

Council of Councils Common Fund Operating Procedures

Elizabeth L. Wilder

Director, Office of Strategic Coordination

January 30, 2015



National Institutes of Health
Office of Strategic Coordination - The Common Fund

CONTEXT

- Council Operating Procedures are typically reviewed annually at the September meeting
- In September, 2014, discussion of CF concept clearance procedures was deferred, pending determination of a response to the CF Evaluation
- Additional changes were suggested to ensure more consistent review of applications received through the High Risk/High Reward program.

Changes to be considered:

- Council review of CF applications
 - Previously, the CoC provided second level review for the Transformative Research Awards and the Early Independence Awards.
 - The Advisory Committee to the Director provided second level review for Pioneer and New Innovator awards, since these initiatives predate the CoC.
 - Proposed modification to the Operating Procedures puts all 4 initiatives of this program under the purview of the CoC.
- Discussion?

Changes to be considered (cont):

- Concept Clearance for CF Programs
 - Previously, the CoC reviewed many concepts gathered through Phase 1 strategic planning.
 - DPCPSI provided a light filter.
 - Concepts were developed to varying degrees.
 - Online pre-votes resulted in clearance for some and non-clearance for others; only those that did not have a majority opinion were discussed in person.
 - The proposed change in this process would engage IC Directors in the process of vetting concepts prior to CoC review.
 - Allows greater input from IC Directors earlier in the process and IC “champions” to be identified
 - Allows concepts to be clarified/enhanced prior to CoC review
 - Results in fewer, more well developed concepts to be considered by the Council
 - Allows richer input from Council
 - Council clearance would be by consensus; if consensus is not apparent, a simple majority vote by show of hands will determine clearance [Note: votes by Council members are required to be transparent to the public according to the Sunshine in Government Act.]

REVISION

Section III. A. 1. paragraph 2 (Advisory Role of the Councils in Program Planning and Policy/Concept Clearance/Common Fund)

- **Concepts for new Common Fund programs are generated through Phase 1 Strategic Planning activities as described on the Common Fund website and in Council briefing documents. The DPCPSI Director, in consultation with a small group of IC Directors, will select concepts to be reviewed and discussed for clearance by the Council. At the Council meeting, an NIH champion of the concept will present the concept to the Council; two Council members will be asked in advance to lead the discussion. Clearance will be by consensus; if general consensus does not emerge, a vote will be taken by show of hands with simple majority rule.**
- **DISCUSSION?**