



National Institute  
on Aging

# “Tips for Grant Writing”

## The NIA Division of Behavioral and Social Research

Frank Bandiera  
2020 ICAA Grant Workshop

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/dbsr>



# Tip 1 – Know what NIA BSR supports

## Supports

- Social, behavioral, and economic research and research training on the processes of aging at the individual and societal level
- Cross-disciplinary research at multiple levels from genetics to cross-national comparative research, and at stages from basic through translational
- BSR supports a range of Alzheimer’s disease and Alzheimer’s disease-related dementias (AD/ADRD) research in addition to general aging research.



## Using

- Grants to support research and research resource projects
- Networks and Centers to develop fields
- Training and career development awards and initiatives to diversify the aging research workforce
- Workshops to explore research gaps and opportunities

# Tip 2 – Where to learn about calls for applications

- FOAs
- NOSIs
- Approved Concepts

# Current BSR Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA)

- **PAR-19-372:** Social Epigenomics Research Focused on Minority Health and Health Disparities
- **PAR-19-373/384:** Research on Biopsychosocial Factors of Social Connectedness and Isolation on Health, Wellbeing, Illness, and Recovery
- **PA-20-172:** Long-Term Effects of Disasters on Health Care Systems Serving Health Disparity Populations
- **PAR-18-544:** Basic and Translational Research on Decision Making in Aging and Alzheimer's Disease
- **PA-19-094/095:** Emotion Regulation, Aging, and Mental Disorder



# What is a NOSI?

- NOSI = Notice of Special Interest
- NOSIs are a tool NIH uses to signal research priorities
- The NOSI describes research priorities and points the applicant to an existing Program Announcement
- \*\*Applicants need to include the Notice number (e.g., NOT-AG-FY-XXX) in the Agency Routing Identifier field (4b) of the SF424 (R&R) form.

## Example Active NOSIs

- **NOT-AG-20-022:** NOSI: NIA Availability of Administrative Supplements and Revision Supplements on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- **NOT-AG-20-026:** NOSI: Dementia Care Workforce for Those Living with AD/ADRD
- **NOT-AG-20-017:** NOSI: Digital Technology for Early Detection of AD/ADRD
- **NOT-MH-20-053:** NOSI: Digital Healthcare Interventions to Address the Secondary Health Effects Related to Social, Behavioral, and Economic Impact of COVID-19



Approved  
Concepts →  
Possible  
Future  
Initiatives

- Approved concepts are posted on the NIA website after each Council round
- These signal possible areas of future interest
- Look here - <https://www.nia.nih.gov/approved-concepts>

Tip 3 – NIA supports  
research resources you  
can use

# BSR Invests in Data Infrastructure

- Health and Retirement Study (HRS)
  - HSR Sister Studies
  - Harmonized Cognitive Assessment Protocol
  - National Health and Aging Trends Study
  - National Social Health and Aging Project
  - Midlife in the United States
  - Add Health Parents Study
- Many allow for linkages to administrative data and cross-national comparisons
  - Broad range of variables and topic areas
  - Visit the Gateway to Global Aging Data ([www.g2aging.org](http://www.g2aging.org)) and [NACDA](#) websites

# BSR Center Programs Develop Key Areas of Research

- 
- Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research (RCMARs)
  - Centers on the Demography and Economics of Aging (D&E Centers)
  - Edward R. Roybal Centers for Translational Research in the Behavioral and Social Sciences of Aging (Roybals)
  - Edward R. Roybal Centers for Translational Research on Dementia Care Provider Support (AD Roybals)

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/dbsr/bsr-centers>

# Research Networks Help Develop New Areas

- 
- Midlife Reversibility of Biobehavioral Risk Associated with Early Life Adversity
  - Reproducibility in the Social and Behavioral Sciences
  - Life Course Health and Disparities at Older Ages
  - Dementia Care and Services Research
  - AD/ADRD Data Harmonization
  - Rural Aging
  - Stress Measurement
  - Genomics and Omics of Behavioral and Social Sciences
  - Integrating Animal Models to Inform Behavioral and Social Research on Aging

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/dbsr/behavioral-and-social-research-networks>

# Tip 4 – Know how a Program Official (PO) can help

- Comment on Institute program interests
- Recommend appropriate and relevant activity codes and funding opportunities
- Help refine project scope
- Provide insights about review
- Comment on a resubmission strategy *after* you receive a Summary Statement



***POs cannot help you write or edit your specific aims or discuss the review before you have the Summary Statement.***

# Contact a PO When...

- 
- You have already read the relevant sections of the NIA website and current funding opportunities
  - You have draft specific aims
  - You are seeking input on an appropriate funding opportunity for your application
  - You have a Summary Statement and you want to discuss a resubmission strategy

# How Best to Contact a PO

## **Before Applying**

- Via email with a 1-page draft of your specific aims

## **After Review**

- Via email after you receive a Summary Statement

\*If a phone call is necessary, scheduling it in advance via email works best.

Do your  
homework first  
to maximize  
the value of  
your  
interaction

- Scientific Meeting and Workshop Reports
- Strategic Directions
- ADRD Research Implementation Milestones

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# Inside

## NIA

A Blog for  
Researchers

Get weekly updates on NIA funding policies and research priorities.

[Subscribe](#)

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/blog>

Tip 5 -  
Subscribe to  
NIA's Blog

# A Few Other Quick Tips

- If you are asked to serve on an NIH scientific review panel – **SAY YES**
- Review all [NIA training and career development](#) opportunities

Consider diversity supplements if applicable

- Student or early career → talk to a mentor or established researcher with NIH funding
- Read PA-18-906

# NIA BSR Staff

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/dbsr>

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