



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



# Insights for Investigators Series

Understanding NIH Study Sections

March 10, 2014



# The Insights for Investigators Series consists of four panels/seminars and an online Toolkit.

## SPRING 2014 SCHEDULE:

- Diversifying Your Funding Portfolio – 1/10
- Understanding NIH Study Sections – 3/10
- Developing Collaborations in Science – 4/8
- Grant Writing Tips & Strategies for NIH – 5/12

See IFI web page for details:

[http://www.brighamandwomens.org/medical\\_professionals/career/cfdd/oprc/ifi.aspx](http://www.brighamandwomens.org/medical_professionals/career/cfdd/oprc/ifi.aspx)

**Insights for Investigators**

**Diversifying Your Funding Portfolio**  
January 10, 2014 • 12-1:30pm • OBC 4-002B  
Panelists:  
Robert Fuhrbriggs, MD, PhD  
Matthew LaVie, PhD  
Amir Lahav, ScD, PhD  
Masanori Aikawa, MD, PhD

**Understanding NIH Study Sections**  
March 10, 2014 • 12-1:30pm • Carrie Hall  
Panelists:  
Robert Fuhrbriggs, MD, PhD  
Olivka Okereke, MD  
Guillermo Garcia-Cardeña, PhD  
Stacy Mitsimer, ScD

**Developing Collaborations in Science**  
April 8, 2014 • 12-1:30pm • OBC 4-002B  
Panelists:  
Robert Fuhrbriggs, MD, PhD  
Lindsey Baden, MD  
Philip De Jager, MD, PhD  
Jill Goldstein, PhD

**Grant Writing Tips & Strategies for NIH R01s**  
May 12, 2014 • 12-1:30pm • Carrie Hall  
Robert Fuhrbriggs, MD, PhD

**PLEASE REGISTER ONLINE:**  
[www.brighamandwomens.org/calendar](http://www.brighamandwomens.org/calendar)

**See the Insights for Investigators Toolkit:**  
[http://www.brighamandwomens.org/medical\\_professionals/career/cfdd/oprc/ifi.aspx](http://www.brighamandwomens.org/medical_professionals/career/cfdd/oprc/ifi.aspx)

**Accreditation**  
Partners HealthCare System is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

**Partners HealthCare System** designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

**Contacts Us:**  
BWHCFDD@partners.org  
617-515-7644

**Sponsored by:**  
BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL  
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY  
BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL  
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY  
BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL  
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT & DIVERSITY



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



This seminar provides participants with an overview of how NIH Study Sections operate and how reviewers consider grants through the lens of the review criteria. Panelists will share their experiences of serving on study sections, provide participants with insight on how and why one might serve on a study section, and tips to improve their own grant reviews through greater understanding of the process.

Making the Right Moves- Addendum

[http://www.hhmi.org/sites/default/files/Educational%20Materials/Lab%20Management/study\\_section.pdf](http://www.hhmi.org/sites/default/files/Educational%20Materials/Lab%20Management/study_section.pdf)

NIH CSR Video: NIH Peer Review Revealed

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBDxI6I4dOA>

### How to Be a Member of an R01 NIH Study Section

*Addendum to*

Making the Right Moves:  
A Practical Guide to Scientific Management  
for Postdocs and New Faculty  
second edition



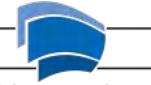


BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



## Introduction to NIH Study Sections

- What is a Study Section?
- Who serves on Study Sections?
- What happens at Study Section meetings?
- Why should I serve on a Study Section?

Panel Discussion



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



# Today's Faculty Panelists:

Robert Fuhlbrigge, MD PhD

Olivia Okereke, MD

Guillermo García-Cardena, PhD

Stacey Missmer, ScD



## What is a Study Section?

<http://public.csr.nih.gov/StudySections/Pages/default.aspx>

- Peer review panels organized by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) evaluate ~70% of research grant applications to NIH
- Study Section = Scientific Review Group (SRG)
- Integrated Review Groups (IRGs) = clusters of SRGs organized around a general scientific area (25 clusters of 4-12 SRG each)
  - AIDS and Related Research IRG [AARR]
    - AIDS Clinical Studies and Epidemiology Study Section [ACE]
    - AIDS Discovery and Development of Therapeutics Study Section [ADDT]
    - AIDS Immunology and Pathogenesis Study Section [AIP]
    - AIDS Molecular and Cellular Biology Study Section [AMCB]
- Each SRG managed by a Scientific Review Officer (SRO)
  - M.D. or Ph.D. with a scientific background close to the study section's area of expertise.



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R



Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.

## Who serves on Study Sections and what do they do?

<http://public.csr.nih.gov/StudySections/Pages/default.aspx>

- Scientific Review Officer (SRO)
  - M.D. or Ph.D. with a scientific background close to the study section's area of expertise.
  - Recruit SRG members and manage review process
- Scientists with demonstrated expertise (authors, speakers, grant recipients)
  - 12 to 40 members per SRG (>20,000 people involved per year)
  - Standing appointments- 4 years, 3 cycles/yr
  - Ad hoc appointments (special expertise for grants under review)
- Standing SRG panels
  - Investigator Initiated Awards- R01, R03, R15, R21
  - Career Development Awards- K01, K02, K08, K22, K99/R00
- Special Emphasis Panels
- Fellowship Study Sections
- SBIR/STTR
  - Small business innovation research
  - Small business technology transfer



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



## What happens before a Study Section meeting:

Panels review 60 to 100 applications per meeting (~80,000 applications/yr)

- SRO assigns reviewers about 6 weeks before meeting
  - 5-12 applications per member per cycle
  - 3 reviewers per application- Primary, Secondary, Reader
- Primary and Secondary Reviewers write detailed critiques addressing Core Criteria
  - Significance
  - Investigators
  - Innovation
  - Approach
  - Environment
- Preliminary scores and critiques submitted 1 week in advance





BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R



Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.

## What happens at a Study Section meeting:

### Introduction

- Orientation (discussion of general business)
- Provisional approval of streamlined list of applications (triage)
- Discussion of remaining applications (typically top third)

### Discussion of remaining applications:

- Reviewers with a conflict of interest are excused
- Assigned reviewers present strengths, weaknesses, and their preliminary scores
- Members discuss scientific and technical merit
- Range of scores is expressed (every member scores every application)
- Requirements for gender, minority, and children, human subjects and animals are reviewed
- Recommended budget changes are discussed

### After each meeting:

- Primary and Secondary Reviewers amend their critiques
- SRO documents the results in a summary statement



### Overall Impact:

The likelihood for a project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on 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: significance, investigator, innovation, approach, environment (weighted based on reviewer's judgment) and other score influences, e.g. human subjects, animal welfare, inclusion plans, and biohazards

e.g. Applications are addressing a problem of high importance/interest in the field. May have some or no weaknesses.

e.g. Applications may be addressing a problem of high importance in the field, but weaknesses in the criteria bring down the overall impact to medium.

e.g. Applications may be addressing a problem of moderate importance in the field, with some or no weaknesses

e.g. Applications may be addressing a problem of moderate/high importance in the field, but weaknesses in the criteria bring down the overall impact to low.

e.g. Applications may be addressing a problem of low or no importance in the field, with some or no weaknesses.

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



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R



Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.

## Pick the right Study Section:

- Review IRG/ SRG descriptions (CSR manages >200 review committees)  
<http://public.csr.nih.gov/StudySections/IntegratedReviewGroups/Pages/default.aspx>
- Talk to the SRO (or multiple SROs)- if there isn't an SRG that fits your research, you might want to rethink your approach, seek support outside NIH.
- Know your audience
  - Review the SRG Roster
  - Identify potential supporters and target their interests
  - Identify members with known conflicts and notify the SRO
  - Request required expertise (ad hoc members) in your cover letter



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



## Why should I serve on a Study Section?

- Community service- Responsibility as a Scientist to provide peer review
- Learn about your field- Exposure to latest research
- Broaden your horizons- Hear/ discuss science from different perspectives
- Improve your own success rate- Know exactly what reviewers want to see
- Advance your career- Networking, CV buffing
- Enhance mentoring- better prepare your mentees



BRIGHAM AND  
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

C E N T E R F O R

Faculty Development & Diversity

Sharing strategies. Supporting careers.



# Today's Faculty Panelists:

Robert Fuhlbrigge, MD, PhD

Olivia Okereke, MD

Guillermo García-Cardena, PhD

Stacey Missmer, ScD