

Attachment 5: Introductory & Follow-up Instructions

1. Introductory letter to respondents

Dear Dr. <LastName>,

The Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI), a federally funded research and development center based in Washington DC, has been directed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to evaluate the process by which recipients of the NIH Director's New Innovator Awards (NIA) were chosen. The primary objectives of the evaluation are to: assess the NIA award selection process; examine whether the program was implemented as planned; and determine if the process was conducted in accordance with the overall mission of the NIA program. Various data sources will be used in the assessment; however, some of the most valuable information will come from those who went through the process. This survey of applicants will be used to highlight aspects of the award process that may need to be revised or improved for future rounds of awards.

Please note that your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary. You are under no obligation to respond to the survey. Your decision to participate will have no effect on your current or future NIH funding status, and other risks for participation or non-participation are minimal. If you do not wish to participate, simply do not complete the survey. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also withdraw your consent at any time prior to the completion of the evaluation by contacting <NIA Evaluation team 202-419-3720>.

If you choose to participate, your responses to the survey will be kept strictly confidential. Your responses will be submitted to STPI, where the information will be kept secure. Information reported to NIH will be limited to aggregate results and overall impressions, and every attempt will be made to mask the identity of individual respondents. The NIH or any other outside parties will not have access to raw survey data or to the identity of individual respondents at any time.

For additional information about the study or the survey, feel free to contact STPI Project Director <NIA Evaluation team enter here>. If you have any questions that you would like to address to the NIH Office of the Director, please contact G. Stephane Philogene, Ph.D., the OD Program Officer responsible for this evaluation (e-mail: PhilogeS@OD.NIH.GOV).

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: NIH Project Clearance Officer, 6705 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7974, Bethesda, MD 20892-7974, ATTN: PRA 0925-0534. Do not return the completed form to this address.

Click here to begin...<URL LINK TO SURVEY HERE>

Thank you

Interview Scheduling Email to Extramural Reviewers

Dear Dr. XX,

We are writing to inquire if you might be willing to participate in an assessment of the FY 200X NIH Director's New Innovator Award (NIA) program, sponsored by the Office of the Director (OD) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI), a federally funded research and development center based in Washington, DC, has been requested by the NIH to evaluate the process by which recipients of the NIH Director's New Innovator Awards (NIA) were chosen in the first five years of program implementation. The primary objectives of the evaluation are to: (1) assess the NIA award selection process; (2) examine whether the program was implemented as planned; and (3) determine if the process was conducted in accordance with the overall mission of the NIA program.

We are employing various data collection techniques to answer these questions; however, we believe that some of the most valuable information will come from those who were involved directly in the review process. To systematically collect data on the NIA program from reviewers, STPI is conducting a series of discussions with participants.

Please let us know if you are willing to participate in a phone conversation about your NIA experience with a member of the STPI evaluation team. The phone conversation will take about 30 minutes, on average. If you are available, please indicate a few times when you might be available in the upcoming weeks so we can follow-up with scheduling – we hope to finish all discussions by XX.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary. Be assured that there will be no penalties if you decide not to respond, either to the information collection as a whole or to any particular question. The information you provide will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed in identifiable form to anyone but the researchers and contractors conducting this study.

We understand that your time is valuable and we would very much appreciate your help with the evaluation. Your extensive knowledge of and experience with the NIA program will enrich our assessment. Feel free to contact any of us below if you have further questions. We thank you in advance for your time and input.

Sincerely,

2. Thank you note to respondents

Dear Dr. X,

We would like to take this final opportunity to thank you for completing our NIH Director's New Innovator Awards (NIA) evaluation survey. We are delighted to report that we closed the survey with very good return rates!

Your responses will enable us to fulfill our mission to help inform and improve the process by which NIA awardees are chosen. We remind you that your answers will remain confidential and are only shared in aggregate with NIH.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

STPI Evaluation Team

Dear Dr. X,

Thank you very much for participating in our interview for the New Innovator Award process evaluation. The information you provided will prove to be very valuable.

I enjoyed listening to your comments and recommendations. Again, the data collected is confidential and only shared in aggregate.

If you have questions or additional comments, please feel free to email me anytime.

Sincerely,

STPI NIH NIA Process Evaluation Team

3. Reminder email

Dear Dr. XX,

About two weeks ago we sent you an email requesting your participation in the process evaluation of the FY 200X NIH Director's New Innovator Award (NIA) program. Since we have not yet received a response from you, we would like to remind you that the survey must be completed by XX. If possible, we would still very much like to hear about your NIA experience and get your suggestions about the program's future.

We understand that you are very busy and greatly appreciate your time and participation in this important evaluation.

Thank you and best regards,

The STPI Evaluation Team

Please note: If you believe you are getting this message in error because you have already responded, we apologize for the inconvenience. We have collected your response.

<click here to begin>

Thank you

4. Encouragement to complete the survey

Date

Dear Dr. _____,

Our records indicate that you have begun to fill out the web survey for the NIA program evaluation. We thank you very much for your willingness to help with the evaluation process. We would like to remind you to complete the survey by **XX**. If you are having difficulty accessing the survey or any of the questions are unclear, please let us know and we can easily mail you the questionnaire or clarify the questions. You can contact us by telephone (Marybeth Hughes at 202-419-5487 or Stephanie Shipp at 202-419-5498) or email mhughes@ida.org or sshipp@ida.org.

We understand that you are very busy and greatly appreciate your taking the time to participate. We look forward to receiving your answers by **XX**.

Sincerely yours,