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NIH Takes Steps to Update Awardee Community on Upcoming Changes

Some funding applications submitted to NIH beginning Jan. 25 will face new requirements and undergo a revised peer review process. To prepare investigators and institutions, NIH launched a dedicated website with details about specific changes and recently issued what Mike Lauer, NIH director of extramural research, called an “uber notice.” Lauer discussed the changes in a recent blog post. They include a simplified review framework applicable to most research project grant applications, revisions to the NIH fellowship application and review process and the use of common forms for biographical sketches and current and pending support.

Regarding fellowships, for example, the revisions “are intended to: (1) better focus reviewer attention on the fellowship candidate’s preparedness and potential, the research training plan, and the sponsor/sponsoring institutional commitment to the candidate; (2) ensure a broad range of candidates and research training contexts can be recognized as meritorious; and (3) reduce bias in review by emphasizing the commitment to the candidate without undue consideration of sponsor and institutional reputation,” Lauer explained. “Although each of these initiatives has specific goals, they are all meant to simplify, clarify, and/or promote greater fairness towards a level playing field for applicants throughout the application and review processes,” the notice states. NIH is holding a webinar on fellowship changes on Sept. 19. Training grant changes will be addressed in a webinar scheduled for June 5. An April 17 webinar focused on the simplified review criteria.

[Link to Lauer’s blog post](#)

[Link to notice](#)

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