

NIH RECOMMENDATIONS FROM A PROGRAM OFFICER

I would recommend that you minimize the background information in the specific aims and focus on the significance and innovation of the proposed research. With the 'new' review criteria, the specific aims (and the project description) need to clearly state the innovation and significance of the proposed research. Reviewers may only read the project description and the specific aims -- I often refer to these parts of the application as the "promotional materials" for the application.

Can you frame your aims as hypotheses? Descriptive research tends not to fare well in review, particularly at the R01 level. (Below I've included the questions we typically ask folks to answer when they start thinking about an application. Even further down are some useful links.).

Also, SSPS has now officially 'split' into SSPA and SSPB (see attached & the CSR link below for study section descriptions)

Questions your application should address:

1. Your research topic and primary research question(s), including an short discussion about why this research question is innovative and significant;
2. Your theoretical perspective;
3. Your specific hypotheses: a) Specify the dependent and independent variables; b) The hypotheses should be directional, not just stating that dependent and independent variables are related; c) Discuss the mechanisms through which the independent variables affect the dependent variables;
4. Your methodology, and data collection methods (if applicable);
5. Your estimated budget (direct costs), and;
6. A time line.
7. Brief description of the public health relevance of the proposed research.

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Visit our web site: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/cpr/dbs>

Include a cover letter with your application submission!

See <http://cms.csr.nih.gov/ResourcesforApplicants/coverlet>

The Center for Scientific Review's website (<http://cms.csr.nih.gov>) posts rosters for the standing study sections so that applicants can get a better idea of who will be reviewing their applications. As you consider your options you may also be interested in the reviewer guidelines

(http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/reviewer_guidelines.htm

) that are available on the CSR website.

Parent announcement web page:

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/parent_announcements.htm

NIH RePORTER (<http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>) to search for funded grants related to your topic (see what has been funded in response to specific announcements, read abstracts, see what study section they were reviewed by, .).

NIAID "All About Grants: Tutorials and Samples" web page

(<http://funding.niaid.nih.gov/researchfunding/grant/pages/aag.aspx>).

Much of the information there applies NIH-wide.