

Warshaw Fellow Research Award and Buchter Resident Research Award

Application Scoring System and Procedure

The scoring system for the Warshaw Fellow Research Award and Buchter Resident Research Award is based on the [NIH grant application scoring system](#). This system was designed to encourage reliable scoring of applications. Individuals invited to review applications are required to recuse themselves if they have a conflict of interest in reviewing an application.

The system uses a 9-point scale (whole numbers only) for both overall impact scores and individual review criteria scores. Reviewers are encouraged to start with an average score of 5 and use the full range of the rating scale, increasing or decreasing scores based on the merit of the application. A score of 5 is a good, medium-impact application; 1 is exceptional and 9 is poor.

Strength of Application	Score	Descriptor
High	1	Exceptional
	2	Outstanding
	3	Excellent
Medium	4	Very Good
	5	Good
	6	Satisfactory
Low	7	Fair
	8	Marginal
	9	Poor

The only required score for a fellow or resident application review is the overall impact score. Overall impact, for a research project, is the project's likelihood to have an influence on the proposed field of research and, in the case of these awards, on the applicant's career. The overall impact score is an independent, standalone score determined by the reviewer's overall assessment of the application based on all strengths and weaknesses. The overall impact score is not the sum or average of any other scores. This system enables one major strength to outweigh many minor and correctable weaknesses.

Reviewers may choose to provide additional scores for individual review criteria. The individual criteria for the fellow and resident research awards, in order of importance, are:

- Investigator
 - Does the investigator's background suggest s/he will be able to successfully accomplish the stated aims?
 - Will accomplishing this research project enhance the applicant's career development?
- Approach
- Significance to Child Health
- Innovation

Optional scores for individual review criteria may inform the reviewer's overall impact score, but they are not summed, averaged or otherwise used to generate any type of overall score. Only the independent overall impact score is used to rank applications.

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Reviewers are asked to provide overall comments on the application and also are strongly encouraged to comment on the specific strengths and weaknesses of each individual review criterion. These detailed comments are particularly helpful for junior investigators and are highly valued by all applicants for helping them improve their approach to research.

The steps of the review process are:

- 1) The Vice Chair for Research and Associate Vice Chair for Research identify subject matter experts (SMEs) in the topic of each application and invite the SMEs to serve as reviewers. Each application is reviewed by at least two SMEs and one biostatistician.
- 2) Each reviewer independently reviews the applications assigned to her/him, assigns scores, and writes detailed comments that support the scores and serve as feedback to each applicant.
- 3) The Vice Chair for Research makes final funding decisions based on reviewers' final average overall impact scores and other input.
- 4) Each applicant, both funded and non-funded, receives de-identified copies of their reviewer comments to inform their future research endeavors.