

Scientific Editing and Research Communication Core

The Advantages of Contacting Your NIH Program Official

NIH program officials (POs) are experts in their fields who are available to help you at different stages in the grant application process. If you have never talked to a PO before, you might feel hesitant about reaching out to them the first time. Here are some tips to help you get started.

What your PO can do for you

POs can help you in several ways, depending on the stage of the application process.

- Before you submit a grant application, your PO can provide feedback on your research ideas and let you know if your proposal would be a good fit for a specific study section or funding mechanism. They can also help you shape your research to better fit an opportunity.
- As you prepare your proposal, they can suggest resources and tips to help you prepare a strong application, and they can clarify program requirements and administrative policies.
- After your application has been reviewed, your PO can provide valuable insight. Although POs do not review grant applications, they attend the review session, so they can help you “read between the lines” of the summary statement. This first-hand information can help guide where your resubmission needs to be stronger and where you don’t need to focus as much.

How to contact your PO

Start by sending a short introductory email to request a phone call.

- Explain why you are reaching out and provide enough information to help your PO prepare for the call.
 - Include the grant number, opportunity number, mechanism, and other details.
 - Before the call your PO might request a Specific Aims page or other short summary.
 - Or during the call you can ask whether your PO would be willing to look at your Specific Aims page.
- Prepare your questions in advance and be sure to do your homework—check NIH’s online resources to answer common questions.
- Don’t wait until the last minute to contact your PO, and allow time for your PO to respond. The closer to a grant deadline, the busier the PO will be.

How to find your PO

- Before submitting your application, check the funding opportunity announcement (FOA) to find the list of program staff contacts. If you have not yet selected an FOA, use the Matchmaker tool in NIH RePORTER to identify NIH-funded grants in your field, then use the “Program Officials” tab to find the POs associated with those projects.
- After submitting your application or receiving your award, your assigned PO will be listed in the contact section of the eRA Commons status screen. The PO’s name and contact information will also appear at the top of the summary statement.

For more information:

- [Program officials are here to help](#)
- [We don’t bite! Communicating with your program officer](#)

Have a question about writing grants or research articles?

Email us your question and we’ll answer it in a future newsletter.

Upcoming Opportunities

NSF Virtual Grants Conference

June 6–10, 2022

Just like the in-person grants conferences, the NSF Virtual Grants Conference is a must, especially for new faculty, researchers, and administrators.

[More information](#)

UI College of Education workshops in the Statistics and Assessment Institute

May and June, 2022

Sponsors: Centers for Advanced Studies in Measurement and Assessment (CASMA) and Iowa Center for School Mental Health (ICSMH)

Faculty and students can participate in four workshops catering to audiences spanning a wide range of constituencies, including educational and health policy makers, assessment practitioners in K-12 schools and their school mental health colleagues, social science and education researchers, and assessment industry specialists.

[More information](#)

New NIH Scientific Data Sharing Website

Whether you are involved in an NIH-funded project and want to understand which sharing policies apply to your research and how to comply, or you are a researcher looking to access scientific data from NIH-affiliated repositories, this site is for you.

[Visit the website](#)

OVPR Resource Library: Learn from Successful Proposal Examples

Are you curious about how to structure your proposal to a certain funding agency? Check out the Resource Library, compiled by the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), to see examples of successful proposals to various funding agencies.

[Access the OVPR Resource Library](#) (HawkID authentication required)

[Unsubscribe](#)

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