

## Program Project Grant (P01) Process

The P01 grant supports multidisciplinary or multi-project research programs with a strong central theme and synergistic interaction between individual projects. Pre-application guidance, which consists of initial contact with the program director (PD) followed by a pre-application meeting, is intended to help investigators submit the best-quality application. This document describes the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences (DCCPS) pre-submission process and timeline, to assist investigators with developing a P01 application, submission, review, selection for funding, or a resubmission.

Learn more about the application process and contacting NCI program directors and officers at <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/funding/submission-and-review>.

### KEY FEATURES OF A RESEARCH PROGRAM PROJECT (P01)

A P01 multi-project application leverages integration and synergy to address aims that could not be accomplished without the structure of the program project. Features that distinguish a P01 from other funding mechanisms include the following: (1) a P01 must consist of a minimum of three scientifically meritorious projects; and (2) each project within a P01 is similar to the traditional research grant application (R01), in the sense that each project has specific objectives, aims, a fully developed research plan, and a separate budget; however, each project in a P01 takes place in the broader environment of the overall program goals. A program project application may include shared resource cores that provide administrative, laboratory and/or clinical facilities, equipment, and/or services to be used by two or more projects.



#### INTEGRATION AND SYNERGY

- The P01 application should be viewed as interrelated and complementary research projects that demonstrate synergy, which is one of its key defining features.
- Synergy in a program project can be described as follows: While each project should be capable of standing on its own scientific merit, the combined research being conducted should allow progress to occur at a greater rate and result in a greater contribution to program goals than if each project were pursued separately.

**Examples of synergy include, but are not limited to, the following:** sharing preliminary data, samples, reagents, pathogens, human subject population(s), technologies, research approaches, data management/analytical tools, and model organisms, which may impact the direction of science and research outcomes in the programs.



#### BEFORE YOU APPLY Contact a Program Director

Always email the PD first to discuss your scientific proposal. Those who do not already have an assigned PD are invited to review information about staff in the various DCCPS programs to identify PDs with related scientific responsibilities. Send the PD a one- to two-page summary of your program project in advance of the call. A list of DCCPS personnel and their responsibilities is available at <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/about-dccps/about-division/who-we-are>.

During the initial call, the PD will discuss whether the P01 is the correct mechanism for the proposed project, the requirements of the P01 mechanism, the importance of integration of the research projects within a P01, budget recommendations, and the timeline and next steps for a presubmission meeting.

## P01 PRE-SUBMISSION MEETING: INVESTIGATOR MEETING WITH NCI STAFF

This meeting should occur at least 6 months prior to the anticipated submission date. This timeline provides ample time for sharing NCI input and for investigators to make key modifications, finalize, and submit their application. The goals of the meeting are the following:

- Provide feedback on the proposed science, aspects that may raise concerns with reviewers, and common flaws in the proposal.
- Determine readiness, integration, and size and scope of the proposed work.
- Provide tips to avoid common mistakes and errors, as well as advice on items that can enhance the P01 application.
- Provide an opportunity for the investigators/team to ask NCI/NIH staff clarifying questions.



## SUBMISSION AND REVIEW OF YOUR APPLICATION

- An Awaiting Receipt of Application (ARA) request must be submitted 8 weeks prior to the anticipated submission date. More information is available at <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/funding/submission-and-review/aras-for-large-budget-grant-applications-dccps-guidance>.
- NCI requires a Letter of Intent (LOI) prior to submitting the P01 application. Information on the LOI can be found at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-23-059.html>.

### Key review components and scoring:

- Shared resource cores (e.g., Biostatistics Core; Recruitment Core; Clinical Biomarkers Core) receive a verbal rating: superior, satisfactory, minimally satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. For a core to be rated as satisfactory, it supports at least two projects in the overall program project. Cores that provide innovative

approaches and unique, cutting-edge technology receive a superior rating.

- Integration receives a verbal rating: highly integrated, integrated, or not integrated.
- If the application does not receive a favorable score (less than 30), the PI should contact the program director and consider these revisions before resubmitting:
  - Review the summary statement and address concerns.
  - Make changes to the P01 in response to review. These may include changing a project/core, adding a new core or dropping a component that did not review well, or adding a new project that is better aligned with the current proposal.
  - Update the application to reflect changes in the science.

JAN  
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MAY  
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SEP  
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**Three receipt dates** *Contact PD 7–10 months before receipt date.*

## PROGRAM PROJECT GRANT (P01) PROCESS TIMELINE

