<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cycle I</th>
<th>Cycle II</th>
<th>Cycle III</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application Due Dates</strong></td>
<td>January 25 - May 7</td>
<td>May 25 - September 7</td>
<td>September 25 - January 7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scientific Merit Review</strong></td>
<td>June – July</td>
<td>October - November</td>
<td>February - March</td>
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<td><strong>Advisory Council Round</strong></td>
<td>August or October *</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Earliest Project Start Date</strong></td>
<td>September or December *</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>July</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R01 new Research Grants</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>October 5</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R01 renewal, resubmission, revision Research Grants</th>
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<td></td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>July 5</td>
<td>November 5</td>
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<th></th>
<th>F Series Fellowships (including F31 Diversity – NOT-OD-17-029) new, renewal, resubmission</th>
<th>Individual National Research Service Awards (Standard) (see NRSA Training Page)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 8</td>
<td>August 8</td>
<td>December 8</td>
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When to submit: Hopkins Office of Research Admin

Recommended Grant Proposal Development and Submission Timeline

Generate Ideas for Proposal
Check if LOI are required by sponsor and make note of the due date

Solicit for letters of support
Set aside time to work (meet with dept. chair for admin time)
Prep of all biosketches

Write Preliminary introduction (with references) and specific aims
Sketch out research plan based on specific aims.
Submit introduction, aims, and preliminary design to subject matter expert.

Finalize Budget with justification
Insure completion of biosketches
Finalize all letters of support
Complete the resource page
Complete any human subjects and vertebrate animal narratives

Send all final documents two your Dept/Div Admin Office for COEUS upload.

DEPT/DIV SUBMIT ALL COMPLETE AND FINAL DOCUMENTS TO SOM/ORA

Check to confirm user accounts (AHA, NIH, etc)
Discuss proposal idea with subject matter expert(s) (internal review panel)

Identify and contact at least 1 external reviewer.
Select and contact co-investigators and consultants
Meet with grants administrator/budget person
Finalize Title

Submit a complete draft to review committee and external reviewers.
(close to final as possible)
Write your IRB and IACUC protocols

Complete any final editing and formatting of research plan based on reviewers’ comments.
Add additional preliminary data if necessary.

4 MONTHS PRIOR TO SPONSOR DEADLINE
3 MONTHS PRIOR TO SPONSOR DEADLINE
1-2 MONTHS PRIOR TO SPONSOR DEADLINE
3 WEEKS PRIOR TO DEADLINE
2 WEEKS PRIOR TO DEADLINE
5 BUSINESS DAY PRIOR TO DEADLINE
Then what?

- If no errors on submission will be assigned to an initial review group (IRG). This will be AUD (Auditory System) for many applications, but also SMI (sensory-motor integration) for vestibular, or BNVT (bio-engineering of neuroscience, vision and low-vision technologies) for prosthetics research?

- E.g. Recent AUD: 26 reviewers, 14 regular members, 8 ad hoc (or phone-in) reviewers. All must funded/published, usually associate or full professor. Recent initiative specifies inclusion of 2-3 junior scientists.

- Distribution requirements: usually only one per institution, geographic spread, gender balance, BUT scientific expertise most of all (especially difficult for AUD that covers a very wide range of methodologies and questions).

- **HUGE and repeated emphasis on confidentiality and conflict of interest.** Sign statements before AND after meeting. COI results in non-participation (don’t see application, leave room during review, do not see score post hoc). Confidentiality requires that NO discussion of applications takes place other than during the monitored review process itself (no cocktail hour chit-chat).

- COI includes: same institution, collaborators, previous mentor (5 years past?), co-authors. AND, writers of letters of support are COI, as are Study Section members from the same institution!

  *So, consider the relative value of a Letter of Support. If necessary for resources, expertise, OK, but if just to have a ‘big name’ added may exact a cost by cutting out your best reviewer.*
Four to six weeks before the study section meeting: Reviewers identify COIs for ALL applications. Applications uploaded to website. The SRO includes a list of the applications for which members are to serve as reviewers. Each reviewer has 8-10 assigned (as first, second or reader). Applications are scored 1 best to 9. A ‘5’ is a good proposal, on par with work in the field. A score of 1-3 means that this proposal is better than most of the work being done in that field. A score of ‘1’ is for a proposal that will substantially advance a field, break new ground, walk on water...

One week before the study section meeting: The primary and secondary reviewers and the reader provide written comments and preliminary scores. Opportunity for reconsideration or further research.

Two to three days before the study section meeting: Comments and scores are available for viewing in rank order. Top half to be discussed (about 40 of 70-80 total). Any reviewer can request a ‘rescue’.
Critiques: WRITE AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE

**DO**

- Write in complete sentences (or at least informative clauses).
- Provide clear indication of positive or negative evaluation (i.e. simply stating what they will do is generally not helpful).
- Include some strengths, if at all possible.
- Make sure score matches the comments; If a score is ≥ 3, list at least one weakness

**DON’T**

- Mention previous priority score and/or percentile.
- Include substantial duplicate content (or at least not cut and pasted) in the Overall Impact paragraph and bullet points.
- Pose questions in your critiques (if you must, include clarifying follow up content); generally instead frame points as statements.

(Almost) AT THE MEETING
At Study Section

- Two-day meetings (usually trying to end early enough on day 2 that another hotel night is avoided)
- ~40 grants will be reviewed (top-half of rank list, R01s and R21s).
- 15 minutes per review! So in theory 10 hours needed over the two days. In reality always takes longer (usually by working later on day 1).
- New investigators are discussed first (5-10?) so that these can be compared with one another (and not with established labs).
- Then established investigators in rank order.
- R21s reviewed after R01s finished (R21 scores are not included in running averages for percentiling)
Application Discussion (12-15 minutes each)

• Prior to discussion of any application (and naming of reviewers), **any member with a COI must leave the room.**

• **Rev 1** concisely introduces proposal content – some technical detail will likely be needed, but an aim by aim listing of all proposed experiments is not.

• **Rev 1** describes strengths and weaknesses in each of 5 core criteria, with emphases on elements that drove the Overall Impact score. Rev 1 should take ≤ 5 min, total.

• **Revs 2 and 3** present their critiques (a few minutes each, if that), with an emphasis on elements that differ from previous reviewers. If there is nothing new to add, “I agree” is sufficient.

• All members (in room) are invited to join the discussion (**please DO!**) and then vote on the final Overall Impact score.
What results in a positive review?

• The strongest scores result when the Reviewers can make it easy for the entire panel to understand the significance and potential impact of your proposal.

• So, write your proposal ‘to tell a story’. A compelling written narrative gives your reviewer a better chance to clearly and concisely persuade the rest of the Study Section.

• Compelling preliminary evidence of feasibility (or really exciting discovery!) can make a big difference.

• Reviewer 1 usually the key (especially if respected regular member). So serendipity to some extent – hope to get an ‘good’ (i.e., experienced) reviewer (remember about Letters of Support!).

• Reviewer 2 or the Reader can influence the score, but rarely to significantly improve. Usually, a substantial discussion/disagreement among the Reviewers will result in a mixed score assignment by the entire panel.

• When complete the Chair summarizes the Discussion and asks for final scores from Reviewers. Then asks entire panel if anyone intends to score outside that range – show of hands. Almost always this is to give a poorer score – although the other is possible (I’ve not seen it yet).
Final Scoring

- At the meeting, score the applications not assigned to you by assessing the scientific merit and not by just “splitting the difference” between the assigned reviewers’ scores.

- Reaching consensus is not the objective and difference of opinion is welcome from both assigned reviewers and the rest of the panel.

Voting Outside the Range

- Non-assigned reviewers can vote outside the range set by the assigned reviewers’ final scores.

- Voting outside the range could be based on:
  - a scientific difference of opinion
  - different weighting of the review criteria
  - a perceived mismatch between the discussions and scores

- The dissent should be made transparent through participating in the discussion or providing a brief reason at the time of final scoring.

- Voting outside the range should not re-open the discussion nor should the out-of-range voter be required to write a justification.
After scoring complete, non-scoring issues are considered:

- Budget
- Resource sharing
- Select agents
- Authentication of resources, materials (e.g., antibodies, viruses, mouse lines)
After Study Section

• Final scores are compiled and ready to report the following Monday (usually)

• Electronic result emailed to applicants.

• Summary statement (written reviews) usually sent out within one month. any recommended budget changes are listed.

• Council meets ~ 3 months later and approves awards. Notice of grant award follows. Budget will include recommended cuts. Across-the-board 15% cut has been the practice for a few years.