experienced US-based investigator / coordinator as an important member of the research team. Inexperienced investigators often benefit from applying with a US investigator familiar with the complex NIH grant process. When planning a collaboration please consult the eligibility requirements in the FOA, including eligibility for a Multiple PI award https://grants.nih.gov/grants/multi_pi/index.htm.

This National Cancer Institute site provides ideas and resources for developing research collaborations https://www.teamsciencetoolkit.cancer.gov/public/home.aspx?js=1

23. How long does it take to know the outcome after submission?
Answer: General guidelines for the time it takes to know your results are here: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/timelines-assignment-review-funding

24. Is access to and communication about medical issues a concern of NIH?
Answer: Yes. Confidentiality of medical information is important to the NIH. There are several relevant web sites: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/research/data-security, https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/review/logistics/security_awareness.htm https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/data_sharing_guidance.htm

The NIAID Privacy information page is here: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/privacy

The Fogarty International Center maintains a list of Guidelines related to research data: https://www.fic.nih.gov/ResearchTopics/Bioethics/Pages/investigators-ethics-committees.aspx

25. We have 30-40% overhead at our institute for indirect costs. What are the NIH guidelines on the indirect costs?

Answer: NIH Guidelines on indirect costs and related funding issues are addressed here:

https://www.fic.nih.gov/Grants/Pages/Frequently-Asked-Questions.aspx#negotiatecosts

and

https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/foreign-grantees-and-foreign-subawardees-notable-change

26. What are the success rates for funding? Especially for non-US researchers.
Answer. The answer is complex and depends on several parameters.
   a) Success rates vary across the NIH Institutes and depend on the funds available, the application type, the science area, the number of competing applications and other issues.
   b) Institutes publish their Financial Management Plans and provide advice about how funds are awarded. NIAID examples are here: https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/niaid-paylines and https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/funding-decisions-next-steps
   c) NIH defines Success Rates here: https://report.nih.gov/UploadDocs/NIH%20Success%20Rate%20Definition%202018.pdf
   d) Success rates are published annually according to various parameters, including foreign locations. See: https://report.nih.gov/success_rates/index.aspx
   e) The searchable, web-based tool called "Reporter" provides information on NIH supported research. See: https://report.nih.gov/index.aspx . The RePORT website includes reporting tools, data, analyses, and statistics of NIH research activities. The website includes the RePORTER (RePORT Expenditures and Results), an electronic tool to search a repository of NIH-funded research grants and contracts, including intramural awards. Recently, the website has been updated to include funded research across government agencies (e.g. NSF, USDA, VA, DOD, NASA) and select international organizations.

Open Access Websites for funding information:
1. RePORTER: https://report.nih.gov
2. Federal RePORTER: https://federalreporter.nih.gov
3. World RePORTER: https://worldreport.nih.gov

27. What is the funding rate for European companies?
    This question requires additional information to be answered. For example the year, type of award, topic etc. Please use the resources provided in Q/A #26 to develop answers.

28. What are the success rates for postdocs based at non-US institutions for F32 fellowships?
    For all F32 applications (US and non-US), please consult Report 62 in the NIH Data Book Book https://report.nih.gov/nihdatabook/report/62. In 2017 there were 1,844 applications and 507 awards for a 27% success rate for all F32 applications. For the non-US investigator F32 applications please use the search resources identified in Q/A # 26.

29. Could you give figures for the number of NIAID applications led by non-US institutions and the success rate of non-US led applications?
    Answer: The figures will rely on several variables. Please consult Q/A #26 for approaches to developing the answers.

30. Do you have data on the total funding awarded to projects with only US participants, with US coordinators + EU participants and projects exclusively with EU participants?
    Answer: I do not have that information. Please use the search resources in Q/A # 26.

31. NIH guidelines are based in US law and may not fit with European law. How can a foreign institute address this dilemma?
    Answer: Differences in US and European laws and regulations related to bomedical research are under negotiation. Before working on any NIH application, foreign applicants are advised to contact the Program Officers identified in Section VII Agency Contacts of each FOA about the planned research and possible legal / regulatory issues.