

Additional Scoring Guidance: Applications for Fellowships, Career Awards, and Institutional Training Grants

The [NIH scoring system](#) was designed to encourage reliable scoring of applications. Reviewers or study sections who assign high ratings to all applications diminish their ability to communicate the scientific impact of an individual application. Therefore, reviewers who carefully consider the rating guidance below can improve the reliability of their scores as well as their ability to communicate the scientific impact of the applications reviewed.

The charts below were developed to encourage reviewers to consider strengths as well as weaknesses when evaluating applications for fellowships, career awards, and institutional training grants.

FELLOWSHIPS & CAREER AWARDS

Overall Impact:

The likelihood that the proposed training (F) or career development (K) will enhance the candidate's potential for a productive, independent scientific research career in a health-related field.

Overall Impact	High	Medium	Low
Score	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

Evaluating Overall Impact Consider the 5 criteria (weighting based on reviewer's judgment):	<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of high value/benefit for the candidate who has high potential for developing into a productive, independent scientist. May have some or no weaknesses in the criteria.</i>	<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of high or moderate value/benefit for the candidate who has high or moderate potential for further development, but weaknesses in the criteria reduce the overall impact to medium.</i> <i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of moderate value/benefit for the candidate who shows moderate potential. May have some weaknesses in the criteria.</i>	<i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of moderate or low value/benefit for the candidate who has moderate or low potential for further development. Weaknesses in the criteria reduce the overall impact to low.</i> <i>e.g. Proposes training or career development of low value/benefit for the candidate who shows low potential. May have some weaknesses in the criteria.</i>				
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Fs</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Ks</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant • Sponsor(s) • Research Training Plan • Training Potential • Institutional Environment & Commitment </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate • Career Development Plan/Goals* • Research Plan • Mentor(s)** • Environment & Institutional Commitment </td> </tr> </table>	Fs	Ks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant • Sponsor(s) • Research Training Plan • Training Potential • Institutional Environment & Commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate • Career Development Plan/Goals* • Research Plan • Mentor(s)** • Environment & Institutional Commitment 			
Fs	Ks						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant • Sponsor(s) • Research Training Plan • Training Potential • Institutional Environment & Commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate • Career Development Plan/Goals* • Research Plan • Mentor(s)** • Environment & Institutional Commitment 						
and other score influences, e.g. human subjects, animal welfare, inclusion plans, and biohazards							
*K05 and K24: Plan to Provide Mentoring **K02: Consultants/Collaborators	5 is a good, medium-impact application. The entire scale (1-9) should always be considered.						

INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING & INSTITUTIONAL CAREER AWARDS

Overall Impact:

The likelihood that the proposed training (T) or career development (K) program will prepare individuals for successful, productive scientific research careers and thereby exert a sustained influence on the research field(s) involved

Overall Impact	High	Medium	Low
Score	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

Evaluating Overall Impact Consider the 5 criteria (weighting based on reviewer's judgment):	
Ts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Program and Environment • Training PD(s)/PI(s) • Preceptors/ Mentors • Trainees • Training Record 	Ks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Development Program & Environment • PD(s)/PI(s) • Mentors • Candidates/ Scholars • Training Record
and other score influences, e.g. human subjects, animal welfare, inclusion plans, and biohazards	

e.g. Proposes a high value training or career development program that is well designed to prepare individuals for highly successful, productive scientific research careers. May have some or no weaknesses in the criteria.

e.g. Proposes a high-value training or career development program that is adequately designed to prepare individuals for successful, productive scientific research careers. Weaknesses in the criteria reduce the overall impact to medium.

e.g. Proposes a training or career development program of moderate value that is adequately designed. May have some or no weaknesses in the criteria.

e.g. Proposes a training or career development program of moderate value that is adequately designed to prepare individuals for successful, productive scientific research careers. Weaknesses in the criteria reduce the overall impact to low.

e.g., Proposes a low-value training or career development program that is inadequately designed. Has some weaknesses in the criteria.

5 is a good, medium-impact application. The entire scale (1-9) should always be considered.