

Health Science Administration at NIH

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Reasons for Making the Switch

- Geographic immobility
- Research not as fulfilling as it seemed
- Want time for something else
 - Family, community, arts
- Preference for occupation with more immediate rewards
- Can't afford to move back to academia

Luci's story

- Found academic job quickly (< 1 year of looking)
- Salary offer was lower than current NIH salary
- Public schools not as good (almost anywhere in US)
- Spouse's career would sacrifice
- Moving would be costly
- Politics crept in during the job negotiations

***For me, research was a fun intellectual pursuit, but not a passion. I was open to the possibility of other options that seemed like a better fit for my family

NIH Peer Review

- Health Scientist Administrator (GS 13/14)
 - Scientific Review Officer
 - Minimum five-years postdoctoral experience
 - Demonstrated record of grantsmanship
(K-award or other independent funding)
 - Administrative experience within intramural helpful, such as serving on IRB, IACUC, trans-NIH committees
 - Outside activities such of appointments to committees of professional societies, graduate faculty appointments, journal editorial boards
 - Demonstrates presence/acceptance in the scientific community;
 - Demonstrates ability to multi-task
 - Will serve as a source of contacts in administrative life

NIH Peer Review

- Primary responsibilities:
 - Locate qualified reviewers to review 80 – 100 NIH grant applications per review cycles; 3 times/year
 - Manage conflicts of interest
(extensive training in first year)
 - Serve as the designated federal official for study section
 - (Federal Advisory Committee Act)
 - Oversee production of summary statement
 - Official report of the study section to the National Advisory Council/Board on the review of each application
 - Ensure that each review is defensible

NIH Peer Review

- Extracurricular Activities
 - Training of new staff members
 - Training committees
 - Best practices committees (within IC or trans-NIH)
(helps to develop recommendations or best practices for managing new NIH policies or programs)
 - Trans-NIH committees
 - STEP committee
(develops training programs for all extramural staff)
 - Review Users' Group
(develops requirements for new IT developments)
 - Review Point-person
(serves as an expert resource on review for specific types of grants programs)

NIH Organization

National Institutes of Health

Office of the Director Program Office:
Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives (HNAW)

Immediate Office of the Director (HNA)

Office of the Director Staff Offices:

Office of Extramural Research (HNA3)
Office of Intramural Research (HNA4)
Office of Management/Chief Financial Officer (HNAW)
Office of Science Policy (HNA6)
Office of Communications and Public Liaison (HNA8)
Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management (HNA9)
Office of Legislative Policy and Analysis (HNAQ)
Executive Office (HNA8)
Office of the Ombudsman/Ctr. for Cooperative Resolution (HNAS)
NIH Ethics Office (HNA7)
Office of the Chief Information Officer (HNAW)

NIH
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National Cancer Institute (HNC)

National Eye Institute (HNE)

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (HLBI)

National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI)

National Institute on Aging (NIA)

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)

National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB)

Evelyn F McKnight Center for Age-Related Memory Loss (EMK)

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)

National Library of Medicine (NLM)

John E. Fogarty International Center for Advanced Study in the Health Sciences (FICHS)

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)

National Center for Research Resources (NCRR)

Clinical Center (CC)

Center for Information Technology (CIT)

Center for Scientific Review (CSR)

IC vs CSR Review Positions

	IC	CSR
Programs Reviewed	Centers (P01, P20) Common Fund programs, Some Training / Career Development (F, K, T), Most RFAs	Research Project Grants (R01, R03), Some Training /Career Dev., Some RFAs
Work Environment	Less centralized, More exposure to program staff, More opportunity for extracurricular activities, Fewer training resources	Highly centralized, Elaborate corporate structure, Much separation from IC influences
Opportunities for Advancement	Many opportunities to detail/or interact with other offices IC within the IC	More opportunities to advance in Review, fewer opportunities to experiment with other roles

NIH Planning and Evaluation

- Health Scientist Administrator or Health Science Policy Analyst (GS 13/14/15)
 - Planning and Evaluation Officer
 - HSAs tends to have advanced degrees in biomedical science
 - HS Policy Analysts often come through a policy fellowship such as AAAS or PMF with a MPA, JD, MS or a Ph.D in a non-biomedical field and little to no postdoctoral experience
 - Administrative experience in highly visible science administration settings –
 - details or internships in other federal agencies that have a less vertical organizational structure, such as NSF, OSTP, NIST, or DOE, will offer exposure to high ranking science officers at entry level

NIH Planning and Evaluation

- Primary Responsibilities

- Preparing Congressional Justification

- (Budget testimony for the yearly appropriations process)

- Tracking performance of key scientific and administrative initiatives

- Preparing communication in response to inquiries from Congress, HHS, OMB, advocacy groups and other public stakeholders

- Coordinating yearly reporting as mandated by legislation, i.e.,

- Biennial Report and NIH Categorization, Inclusion reporting
 - Supervise small staff of program and/or policy analysts
 - May also manage communications staff and/or IC web page administrators

NIH Planning and Evaluation

- Extracurricular Activities

- Very little “doesn’t count” as a primary responsibility
- Typically involves fed-wide activity with other agencies around some new Congressional mandate or Executive order (like the Recovery Act, Stem Cell Policy)
- P&E Officers tend to bear a very heavy workload, and are expected to help manage crises with a short turnaround
 - such as highly public incidents of scientific misconduct, acts of terrorism, natural disasters, political hullabaloo
- Need to have strong communication and diplomacy skills
- Current “Transparency Movement” values strong data analysis skills, ability to perform requirements analysis and oversee the development of data systems

Comparing three types of Administrative Careers at NIH

	Review	Program	Planning & Evaluation
Predictability	High- work is cyclic and highly regimented, most “surprises” are preventable by thorough preparation, but when emergencies happen the stakes are high	Medium – POs who manage grants must respond to external contingencies, can be unpredictable . Ex. grantee makes a very controversial discovery, or accused of misconduct	Low- P&E officers are often tasked with projects that are externally driven, and inherit new ones with little warning and short deadlines. (“Friday Fire Drill”)
Latitude to Work Independently	Very High –SROs’ most important contacts are reviewers (outside NIH), telework is a big perk	Medium – Certain amount of teamwork with NIH colleagues is obligatory	Low – Much time is spent on working in trans-NIH committees, interacting with other federal offices and supervising analysts and contractors
Creativity	Low – because uniform processes are required, little deviation from best practices is possible, although innovations that improve efficiency are rewarded	High – work is very flexible, POs tend to have diverse choices about how to carry out their duties, but this comes at a cost. There is little automation of duties, POs seldom agree on best practices	High – P&E officers are charged with finding the best ways to detect, describe, communicate complex research results and performance data to the public, including Congress
Possibilities for Advancement	Limited - SROs who are promoted to supervisors typically stay in review, 5 – 6 years in review is invaluable and unique experience	High- POs have wider selection of opportunities for advancement within and outside	High – P&E officers are highly visible and exposed to many networking opportunities