Inside the IRP
Our Review Process: A Step-by-Step Guide

The Intramural Research Program (IRP) is the nation's biomedical research enterprise, with 1,100 Principal Investigators and more than 4,000 postdoctoral fellows conducting basic, translational, and clinical research. To ensure that only the most outstanding research is funded, IRP researchers are evaluated both on accomplishments since their last review and on proposed plans for future research.

IRP researchers are reviewed every 4 yrs.

IRP researches are reviewed using a rigorous set of evaluation criteria:
- Significance
- Approach
- Innovation
- Environment
- Support
- Training
- Productivity
- Mentoring

IRP reviews are largely retrospective.

IRP researchers are reviewed by Boards of Scientific Counselors (BSCs), external individuals with outstanding scientific credentials who are committed to providing rigorous, objective reviews.

Scientific experts conduct in-person site visits to evaluate the quality of work of the individual Principal Investigator.

The Principal Investigator may also be evaluated in the context of the overall portfolio of the Institute or Center.

Final BSC recommendations are presented to the Scientific Director (SD), who reports these to the NIH Deputy Director for Intramural Research (DDIR) and the Institute Council. Subsequently, the SD determines funding levels, staffing, and promotions.

Rigorous reviews are critical for planning and to ensure that only the most outstanding research is funded. If a program fails to meet expectations, funds are redeployed.

This infographic is representative of the overall IRP review process, and may differ between individual Institutes and Centers.