



11th Annual NIAID Bridging the Career Gap for Underrepresented Minority Scientist Workshop

Fellowship Applications: What do Reviewers Like and Dislike?

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center for
scientific review

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National Institutes of Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



Fellowship Review Criteria

- **Fellowship Applicant:** Quality of academic record and research experience? Potential to develop into independent and productive researcher?
- **Sponsors, Collaborators, and Consultants:** Sponsor(s) research qualifications? Match in research interests with applicant? Can the sponsor meet the applicant's needs? Appropriate collaborators to foster training?
- **Research Training Plan:** Quality of research project? Relationship to training plan and career goals?
- **Training Potential:** Will research and other experiences help the applicant reach career goals? What will they learn?
- **Institutional Environment & Commitment to Training:** Quality of resources, facilities, and training opportunities? Quality of environment for the scientific development of applicant?



What do Fellowship Reviewers Like?

- **Clear career goals**
- **Productive applicant-publish**
- **Applicant will learn new/valuable techniques/approaches**
- **Previous training is relevant to new training**
- **Plan considers career goals**
- **Sponsor provides customized training plan**
- **Environment provides opportunities for development**
- **Consistently enthusiastic and in-depth letters**
- **Preliminary data supplied by applicant-a plus**
- **Project with appropriate scope and good impact**



What do Fellowship Reviewers Dislike?

- **Sponsor with limited mentoring experience- too junior**
- **Research Topic similar to previous research**
- **“Generic” Training plan from sponsor**
- **Lack of financial support in sponsor’s laboratory**
- **Reference letters with limited detail or with flags**
- **Isolated environment in terms of research area**
- **Applicant’s publication record is weak**
- **Research plan is unclear, not feasible, overambitious, or superficial**
- **Lack of potential pitfalls and alternative approaches**



Inside the NIH Grant Review Process Video



- **CSR has developed a video of a mock study section meeting to show how NIH grant applications are reviewed.**

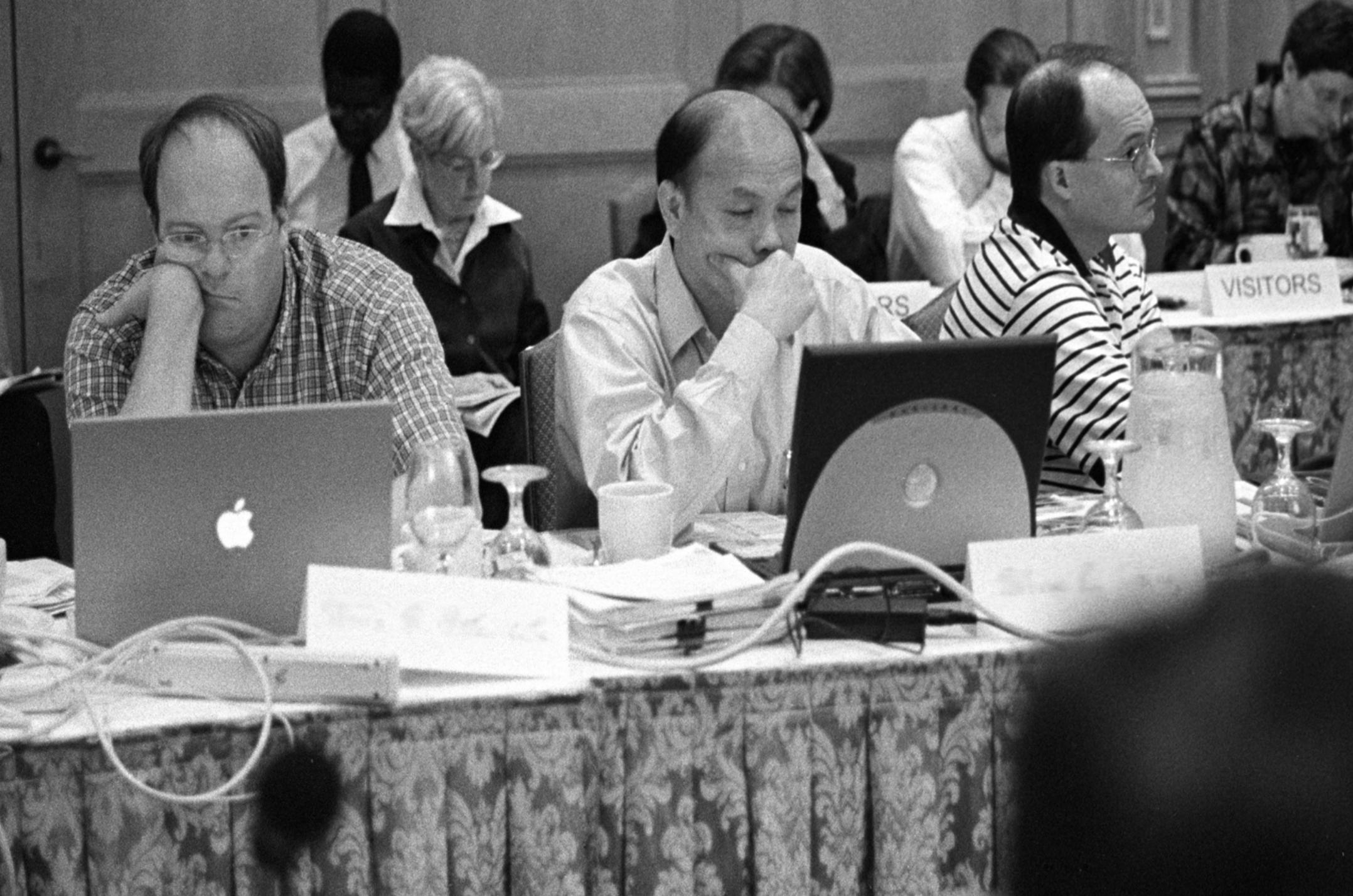
<http://www.csr.nih.gov/video/video.asp>



Applications are Reviewed by People

**Your Goal as an Applicant:
Keep them Happy**









Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program

www.csr.nih.gov/ECR

**Train qualified scientists without prior
CSR review experience.**

**Prior NIH funding not required, but must
be a full-time independent researcher.**