

CIHR Project Grant Peer Review

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Reviewer:

Cardiovascular Sections B and C; New Investigator

Scientific Officer:

Cardiovascular Section C

How is the fate of your grant decided?

(Things I've learned about reviewer selection)

Based on your grant NOI summary:

- Chair and SO decide if your grant belongs in that committee
- Reviewers identify their capacity to review your grant
(*High / Medium / Low / No / COI*)

To ensure you get matched with the best reviewers:

Your NOI summary should clearly reflect the subject area of your grant and the major methodologies

How is the fate of your grant decided?

(Things I've learned about reviewer selection)

CIHR staff assign reviewers with some input from Chair / SO

- Aiming for all reviewers to be “High” or “Medium”, but sometimes reviewer 3 is “Low”

Previous reviewer not automatically assigned to a repeat application

- Panel membership changes over time
- Balancing number of 1st, 2nd, 3rd reviewer grants for each reviewer

Ranking scheme

Descriptor	Range	Definition	Outcome
Outstanding	4.5 – 4.9	The application excels in most or all relevant aspects. Any short-comings are <u>minimal</u> .	
Excellent	4.0 – 4.4	The application excels in many relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Certain improvements are <u>possible</u> .	Fundable
Good	3.5 – 3.9	The application excels in some relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Some improvements are <u>necessary</u> .	
Fair	3.0 – 3.4	The application broadly addresses relevant aspects. Major revisions are <u>required</u> .	Not Fundable
Poor	0.0 – 2.9	The application fails to provide convincing information and/or has serious inherent flaws or gaps.	

Top-ranked grants

Innovative, well-conceived idea / direction of research

- May be basic science in concept but the applicant made it obvious that is applicable to disease process
- Organization and wording made it **highly readable** – good use of subtitles
- Balance of ‘big picture’ and specific details
- Preliminary data support each of the main approaches

- Often, top ranked grants are NOT a solo effort – 2+ co-applicants with complementary skill-sets

Pitfalls common in lower-ranked grants

- Idea appears to be an incremental advance in knowledge
- Overly complex – too much proposed in 1 grant
- Insufficient preliminary data to support each Aim

- Unclear or poorly described research aims/methodologies
- Experiments proposed fall short

- Co-applicants were needed to strengthen the feasibility of the project

- *Hasn't corrected issues identified by previous reviewers*

Things to avoid!

- Errors/duplications in your CV
- Figures that are too small to read
- Adding data in appendix
- Typos / grammar → proof-read!

Streamlined or discussed?

Criteria for streamlining:

1. Average of the initial scores places the application in the **bottom 60%** of all applications in the committee

2. At least **one reviewer** placed the application in their **bottom (non-competitive) group**

3. **No objection from any committee member** to streamline the application