



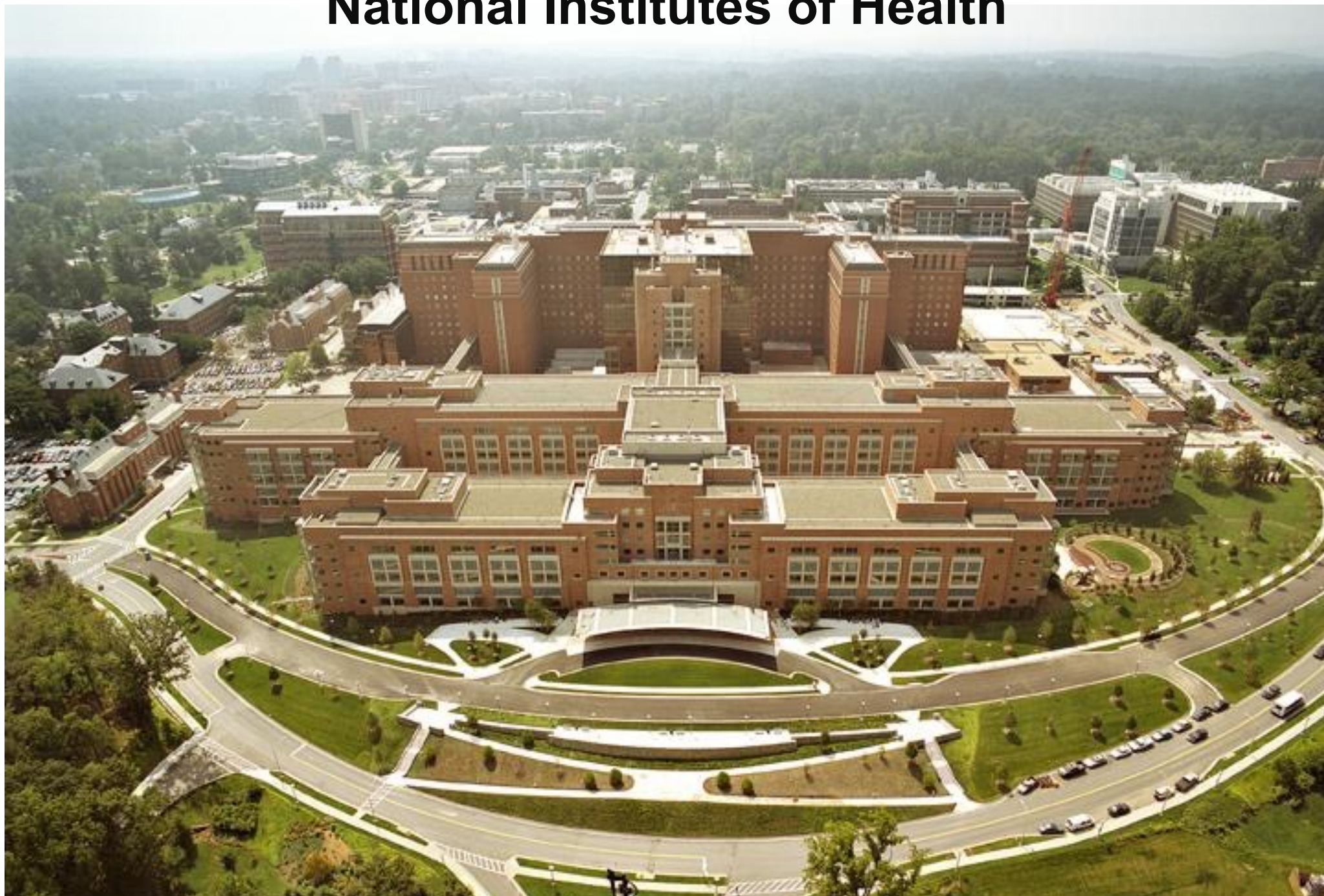
Staying at NIH but **LEAVING** the Bench

SS/SC to SRO

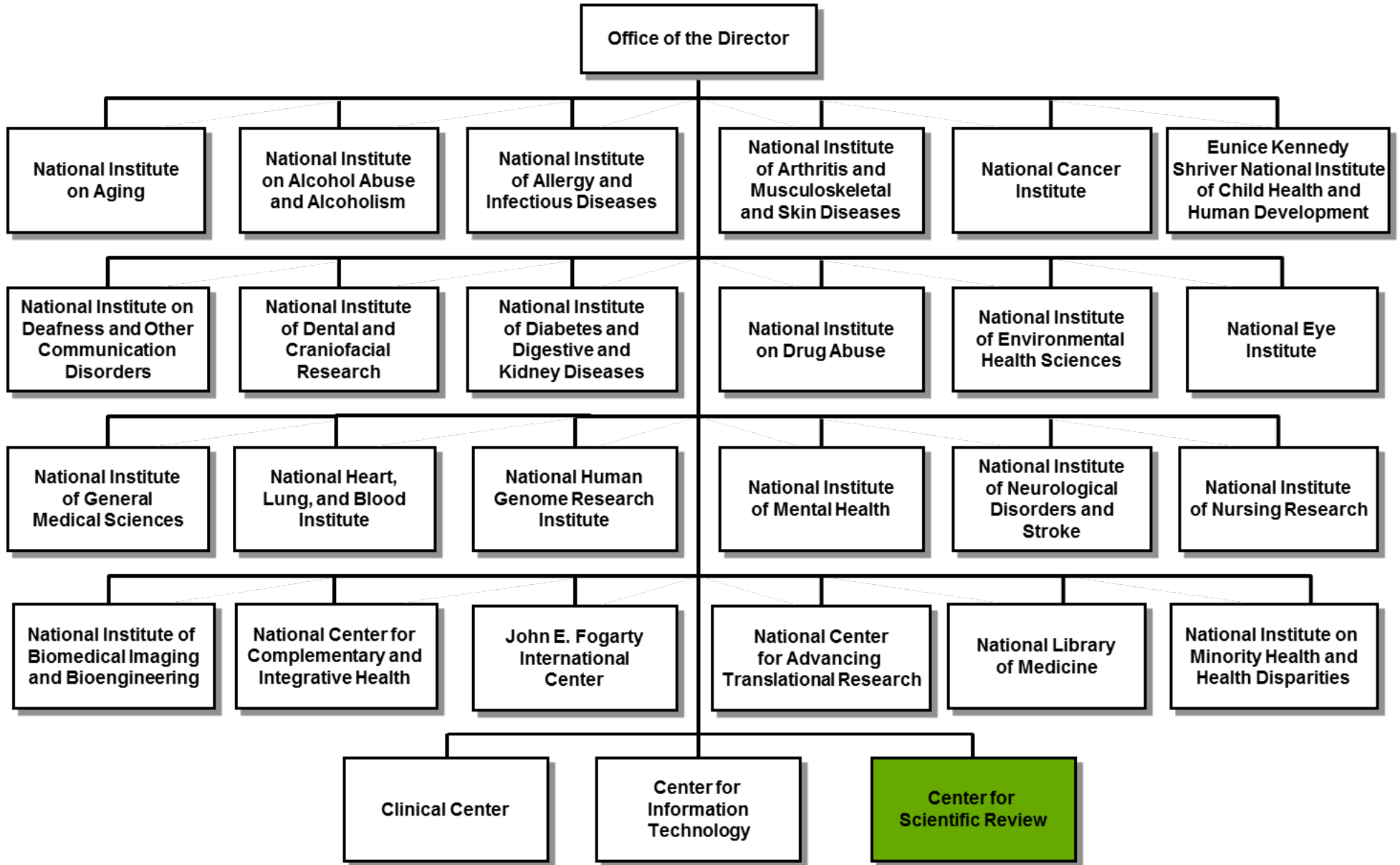
Talk organization

- Description of CSR and SRO JOB
- Take Home
- Sounds Good...
- Personal Thoughts – 7 years into being an SRO

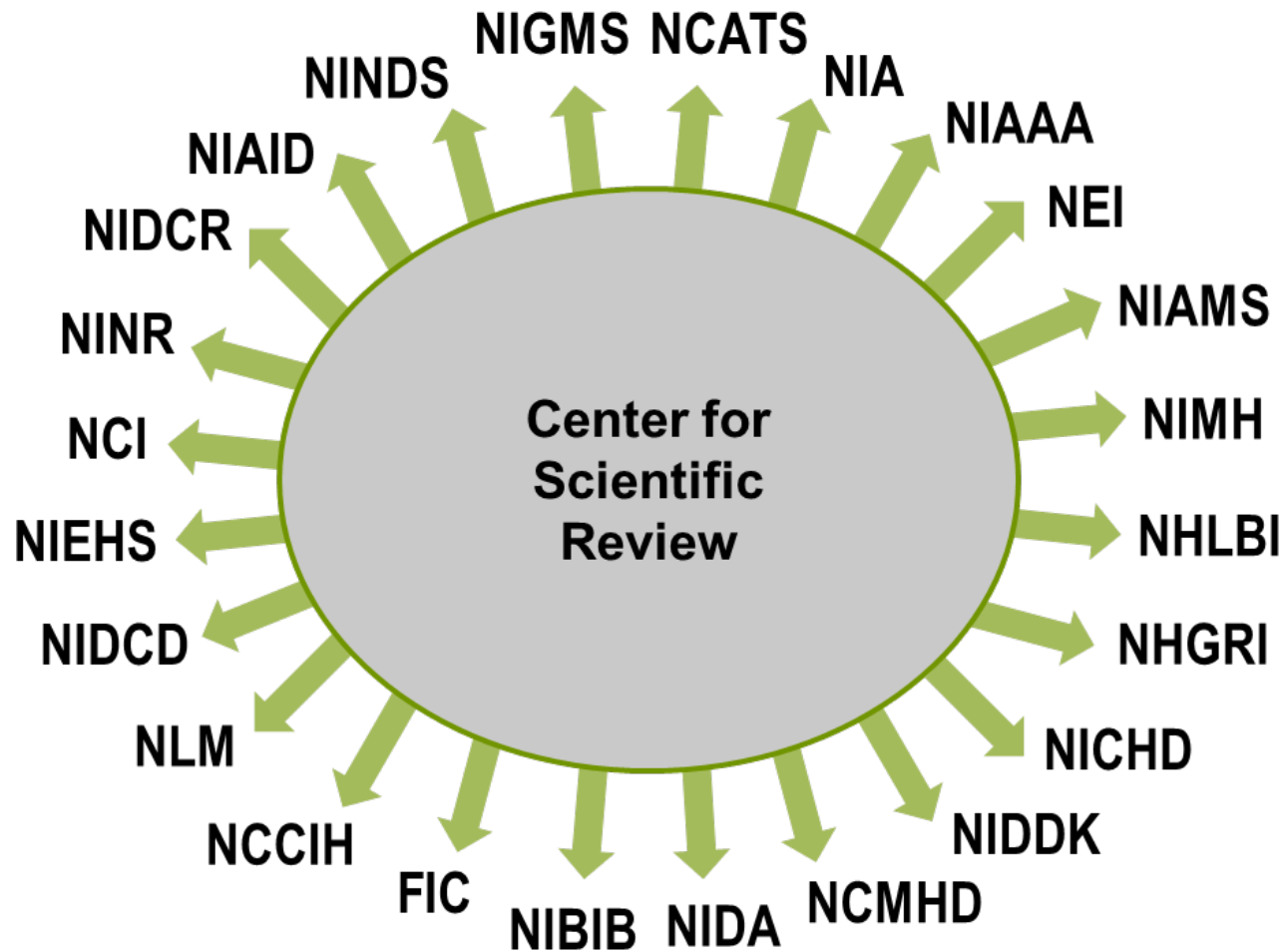
National Institutes of Health



Funding is by One of 24 NIH Institutes or Centers (ICs)



24 NIH Institutes and Centers fund grants.



CSR Mission



To see that NIH grant applications receive fair, independent, expert, and timely scientific reviews – free from inappropriate influences – so NIH can fund the most promising research.

The Gateway for NIH Grant Applications

The Center for Scientific Review

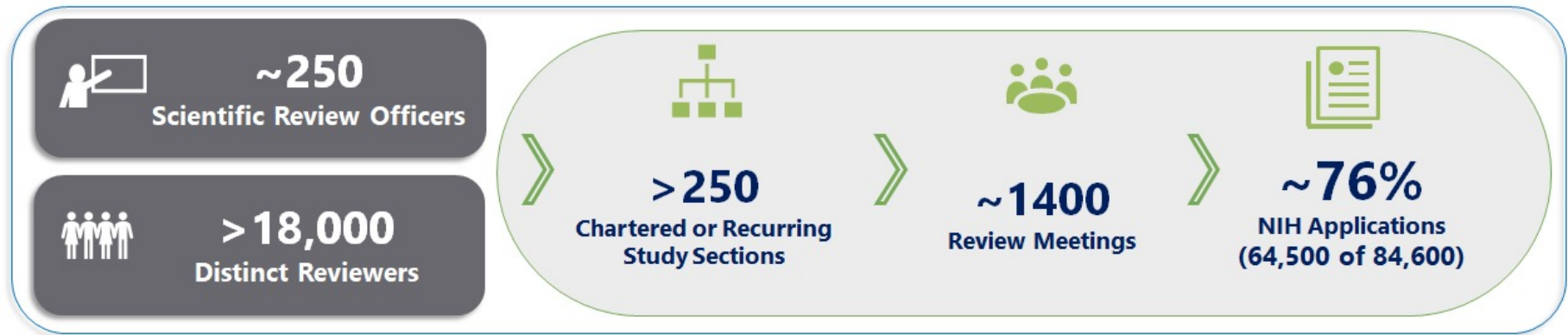


- **Receives all NIH grant applications**
- **Assigns applications to one or more NIH Institute or Center for potential funding**
- **Assigns applications to CSR or NIH Institute review groups**
- **Conducts initial scientific merit review of most NIH research applications**

This Is CSR



Scope of CSR's Operations



Data for calendar year 2020

Center for Scientific Review

Referral

- Central receipt point for most PHS Grant Applications
- Institute/Center assignment for potential funding
- Assignment to scientific review group in CSR or at an institute

Scientific Review

- Approximately 240 CSR chartered study sections and regularly recurring special emphasis panels (SEP) that primarily review:
 - Research Grant Applications
 - Fellowship Applications
 - Academic Research Enhancement Award Applications
 - Small Business Innovation Research Applications

Scientific Review Officer (SRO)



- Recruits reviewers and assigns applications
- Manages the meeting and conflicts
- Prepares summary statements
- Provides information to NIH Institutes and Centers

Extramural Support Assistant

- Assists scientific review officer (SRO) with administrative and technical review of applications
- Makes preparation for study section meetings and project site visits
- Shares administrative responsibilities at meetings
- Prepares preliminary summary statements for SROs

SROs Seek Reviewers Who Are Recognized Authorities in Their Field

- Doctoral degree or equivalent
- Demonstrated scientific expertise/research support
- Mature judgment and breadth of perspective
- Work effectively in a group context
- Impartiality
- Inclusion of women and minority scientists
- Geographic distribution



Where Do We Find Reviewers?

- Successful applicants
- Recommendations from reviewers and NIH staff
- NIH RePORTER
(<http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>)
- NIH PI and reviewer databases
- Internet
- Scientific conferences

Before the Study Section Meeting



SRO assigns 3 or more reviewers 5-6 weeks in advance

Reviewers assess each application by providing:

- Preliminary Overall Impact score
- Criterion scores for each of the 5 core review criteria
- Comment on appropriateness of the budget
- A written critique
- SRO reviews preliminary critiques for completeness, content
- Set Discussion Order (top 50%)

At the Meeting

Not Discussed Applications

- About half the applications will be discussed
- Applications unanimously judged by the review committee to be in the lower half are not discussed

Clustering of Review

- New Investigator R01 & some types of applications are often reviewed together

Order of Review

- Applications to be discussed are reviewed in random order within each cluster.



At the Meeting: Application Discussion



- Any member in conflict with an application leaves the room
- Reviewer 1 introduces the application and presents critique
- Reviewers 2 and 3 highlight new issues and areas that significantly impact scores
- All members without a conflict are invited to join the discussion and then vote on the final overall impact score
- About 70-100 applications are reviewed by each study section in 1-2 day meetings

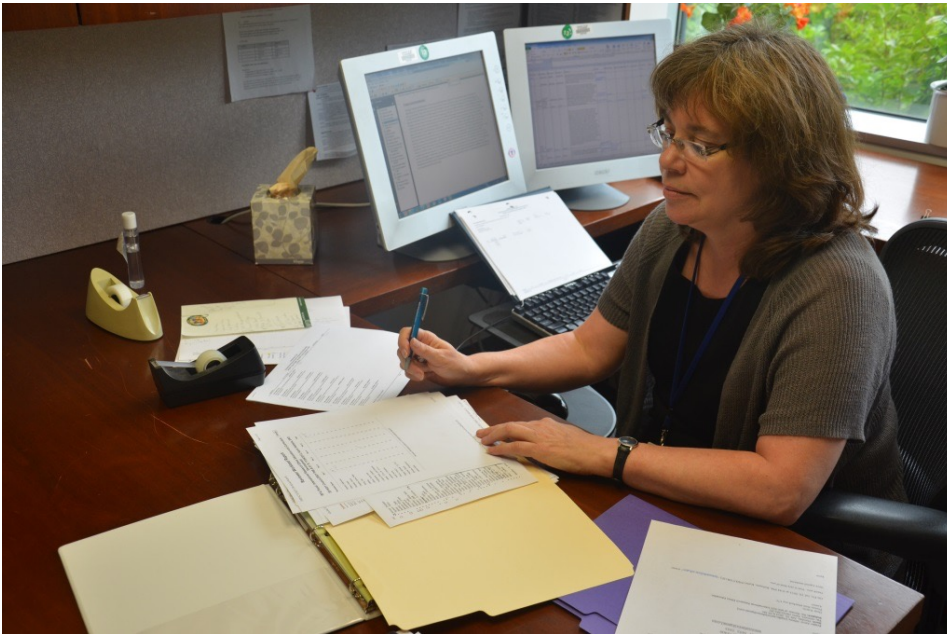
Scientific Review Officer (SRO)



During and after the review meeting

- Manages the meeting and conflicts
- Ensures NIH policy and procedures are followed during the review meeting.
- Prepares summary statements
- Provides information to NIH Institutes and Centers

After Review



SRO

- Prepares summary statements within 30 days
- Provides information to NIH Institutes and Centers

CSR Web Site

- About CSR
- Applicant Resources
- Study Sections
- Rosters and Meetings



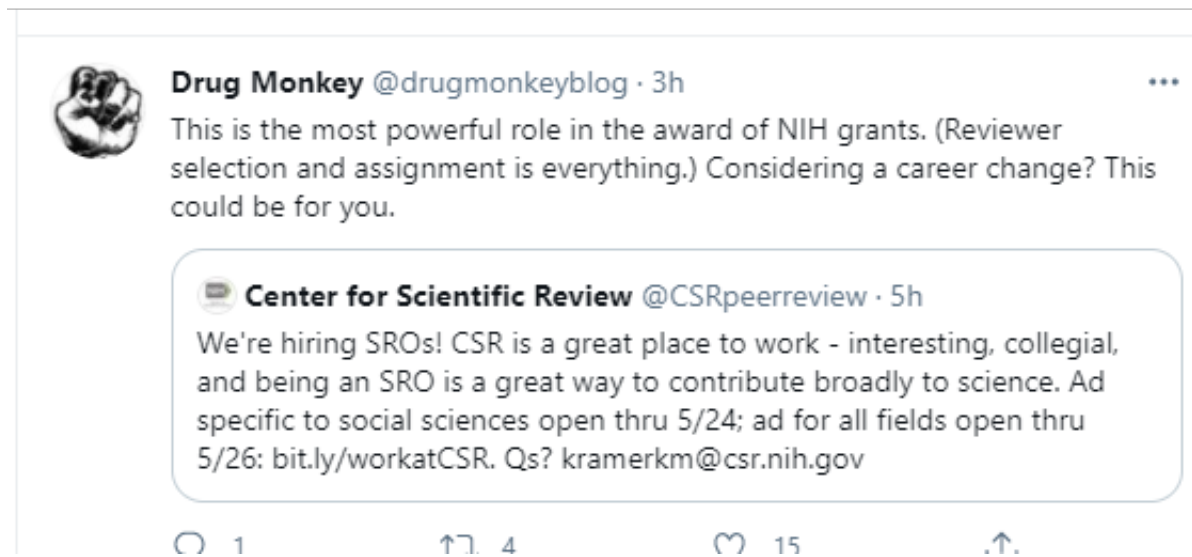
<http://www.csr.nih.gov>

TAKE HOME -

- You can contribute broadly to science by running a fair, expert peer review – it is the underpinning of all NIH extramural funding.
- CSR is the gateway for all NIH grant applications and reviews ~ 76% of all NIH applications for their scientific and technical merit. Beyond our review of most R01 applications, CSR covers a wide range of grant mechanisms as well as high profile initiatives such as HEAL, INCLUDE, BRAIN, All-of-U.s, FIRST, MIRA, Common Fund, RADx PreVAIL, and DS-I Africa. CSR often leads the way in identifying opportunities for innovation in peer review. Several CSR initiatives are:
 - Increasing diversity in review panels
 - Early Career Reviewer engagement
 - Development of bias awareness and integrity training for all review staff and reviewers
 - Increasing transparency and engagement with the community
 - Evaluating study sections for scientific fit and emerging areas of science through ENQUIRE
- Diversity of science at CSR – we cover all the science covered by ICs. Interesting place to work, interesting people to interact with.
- CSR's specialization in review and large workforce makes for a work environment that is interesting and rewarding – the breadth of science covered at CSR is incredibly diverse, encompassing that in all ICs. The atmosphere is collegial and supportive. There are opportunities for professional growth and contributions beyond one's division, through cross-divisional collaborations, and beyond in visible trans-NIH work. CSR is also committed to providing opportunity and support for employee growth and development such as career stage-appropriate CSR or NIH leadership programs.

Expertise and Integrity – the SRO job

- CSR is viewed as the expert in peer review and widely viewed as running peer review with a high degree of integrity.



Sounds good... Where do I go now?

- The Center for Scientific Review (CSR) is seeking to hire SROs – open 9/21

To apply visit USAJOBS:

- If anyone there is interesting in applying to be an SRO and has questions, I am happy to speak with anyone. Kristin Kramer - kramerkm@csr.nih.gov
- You can also find pointers and more about CSR on the CSR Employment page.

<https://public.csr.nih.gov/AboutCSR/Employment>

Personal Thoughts

1. Before Leaving the Bench
 - A. Know why you are leaving your current position
 - B. Know how you want to contribute to your field in the future
 - C. Know what you want out of the next decade of your career
 - D. Have a good idea of the time you'll have for family, self, career
2. What are the options if staying at NIH
 - A. Health Science Administrator (HSA)
 - i. Scientific Review Officer
 - ii. Program Officer/Director
 - iii. Policy Analyst
 - B. Training Programs
 - C. Core directors

7-years In

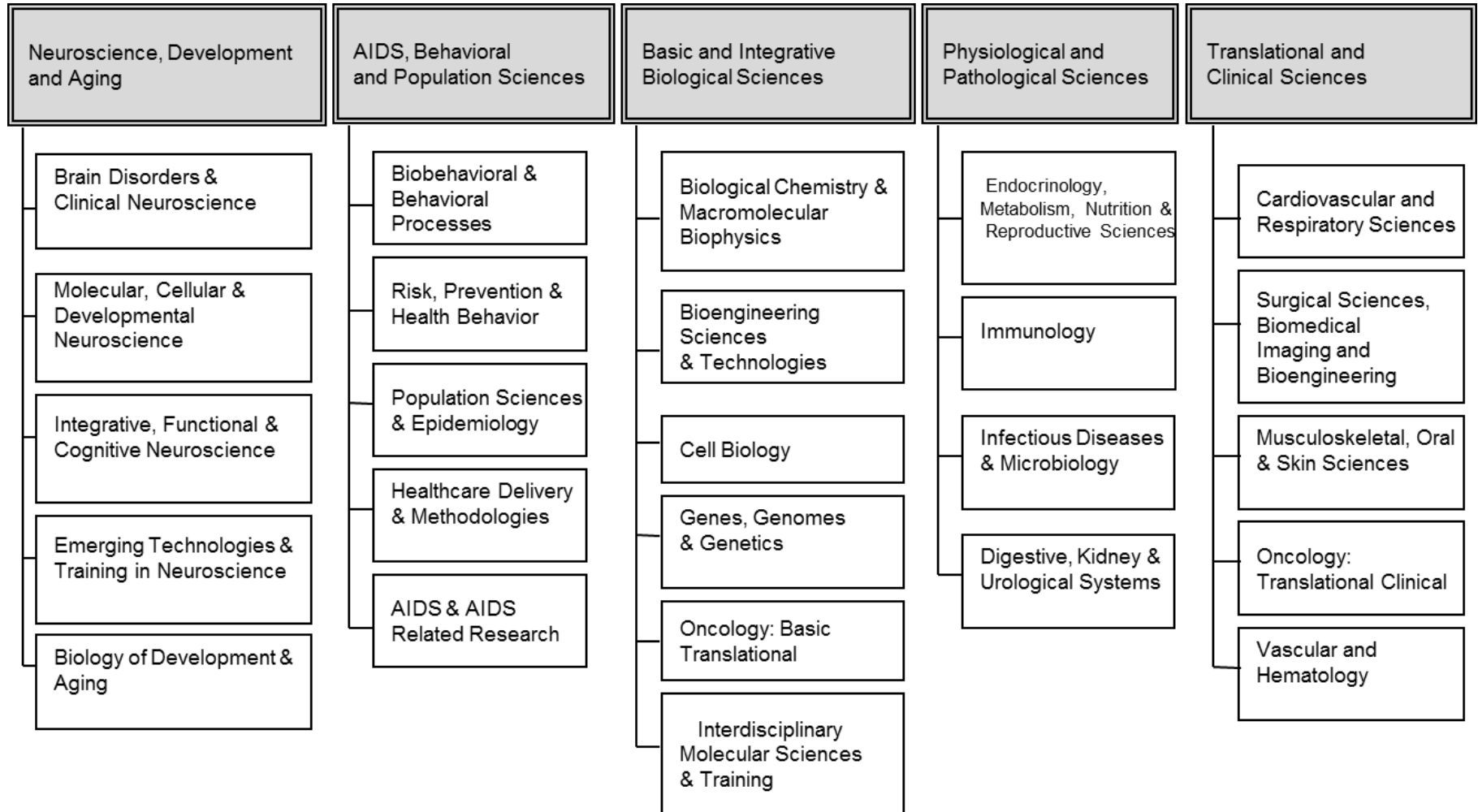
Personal

- Could participate in Mom's end-of-life care
- Had no problem doing SRO job and having a broken ankle
- Continued telework and when CoVID caused shut down – still had work
- Expanded number and types of hobbies

Professional

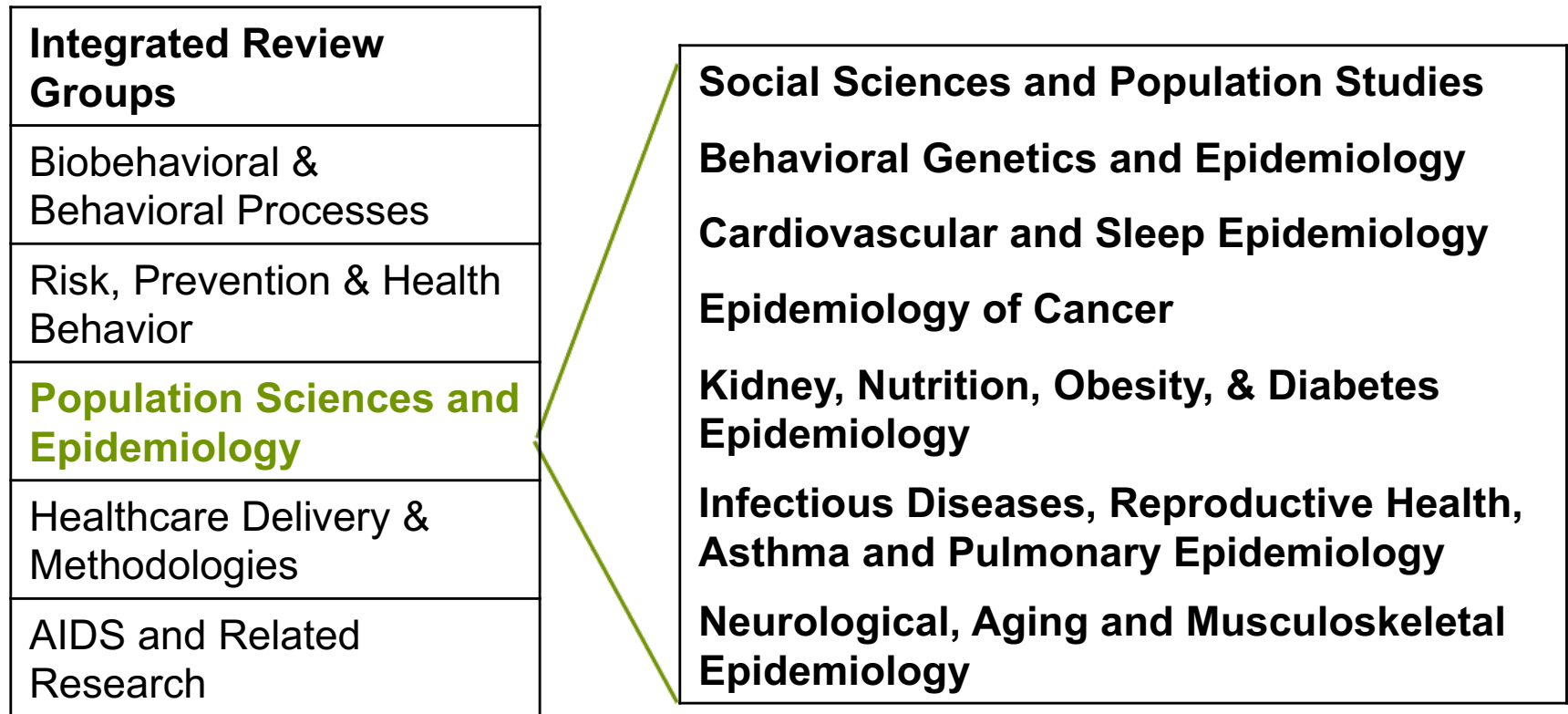
- Mastered CSR review process
- Contribute to NIH mission
- Participate in National and International (Canada) Scientific meetings
- Work with several NIH IC's learning something new about the human condition daily
- Leadership training
- Continuing education options
- Promotion pathways

Divisions and Integrated Review Groups (IRGs)



240 Study Sections and Recurring Special Emphasis Panels

Division of AIDS, Behavioral and Population Sciences



Reviewer Conflicts of Interest (COI)

What constitutes a reviewer COI?

- Institutional
- Family member/close friend
- Collaborator/Key Personnel
- Longstanding scientific disagreement
- Personal bias
- Appearance of conflict

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/peer_coi.htm

Confidentiality

- Review materials and proceedings of review meetings represent confidential information for reviewers and NIH staff.
- At the end of each meeting, reviewers must destroy or return all review-related material.
- Reviewers should not discuss review proceedings with anyone except the SRO.
- Questions concerning review proceedings should be referred to the SRO.
- Applicants should never communicate directly with any members of the study section about an application.
- Statute of confidentiality is life-long.

The SRO Selects a Chair Among the Panel Who...

- Has a particularly strong scientific and NIH funding track record
- Is a leader in her or his specialty
- Has an especially broad perspective
- Communicates particularly well
- Has a particularly strong reputation for impartiality

Role of Study Section Chair

- Partners with their scientific review officer (SRO) to conduct the meeting
- Guides and summarizes study section discussion
- Ensures all study section member opinions are given careful consideration
- Manages scientific discussions at the meeting, e.g., timeliness and thoroughness