

# Q&A Webinar

For RFA-RM25-003



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



TRANSFORMATIVE  
RESEARCH  
AWARD

[commonfund.nih.gov/tra](https://commonfund.nih.gov/tra)  
[Transformative\\_Awards@mail.nih.gov](mailto:Transformative_Awards@mail.nih.gov)

# Panelists

Patricia Labosky, Ph.D.

Program Leader

Office of the Director

Becky Miller, Ph.D.

Program Leader

Office of the Director

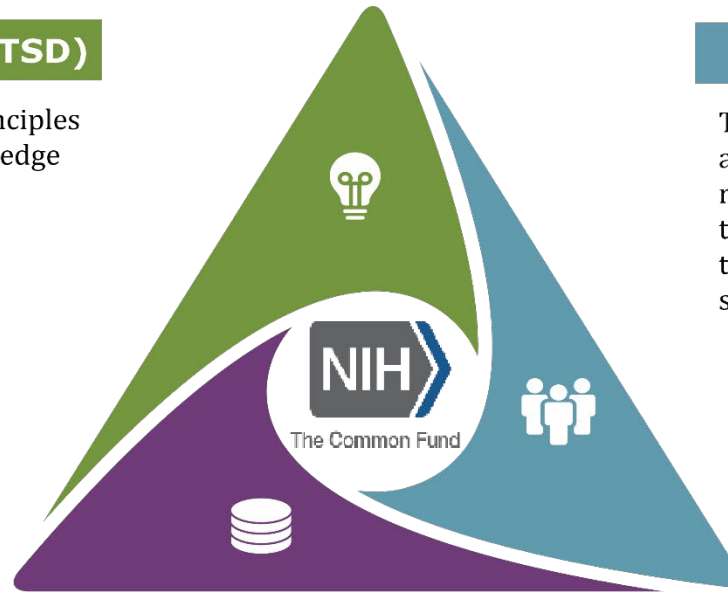
# Types of Common Fund Programs as of FY25

## Transformational Science and Discovery (TSD)

These **programs** are designed to establish new scientific principles, models, and research resources to transform scientific knowledge and paths to discovery.

- 4D Nucleome
- A2CPS
- CryoEM
- DS-I Africa
- Human Virome
- HRHR
- MoTrPAC
- NIOI
- NPH
- Oculomics
- SMaHT
- SPARC

High-Risk, High-Reward  
Research program



## Re-Engineering the Research Enterprise (RRE)

These **programs** are designed to transform how we do biomedical and behavioral research, how we make the biomedical workforce as robust as possible to ensure new perspectives and ideas contribute to discovery, how we transition that research into prevention and therapies, and how those successful prevention and therapies can be shared broadly.

- CARE for Health™
- Complement-ARIE
- NBSxWGS
- Replication Initiative
- SCGE
- Transformative Research to Address Health Disparities

## Catalytic Data Resources (CDR)

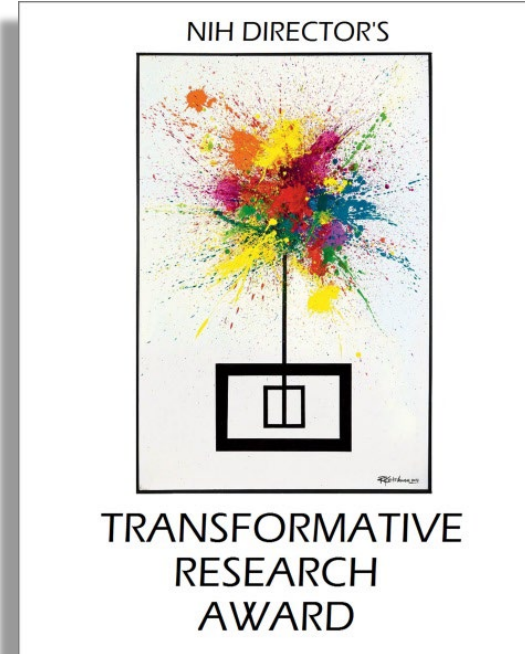
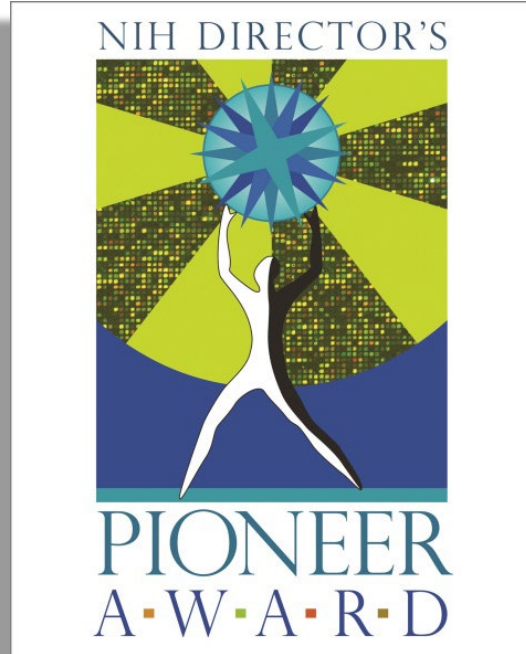
These **programs** are designed to manage and develop data for scientific discoveries by accelerating research through data resources.

- Bridge2AI
- CFDE
- HuBMAP
- Kids First
- PRIMED-AI
- SysBio

**CF programs may be useful for your research: funding opportunities, access to high-end instruments, databases, reagents, protocols....**

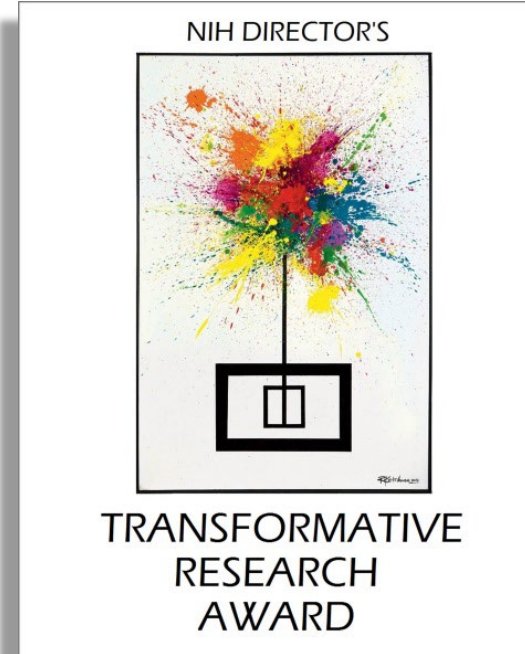
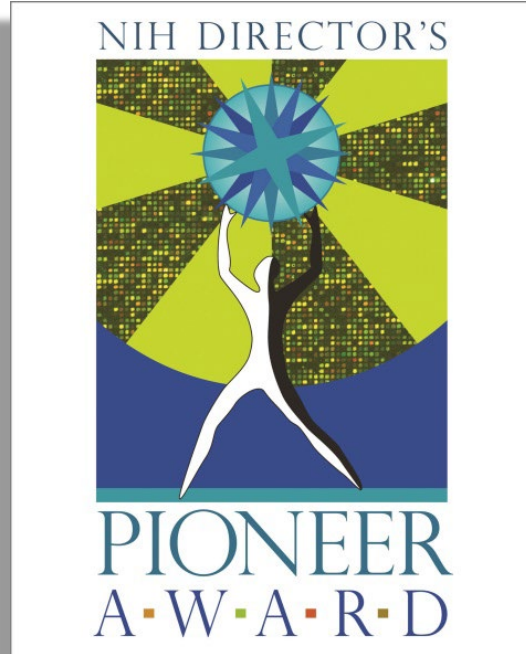


# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



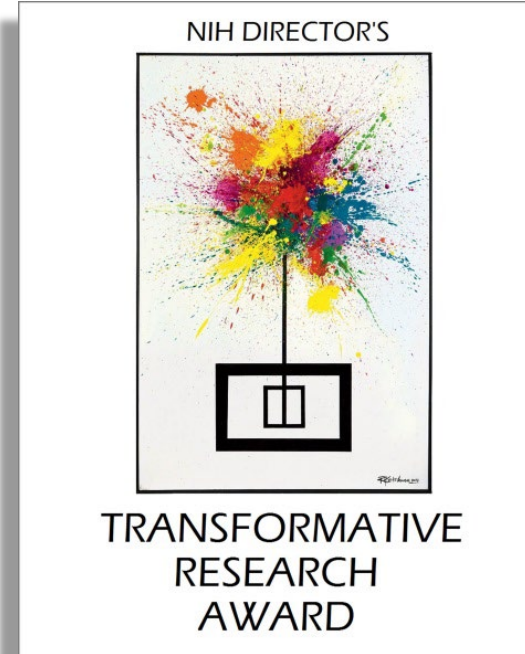
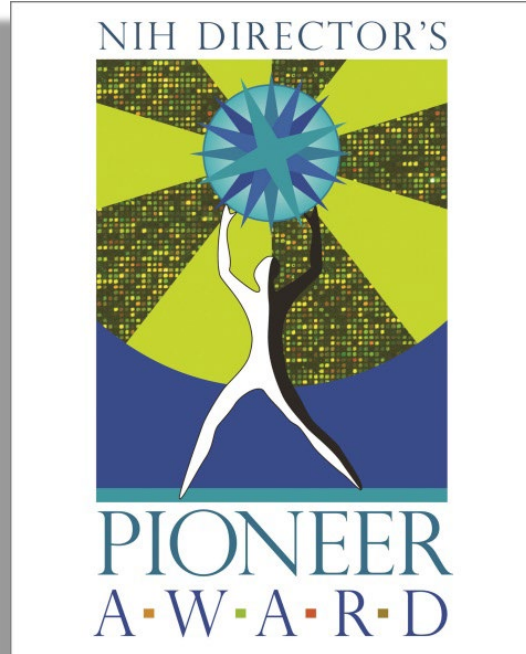
*Supporting scientists at all career stages proposing outstanding high-risk, high-impact research*

# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



Annual funding opportunities

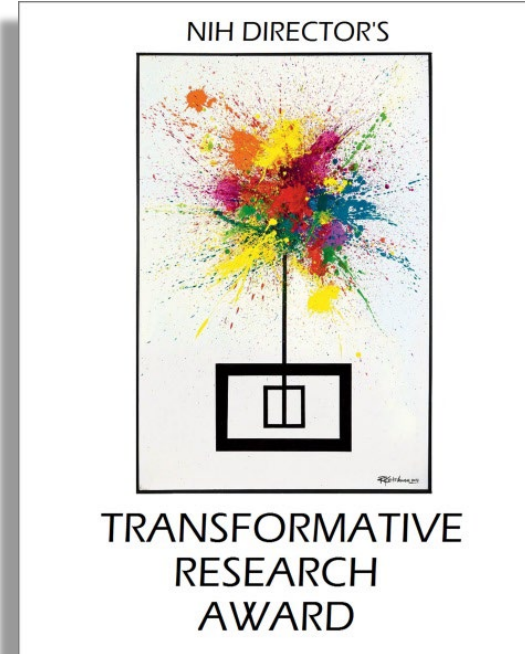
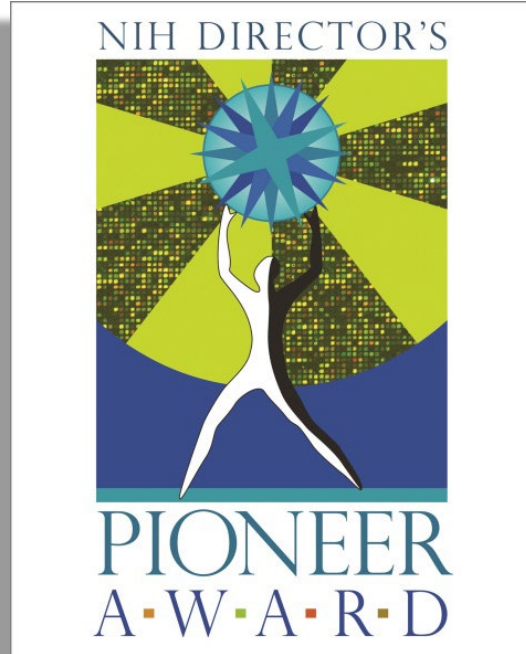
# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



High-risk, high-impact ideas

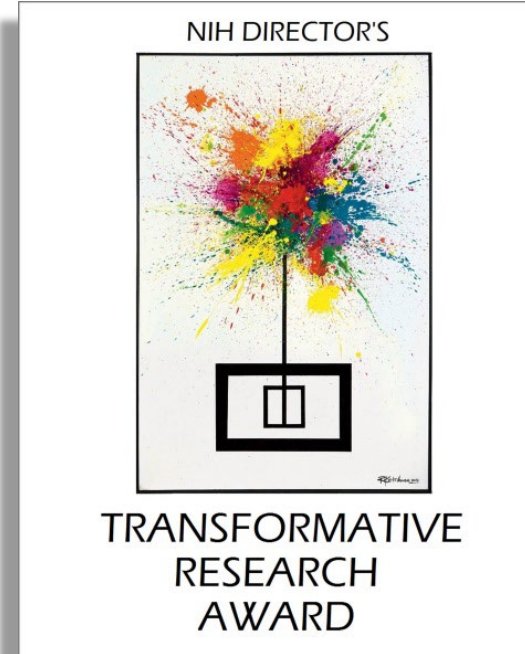
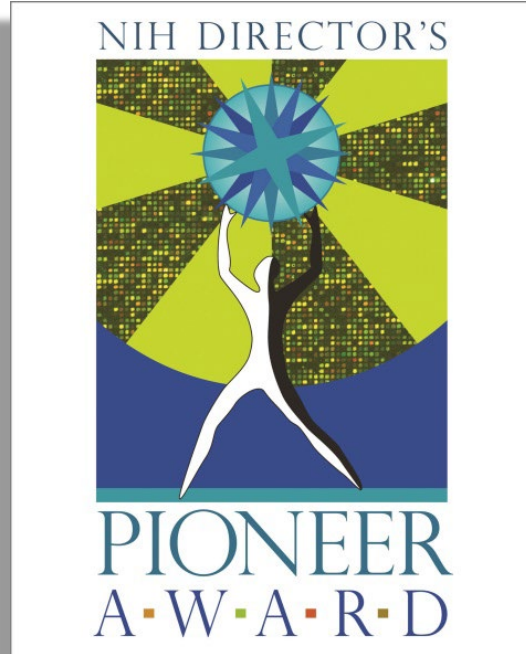


# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



No preliminary data or detailed experimental plan required

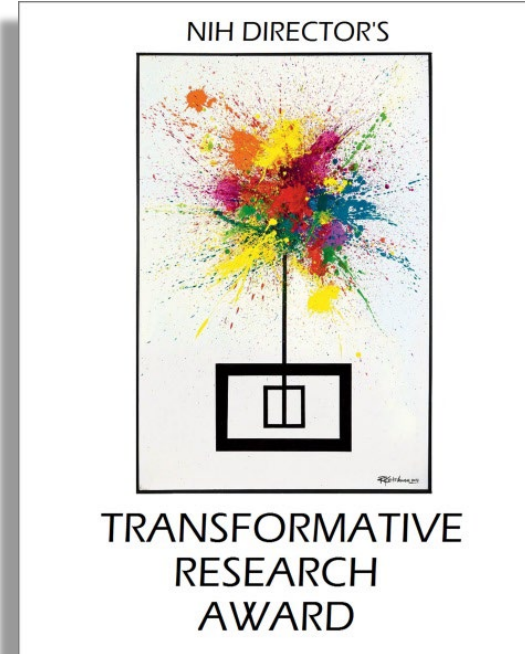
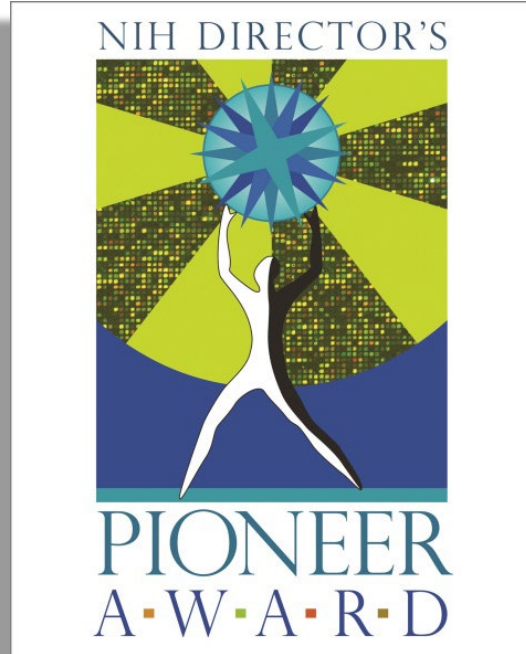
# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



*Any topic relevant to NIH mission welcome*  
Behavioral, social, biomedical, applied, and formal sciences,  
and basic, translational, or clinical research



# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



Encourage applications from all eligible institutions

# HRHR Working Group

## **Chair**

Nicole Kleinstreuer (OD)

## **Program Leader**

Patricia Labosky (OD)

## **Members**

Geetha Bansal (FIC)

Alexey Belkin (NIAMS)

Sangeeta Bhargava (NEI)

David Bollweg (OD)

Gene Carstea (CSR)

Jennifer Collins (NIEHS)

Christine Colvis (NCATS)

Bill Duval (NINR)

Emmeline Edwards (NCCIH)

Zeynep Erim (NIBIB)

Marcus Ferrone (CSR)

Asanté Forde (OD)

Nancy Freeman (NIDCD)

April Harrison (NIDCR)

Gabriel Hidalgo (NIDCR)

Dana Hill (CSR)

Sharon Isern (CSR)

Ray Jacobson (CSR)

Sarah Leinwand (NIMH)

James Li (CSR)

Roger Little (NIDA)

Brittany Mason-Mah (CSR)

Becky Miller (OD)

Brett Miller (NICHD)

David Miller (NCI)

Michael Morse (OD)

Imoh Okon (CSR)

Vivian Ota Wang (OD)

Michael Pazin (NHGRI)

Steven Pittenger (NCATS)

Dena Procaccini (OD)

Raul Rojas (CSR)

Ananda Roy (OD)

Diana Rutberg (NIDCR)

John Satterlee (NIDA)

Dana Schloesser (OD)

Kristen Schlotman (OD)

Johanna Schneider (NIAID)

Carol Shreffler (NIEHS)

Corinne Silva (NIDDK)

Elena Smirnova (CSR)

Barbara Sorkin (OD)

RV Srinivas (NIAAA)

Nathaniel Stinson (NIMHD)

William Tyler (NINDS)

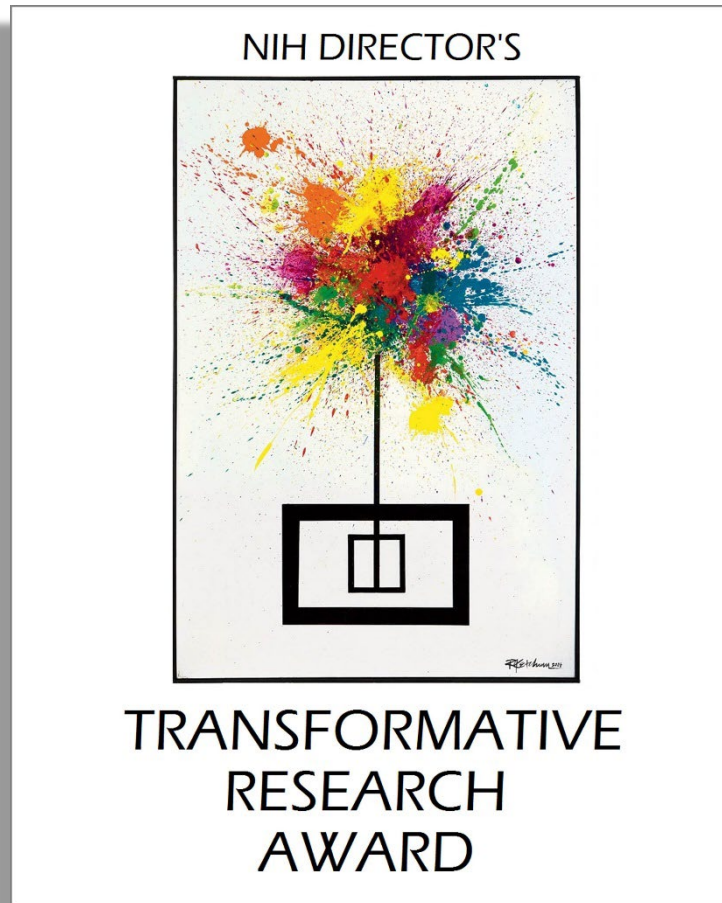
Scott Verbridge (NIDCR)

Stephanie Webb (NHLBI)

Xin Yuan (NIA)

Ariel Zane (NIGMS)

# High-Risk, High-Reward Research Program



Supports exceptionally innovative or unconventional research projects with the potential to create or overturn fundamental paradigms

- Started in 2009
- Open to individuals or teams at all career stages
- No preliminary data required
- Flexible budgets
- No prior approval required for large budget requests
- Cannot be renewed



# R01 Application (but used in unconventional way)

## Specific Aims page

- Not used to list specific objectives of project as in standard R01 application
- Instead, used as a one-page distillation of project and why it is well-aligned with the spirit of the TRA initiative
- Two sections:
  - Significance, Innovation, Impact
  - Insight and rationale

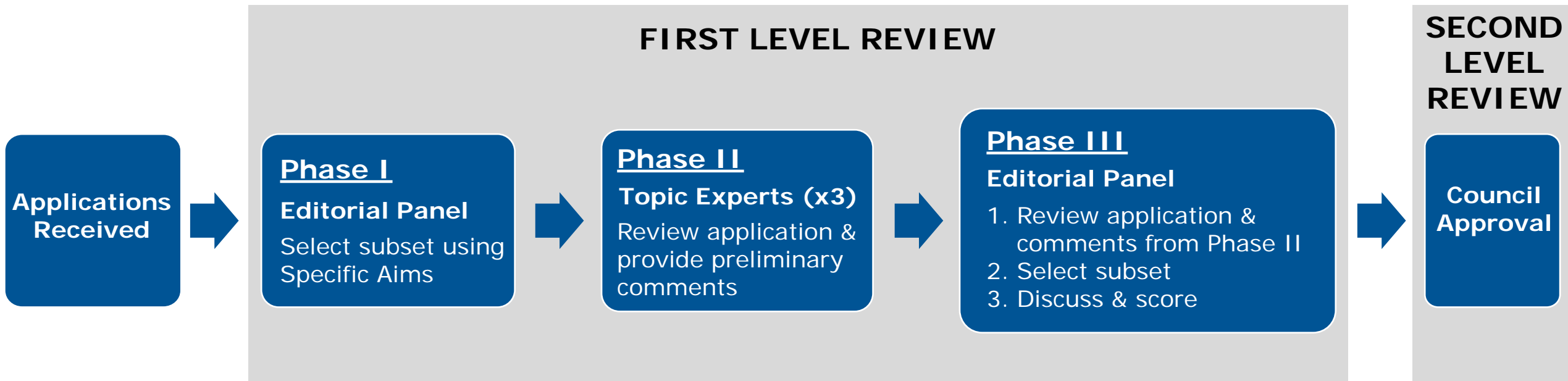
## Research Strategy section

- Not used as in standard R01 application with substantial preliminary data and experimental details
- Instead, used to address items of programmatic importance to TRA
- Five sections:
  - Overview of research project (set context for project)
  - Approach (describe underlying logic and will ensure robustness and rigor)
  - Innovation (explain why exceptionally innovative)
  - Appropriateness for TRA (explain why HRHR and not traditional R01)
  - Timeline (including critical decision points)

# Research Strategy Considerations

- Given that not all reviewers will be topic experts, be sure that what you write can be easily appreciated by people well outside the field for exceptional innovation and potential for unusually broad impact
- Begin with a description of the landscape of the field and current state-of-the-art or boundaries; provide proper context for proposal and why it is so innovative and potentially impactful
- Ease the reader into the jargon of the field
- Though no detailed experimental plan is required, make clear what it is that you want to do
- Convince the reviewers you have thought deeply about the project – identify risky aspects, how they will be mitigated, alternate approaches
- Also, convince the reviewers that the research will be performed in a robust and rigorous manner – validate new approaches, provide estimates of numbers of human or animal subjects (if used) and why, include that sex will be considered as a biological variable (if appropriate)

# Transformative Research Review Process





# Phase I : Editorial Panel Review

## Phase I

### Editorial Panel

Select subset using  
Specific Aims

#### Timeline:

- Applications Due: September 3, 2025
- Phase I Review: September to November 2025

- The editorial board review panel is composed of 16-20 senior scientists with collective expertise spanning from diverse scientific areas that broadly cover the NIH research portfolio
- Each application is reviewed by 4 editors
- Each editor reviews the Specific Aims page of 40-50 applications and bins them based on potential transformative impact
- Top scoring subset of applications plus “rescues” are advanced to Phase II



# Phase II: Topic Expert Review

## Phase II

### **Topic Experts (x3)**

Review application &  
provide preliminary  
comments

- **December 2025-February 2026**
- **70-80 applications**

- The top (70-80) applications selected from Phase I are reviewed by “mail” reviewers who are topic experts in the area of science of application
- Each application is reviewed by 3 topic experts
- The “mail” reviewers provide written comments addressing significance and transformative impact, the level of innovation, and the logic of approach

# Phase III: Editorial Panel Review

## Phase III

### Editorial Panel

1. Review application & comments from Phase II
2. Select subset
3. Discuss & score

- Each panel member assigned 15-20 applications to review with access to Phase II (topic expert) preliminary scores and comments
- Panel selects ~50% of Phase II applications to discuss
- Panel discusses subset and scores

#### Timeline:

- **Application Selection: February to March 2026**
- **Review Meeting: March 2026**



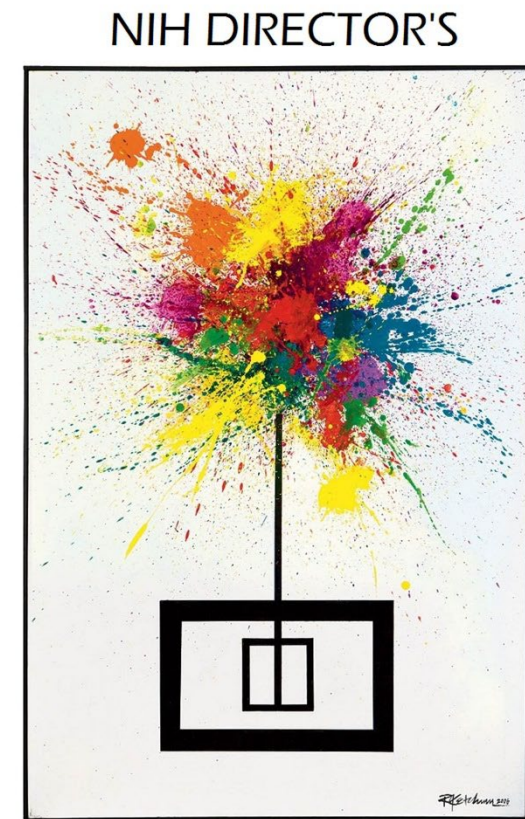
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## *Eligibility*



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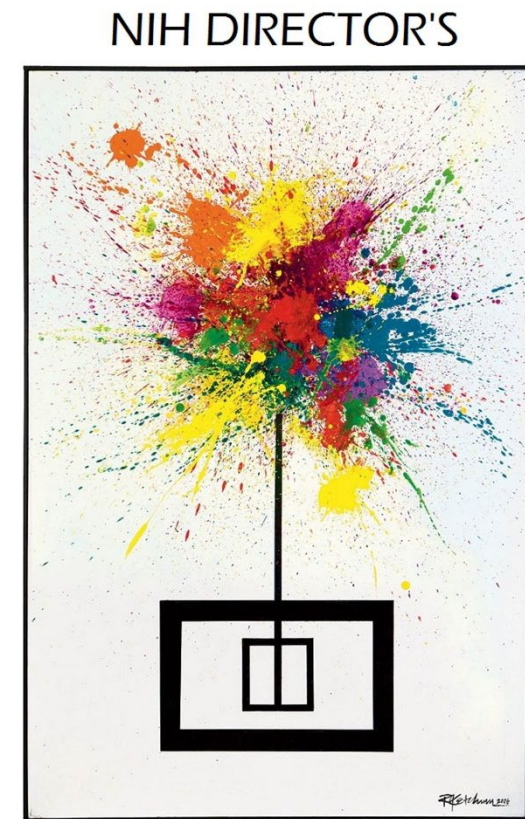
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*Application & Submission*



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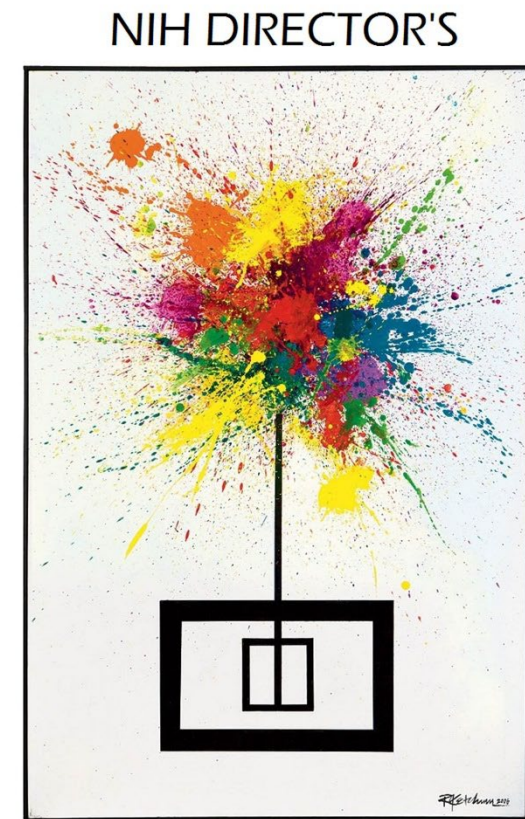
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*Budget*



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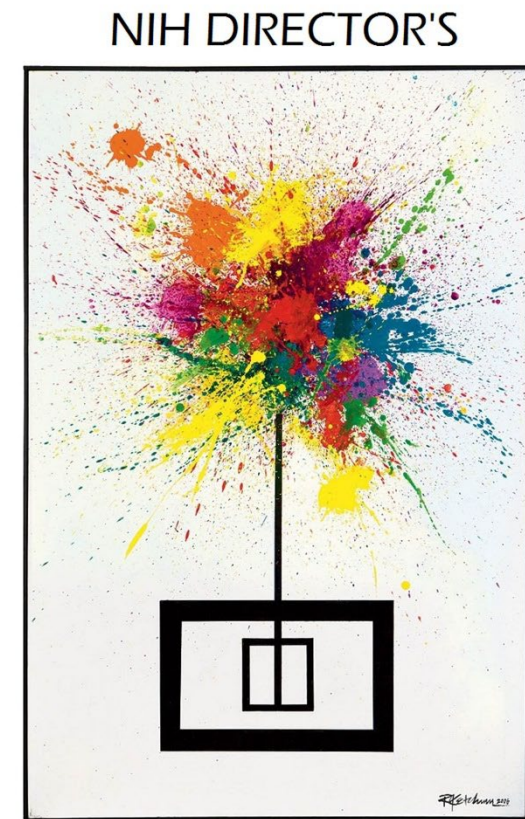
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## *Review*



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Thank you for attending.

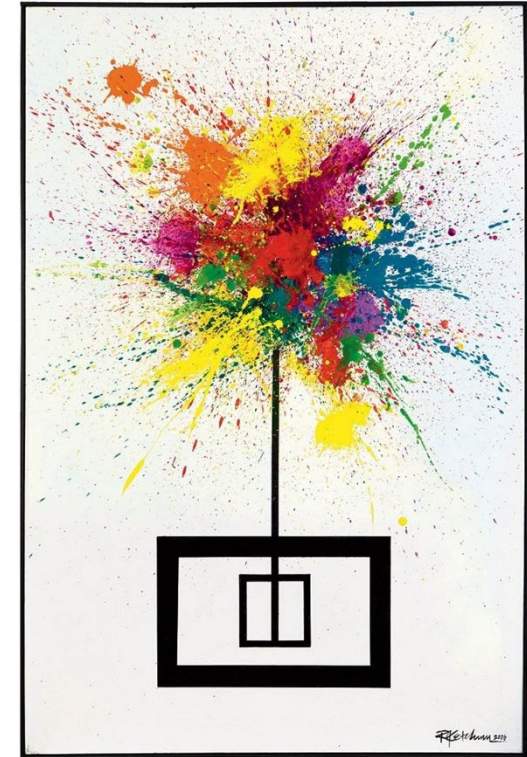
A recording of the webinar & slides will be posted on  
[commonfund.nih.gov/tra](https://commonfund.nih.gov/tra).

For additional questions, email us at  
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