



NIH Scoring Grid

Judging Criteria

Significance: Importance of the problem, potential impact on the field

Approach: Experimental design, pitfalls, and alternatives

Innovation: Originality and novelty of the concepts, challenge to dogma

Investigator: Training, experience, integration of the team

Environment: Institutional resources, uniqueness of subject populations

Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths & Weaknesses
1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

Non-numeric score options: NR = Not Recommended for Further Consideration; DF = Deferred; AB = Abstention; CF = Conflict; NP = Not Present; ND = Not Discussed

Minor Weakness: An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact

Moderate Weakness: A weakness that lessens impact

Major Weakness: A weakness that severely limits impact