

NIH Simplified Review Framework: Scoring Guidance

Factor Strength/Overall Impact	High	Medium	Low
Score	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9
	↑ Exceptional	↑ Average	↑ Poor

Consider the entire range.

Factors 1 & 2:

- Scores in the high range should be based on strengths, not merely the absence of weaknesses.
- Scores in the low range should be based on weaknesses.

Factor 3:

Give a binary rating: Appropriate or Additional expertise and/or resources needed (if gaps are identified).

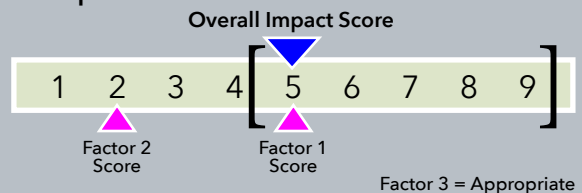
Overall Impact Guidance:

Logically, a project of moderate or limited importance (Factor 1) cannot be made more impactful by a strong approach (Factor 2) and/or appropriate expertise and resources (Factor 3).

- Your Factor 1 score should set a limit for the best possible overall impact score.
- Your assessment of Factors 2 and 3 can reinforce this score or worsen it.
- Concerns with the Additional Review Criteria can move you towards a worse score.

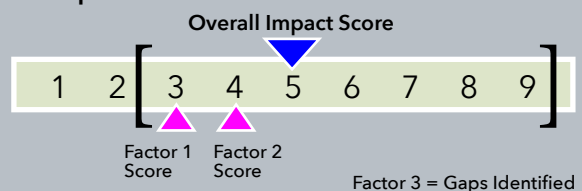
Overall Impact Scoring: Examples

Example 1:



Because the importance of the research (Factor 1) is seen as moderate, a strong approach (Factor 2) and/or appropriate expertise and resources (Factor 3) cannot be expected to improve the overall impact score.

Example 2:



The importance of the research (Factor 1) is seen as strong, yet a moderate approach (Factor 2) and/or gaps in expertise and/or resources (Factor 3) can worsen the overall impact score.