

# **Research Innovation for Scientific Knowledge (RISK) Initiative**

**National Institute of Arthritis and  
Musculoskeletal and Skin  
Diseases**



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# Agenda

Introduction

Opening Remarks from Dr. Stephen Katz,  
NIAMS Director

Innovation

Mechanism, Review, Budget

Timeline

Open Question Period



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# NIAMS Team

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# **Opening Remarks**

**Dr. Stephen Katz**

**NIAMS Director**

# “Think Different”

What we are looking for:

- If the idea is suitable for a regular grant, it is not suitable for RISK.
- We will focus on the level of innovation.
- This FOA intends to support **disease-focused translational studies**.



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# RISK Initiative Itself is an Innovation

## *The Challenge*

How to select truly innovative and significant ideas for funding

## *Our Approach*

Focused peer review



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# Measures to Focus Peer Review

- Review ideas only, requiring applicant anonymity, a first at NIH (X02).
- Review innovation and significance with no overall score (X02).
- Review the idea (X02) and implementation (R61/R33) separately.
- Focus review on the *level* of innovation.



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# Overview of Mechanism

- The RISK is a **two-step** process, consisting of two activity codes.
- The first step is a pre-application using the **X02** activity code.
- The second step is funding using the **R61/R33** activity code.



# X02 Pre-application

- The X02 pre-application is strictly an idea presentation and evaluation step.
- Instructions are found in section IV.2. of the funding opportunity announcement (FOA).
- The pre-application will include, in 3 pages:
  - Project title
  - Research essay: Concept Summary, Innovation, and Significance
  - Literature references are NOT allowed.
- Anonymity: Applicants MUST conceal personal and institutional identities. Applications with obviously self-identifiable information will be withdrawn.



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# X02 Peer Review

- Only the 3-page pre-application essay will be given to reviewers.
- Anonymized applications will be reviewed by mail, with no discussion among the reviewers.
- Only Significance and Innovation will be reviewed. See section V.1. of the FOA for review criteria, paying attention to the criteria specific to this FOA.
- Applicants will receive a written critique with Significance and Innovation scores. No overall impact score will be given.



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# X02 Post Review

- Applicants with pre-applications rated most innovative and relevant to the RISK program will be notified of the opportunity to submit an R61/R33 application.
- There are no funds associated with the X02 pre-application.



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# R61/R33 Application

- The R61/R33 is the idea testing and exploration step.
- The R61/R33 is a single application with two phases. Instructions are found in section IV.2. of the FOA.
  - R61 phase:
    - Must propose critical experiments for unambiguously testing the innovative idea.
    - Must explicitly set milestones for gauging the success of the R61 phase.
  - R33 phase:
    - Award is contingent on the milestone results of the R61 phase.
    - The R33 is for further exploration if the innovation is promising.
    - It is expected that not all applicants will be awarded the R33 phase.



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# R61/R33 Peer Review

- The peer review meeting will be a traditional face-to-face meeting with reviewer discussion.
- In addition to the standard review criteria, please pay attention to the criteria specific to this FOA for Significance, Innovation, and Approach. This can be found in section V.1. of the FOA .
- Applicants will receive a written critique with scores for all 5 review criteria, as well as an overall impact score.



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# Grant Specifics

- **Eligibility**
  - Foreign Institutions are not eligible.
  - Multi-PI applications are allowed.
- **Scope**
  - RISK intends to support disease-focused translational studies, up to, but not including, first in human studies. RISK R61/R33 is not intended to support clinical trails.
- **Award Funding**
  - R61: Up to \$250,000/year for two years
  - R33: Up to \$250,000/year for one year



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# Early Stage Investigators

- Early stage investigators (ESIs) are eligible to apply.
- No special consideration given to ESIs during review.
- Receiving the R61 award does NOT negate ESI status.
- Progressing to the R33 phase DOES negate ESI status.



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# Separate FOAs for Musculoskeletal Diseases and Skin and Rheumatic Diseases

## **Skin and Rheumatic Diseases:**

- PAR-18-899 (X02) Pre-application
- RFA-AR-19-012 (R61/R33)

## **Musculoskeletal Diseases:**

- PAR-18-900 (X02) Pre-application
- RFA-AR-19-013 (R61/R33)



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# Key Dates and Timeline

**X02:** PAR-18-899 and PAR-18-900

**R61/R33:** RFA-AR-19-012 and RFA-AR-19-013

Round 1				
Activity code	LOI due	Application due	Review	Earliest start
X02	September 4th, 2018	October 4th, 2018	January 2019	N/A
R61/R33	N/A	April 9th, 2019	July 2019	September 1st, 2019

Round 2				
Activity code	LOI due	Application due	Review	Earliest start
X02	June 3rd, 2019	July 3rd, 2019	October 2019	N/A
R61/R33	N/A	January 9th, 2020	April 2020	July 1st, 2020



# Letter of Intent

1. Letter of Intent is not required but will help NIAMS staff to organize review of the X02 applications.
2. Letter of Intent is very easy to do:
  - Descriptive title of the proposal
  - Name, address and telephone number of the applicant
  - Names of the key personnel
  - Participating institution(s)
  - Number and title of this funding opportunity.

# Questions?

- You can virtually raise your hand *via* the  icon in the webinar.
- You can ask questions via the “chat” function in the webinar.



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# Thank you!



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