

New Grantee Workshop

# Communicating with Your NCI Program Director: It's a Two-Way Street

*Cheryl Cero, Ph.D.*

# Objectives

- Program Director: Who we are? What we do?
- Connecting with your Program Director: When? Why?
- Understanding what NCI Program Directors Can and Can't do for you
- Typical vs Atypical Annual Progress Report (RPPR)

# Roles of a Program Director/ Program Officer

- Service
  - Point of contact for information
  - Liaisons and advocates for investigators
- Stewardship
  - Stewards of federal funds
- Vision
  - Identify gaps and needs, make recommendations to NCI/NIH Leadership
  - Report major advances to NCI/NIH Leadership

# Tips for finding a Program Officer:

- 1) Ask your mentor or peers who have submitted applications for names.
- 2) Check out NCI Divisions, Offices, and Centers websites for staff information.

## Cancer Cell Biology Branch (CCBB)

CCBB supports and directs research that defines the biological basis for the differences between normal cells and cancer cells, with a major emphasis on studies that reveal processes and molecular targets where there is potential for therapeutic or preventive intervention.

More information on research supported by this branch is available in the [Research section](#).

Phone: (240) 276-6230

Fax: (240) 276-7865

Name & Position	Email	Areas of Expertise
Rihab Yassin, Ph.D. <i>Chief</i>	<a href="mailto:yassinr@mail.nih.gov">yassinr@mail.nih.gov</a>	Gastroesophageal cancers biology, tumor-initiating cells, stem cell biology, and plasticity
Cheryl Cero, Ph.D. <i>Program Director</i>	<a href="mailto:cheryl.cero@nih.gov">cheryl.cero@nih.gov</a>	Cell cycle regulations, senescence, and R03 grants in cancer cell biology
Sharmistha Ghosh-Janjigian, Ph.D. <i>Program Director</i>	<a href="mailto:sharmistha.ghosh-janjigian@nih.gov">sharmistha.ghosh-janjigian@nih.gov</a>	Early lesion biology, as well as oncogenes and their mechanisms
Ruibai Luo, Ph.D. <i>Program Director</i>	<a href="mailto:luoru@mail.nih.gov">luoru@mail.nih.gov</a>	Post-translational modifications, circadian biology, and R15 and R50 grants in cancer cell biology

# Help Your Application Get to the Right Institute and Program Director

**Matchmaker Results**  
Top 500 Projects

mitochondria and cancer

Export

Search

Projects **Program Officials**

**Filters**

- Active Projects
- Fiscal Years
- Agencies
- Activity Codes
- Program Officials**
- Study Sections

**Institute/Center**

Institute/Center	Projects
NIH/NIGMS	85
NCI	80
NIA	70
NHLBI	65
NINDS	45
NIDDK	45

**Activity Code**

Activity Code	Projects
R01	250
R35	50
R21	30
F31	25
R56	20
ZIA	15

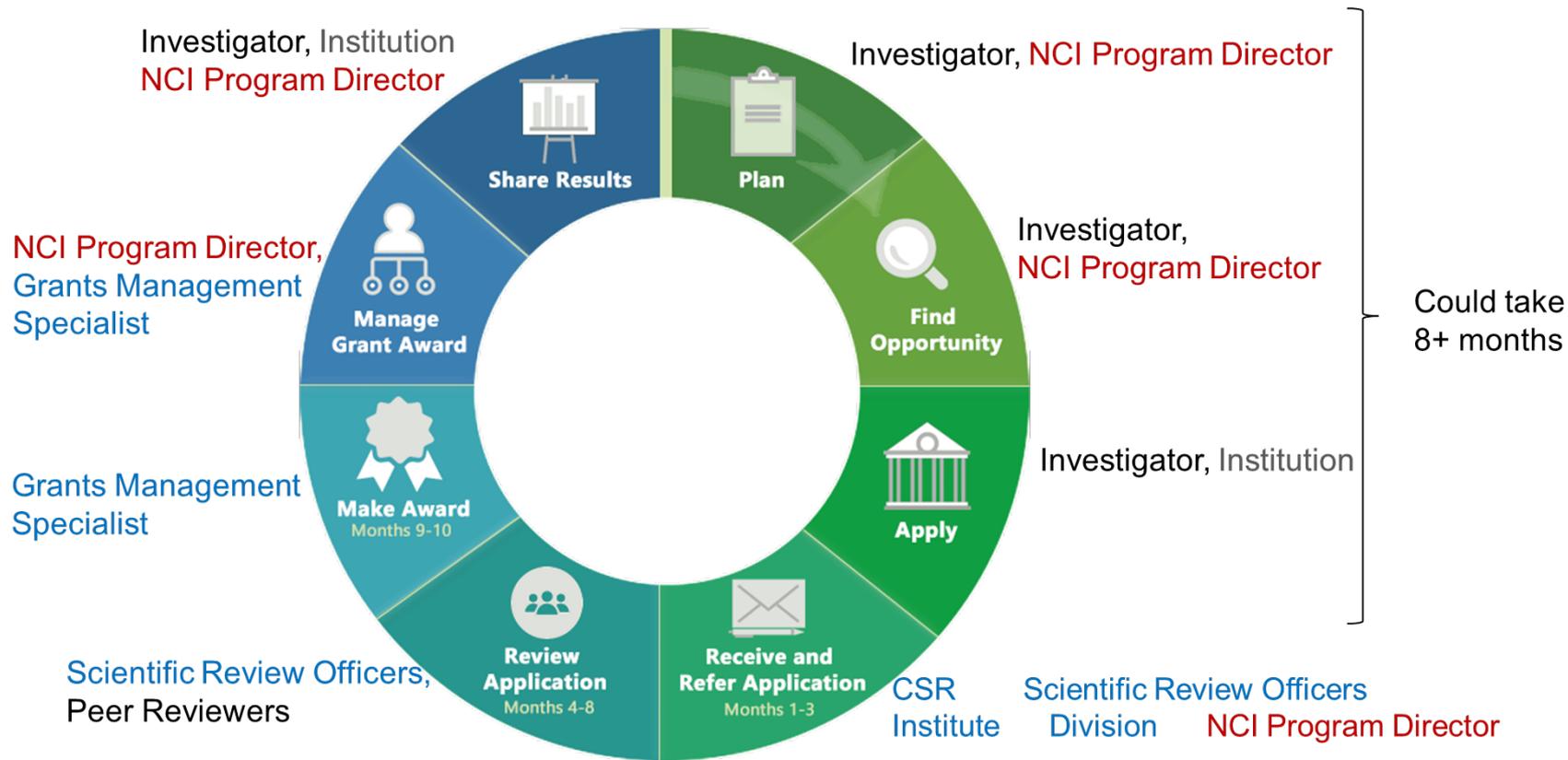
**Study Section**

Study Section	Projects
NOMD	35
MPPB	10
CNAD	8
MPPA	5
CSRS	5
PBKD	5

TAct Project	Year	Sub	Principal Investigator(s)/ Project Leader(s)	Organization	Fiscal Year	Admin IC	Funding IC	FY Total Cost by IC	Similar Projects	Match
1R01AG075589-01A1			GERMAIN, DORIS A	ICAHN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT MOUNT SINAI	2023	NIA	NIA	\$484,736	View	220

<https://reporter.nih.gov/matchmaker/MBpx4DZoc0OirsZ1Wx-PIQ/POs>

# Grant Application life cycle – who can help you in the different stages



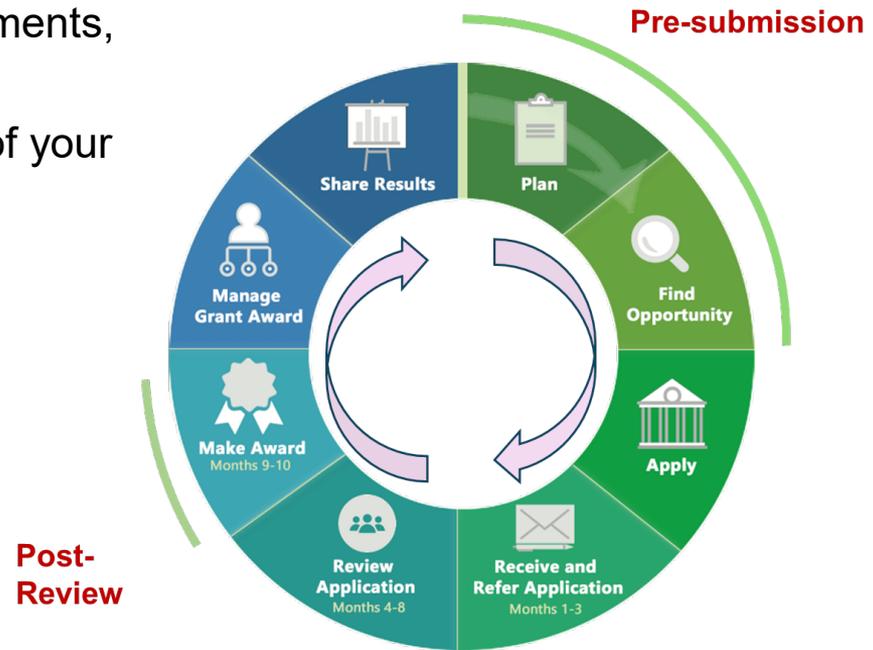
# Program Officer Responsibilities: Service Across the Grant Lifecycle (1)

## ■ Before submission

- Help in identifying NOFO, special requirements, policies, updates
- Scientific priorities; feedback on science of your proposed research

## ■ After review

- Interpret the summary statement
- Provide advise on next steps



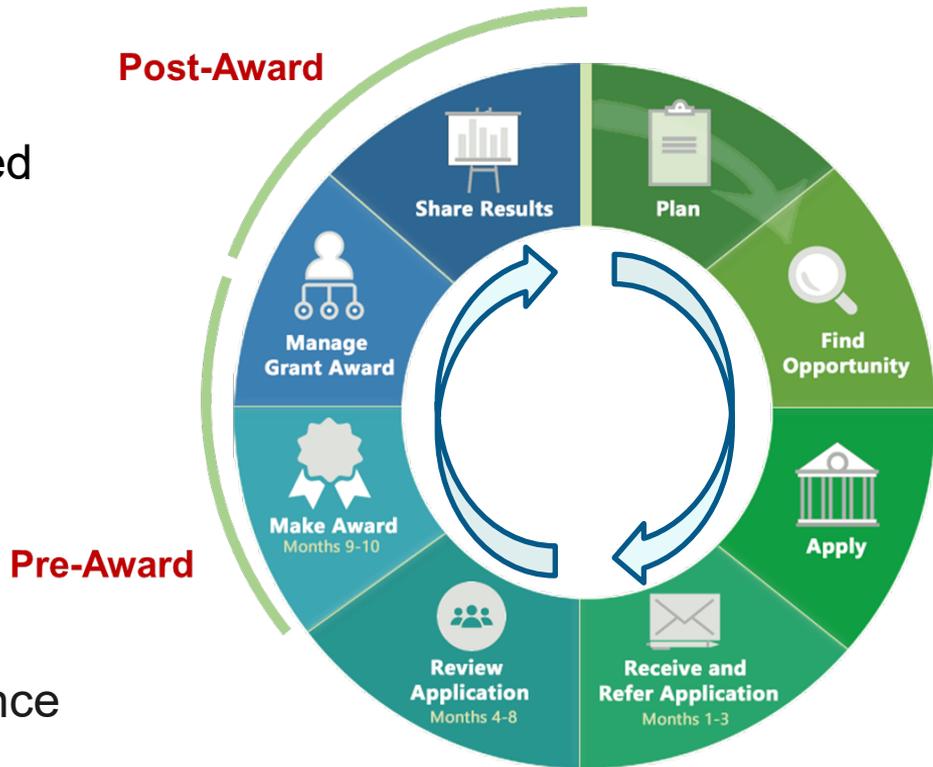
## Program Officer Responsibilities: Service Across the Grant Lifecycle (2)

- **Before the award**

- Issues that need to be addressed

- **After the award**

- Annual progress report monitoring (RPPR)
- Scientific advances, trends; advocate for an area of science



## What NCI PDs cannot do for you...

- Tell you how to design your project.
- Provide exemptions for submission deadline or rules-violation.
- Change a study section assignment.
- Change the NCI funding policy.
- Change the requirements that must be fulfilled for an award to be issued.
- Write you a letter of recommendation as your PD.
- Talk to your Chairperson, or anyone outside of NIH except you, about your application, your Summary Statement, or your job/position status.

# ...and it's a Two-Way Street: PI responsibilities (1)

- **Keep eRA Commons Personal Profile up to date**
  - (name, degrees, institution, department, academic rank, address, phone, email)
- **Regularly monitor application and grant status in eRA Commons**
  - Documents received/accepted
  - Study section assignment and SRO
  - NIH referral assignment and Program Director (PD)
  - Scores and Summary Statements
  - Just-in-Time (JIT) requests
  - Notice of Award (NoA)

## ...and it's a Two-Way Street: PI responsibilities (2)

- **Submit all required materials on time**
  - JIT information
  - Annual RPPR
  - Required certifications and documentation (e.g., IACUC, IRB, training certifications, data/resource/genomic data sharing)
  - Grant close-out reports
- **Inform the NIH PD of major scientific advances or publications** (optional, but encouraged—do not wait for the next RPPR)

# A Typical Annual Progress Report (RPPR) – Key Requirements

## *Document used by NIH grantees to report grant progress*

- **Accomplishments:**
  - ✓ brief overall summary with major goals of your research
  - ✓ progress toward each Specific Aim
  - ✓ challenges or delays
  - ✓ must provide if estimated unobligated balance >25% and how remaining funds will be spent
- **Products:** Relevant Publications (ensure compliance with the NIH Public Access Policy);  
Websites, Technologies, Inventions, Patents, Licenses
- **Participants:** What individuals have worked on the project? If efforts have changed
- **Changes:** Reminder! Significant changes in objectives and scope require NIH prior approval

# An Atypical Annual Progress Report (RPPR)

## ➤ **Progress Appears Too Extensive**

- Progress limited to current budget year
- Prior vs. current year progress clearly distinguished
- Data attributable to this grant only
- Other funding contributions clearly identified/explained

## ➤ **Progress Appears Insufficient**

- Reflects total progress for the reporting period
  
- If accurate:
  - **Recurring issue**
  - **Challenges and recovery plan** described\
  - **PD support needed** (esp. New PI)
  
- If inaccurate:
  - **Revision requested** with adequate detail

**We will reach out too!**

**Keep an eye out for our emails**

- grant related questions
- invitation to participate in a WS or a seminar
- inform you about programs relevant to your expertise
- notify you of other opportunities

# Thank you



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CANCER  
INSTITUTE**



[cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov)

[cancer.gov/espanol](https://www.cancer.gov/espanol)