

NCI Funding Policy for RPG Awards FY2019

NCI MISSION

The National Cancer Institute conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and the families of cancer patients. For more information or to view the Institute's mission statement, please visit the NCI website: <https://www.cancer.gov/aboutnci>.

BUDGET INFORMATION

The FY 2019 Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act included \$5.74 billion for NCI, a \$79 million increase over FY 2018. NCI also received \$400 million in FY 2019 for the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot, which was authorized in the 21st Century Cures Act of 2016.

Information on the FY 2019 budget can be found on the NCI website at the following link: [NCI Budget and Appropriations](#).

FUNDING STRATEGY

In FY 2019, decisions on competing grants will continue to be based on review of individual applications. Peer review evaluation of scientific merit will remain the primary consideration in these funding decisions, which will be made by NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL) following discussions with program staff. The SPL will continue its efforts to support early career investigators and give special consideration to applications that fill a significant gap in the cancer research portfolio or propose an especially novel or promising scientific approach.

NON-COMPETING AWARDS

Both Categorical and Modular non-competing RPG grants will be awarded with a 3% reduction from the committed level. No cost of living (COLA) adjustments will be awarded to any FY 2019 non-competing grants. However, adjustments for special needs (such as equipment and added personnel) will continue to be considered. This policy does not apply to NRSA, Career, Cancer Education, Continuing Education, P30 Cancer Centers, Conference, NIH Early Independence, SBIR, and STTR awards, which will be funded at committed levels.

COMPETING AWARDS

Traditional Research Grants - Experienced and New Investigator (R01) & Exploratory Development Grants (R21s)

Most Traditional(R01) – Experienced and New Investigator applications with scores up to and including the 8th percentile and Exploratory Development (R21) applications with scores up to an including the 7th percentile will be funded without additional review. Final funding decisions on individual grants within this range are based on review of the applications by NCI program staff and grants management specialists and the negotiation of awards. Applications with higher scores require NCI division and Scientific Program Leader (SPL) review before final funding decisions are made. Information on the outcomes of grant selections from recent years can be viewed at: [NCI FY 2017 R01 and R21 Funding Patterns](#).

Early State Investigators (ESIs)

NCI is strongly committed to supporting early stage investigators (ESIs) and will place special emphasis on supporting these applicants. Most Traditional R01 selections submitted by ESIs with scores up to the 14th percentile will be funded without additional review by the NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL). ESI applications within the regular R01 payline of the 8th percentile will be eligible to convert to R37 Method to

Extend Research in Time (MERIT) Awards: [Merit R37 Conversion notice](#). Traditional R01 applications submitted by New Investigators who are not ESIs will generally be funded up to the 8th percentile (same payline as the more experienced investigators).

Current definitions and additional information regarding New and Early Stage Investigators can be found on the NIH's Office of Extramural Research website at: [New Stage and Early Established Investigator Policies](#).

Program Projects (P01s)

All P01 applications will be individually reviewed for funding selection by the NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL).

Outstanding Investigator Awards (R35)

All R35 applications will be individually reviewed for funding selection by the NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL). There will be no funding policy reductions applied to these grants.

Small Grants (R03s) & AREA Grants (R15)

Small (R03) and AREA (R15) grant applications with scores up to and including 25 will likely be funded with no policy reductions. Applications with higher scores may be individually selected for funding depending on the availability of funds.

Large Dollar Amount R01s (\$700,000 or more in direct cost requested in any year)

All Large R01s will be individually reviewed for funding selection by the NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL).

Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA applications are considered for funding by the NCI Scientific Program Leaders (SPL). Success rates for RFAs will depend on the scientific merit and programmatic priority of each application, the number of applications submitted, and the amount of funds available. NCI does not consider it obligatory to use all funds set aside for any RFA. Please contact the program director listed on your summary statement if you have questions.

Competing RPG Funding Policy Reductions

R01 Modular Applications: Competing renewals (Type-2s) will generally be funded at 5% below the allowable requested level. New Modular (R01) applications (Type-1s) with a direct cost \$175 thousand or less will generally be funded at a 6.5% reduction from the Initial Review Group (IRG) recommended level and awards with a direct cost over \$175 thousand will generally be funded at an 8.5% reduction. Foreign applications with direct costs under \$250 thousand will be treated as modular grants in applying funding policy reductions.

R01 Categorical (Non-modular) Applications: Competing renewals (Type-2s) will generally be funded at 10% below the allowable requested level¹. New Categorical Traditional (R01) grants (Type-1s) will generally be funded at a 19% reduction from the Initial Review Group (IRG) recommended level. The policy reduction for these applications was previously at 17%.

Other RPG Reductions (P01, UM1, R21, R33): Competing renewals (Type-2s) will generally be funded at 10% below the allowable requested level¹. New (Type-1) applications requesting \$175 thousand or less will generally be funded at a 13% reduction from the Initial Review Group (IRG) recommended level, and those requesting over \$175 thousand in direct costs will generally be funded at a 19% reduction (previously 17%).

No Policy Reduction: No funding policy reductions will be applied to the following grant awards:

- Outstanding Investigator (R35)
 - Small Grant (R03)
 - Academic Research Enhancement Award (R15)
 - Research Specialist Award (R50)
 - Small Business Innovation Research (R43/R44)
 - Small Business Technology Transfer (R41/R42)
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¹ The allowable requested level is the amount that the PI is allowed to request for a competitive renewal (Type-2). For FY 2019 this amount is generally 10% over the final year commitment on the most recent competing award.