ACD Diversity Workgroup
Subcommittee on Peer Review
June 2014 Progress Report

Richard Nakamura, Ph.D., Director
Center for Scientific Review
The ACD asked for:

• Creation of a subcommittee on peer review
• Research to examine causes of award disparities
  – Text analysis studies
  – Anonymization studies
• Exploration of interventions to reduce possibility of bias
Overview of Research Efforts

I. Development of Measures, Tools, Solicitations

II. Baseline Assessment of Bias in Peer Review

III. Intervention Development and Testing
I. Development of Measures, Tools, Solicitations

Challenge #1 - New Methods to Detect bias in Peer Review

- Launched on May 5, 2014
- Submission deadline June 30, 2014
- Awards September 30, 2014

How to detect bias among reviewers due to gender, race/ethnicity, institutional affiliation, area of science, and/or amount of research experience of applicants.

Judging criteria
- Best Empirically Based Submission
- Most Creative Submission

Prizes
- First - $10,000
- Second - $5,000
II. Baseline Assessment of Bias in Peer Review

- **Survey of New Investigators**
  - Survey created and refined
  - OMB and IRB approvals received
  - OER provided investigator contact and demographic data
  - Survey launched May 28, 2014

- **Anonymizing Experiments**
  - SRO /Chief’s provided suggestions on study design
  - Subcommittee on Peer Review to review on June 9th
  - Plan is to initially review ARRA grants
  - Design includes comparison of:
    - Fully anonymized applications
    - Partially anonymized applications
    - Original applications
Baseline Assessment of Bias in Peer Review

- **Text Analysis of Summary Statements**
  - Research Plan developed with 3 Tasks
  - Contract to be awarded Summer 2014

- **Task 1: Development of Lexicon for Text Analysis**
  - Finalize Lexicon
  - Replicate Findings on Gender differences in evaluation terms
  - Evaluate Summary Statements

- **Task 2: Examination of unedited critiques by Applicant Race**
  - Test Gender-based Lexicon
  - Revise Lexicon and Reanalyze critiques—Iterative process

- **Task 3: After accumulation of critiques**
  - Test of Reviewer and Applicant Race differences in evaluation of grant applications
Challenge #2 - Strategies to Strengthen Fairness and Impartiality in Peer Review

- [http://public.csr.nih.gov/Pages/challenge.aspx](http://public.csr.nih.gov/Pages/challenge.aspx)
- Submission deadline June 30, 2014
- Awards September 30, 2014

Methods for strengthening reviewer training methods to maximize fairness and impartiality in peer review with regards to gender, race/ethnicity, institutional affiliation, area of science, and/or amount of research experience of applicants.

- **Prizes**
  - First - $10,000
  - Second - $5,000
Intervention Development and Testing

Early Career Reviewer Program (ECR)

- 3134 ECRs have been accepted into the program
- 1069 have served on at least one study section
- 25 percent of ECRs from under-represented groups
- Early Career Reviewer Application and Vetting System (EAVS)
- ECR video created and disseminated
- Outreach webinars for R15 schools
Questions? Comments?