

## **Attachment 4: Respondent Instructions**

Prior to supplying respondent instructions, an email signed by the NIH officer and the evaluation team will be sent to all respondents. This letter will introduce the evaluation and will request that participants complete the surveys (the letter is included in Appendix 4). A few days after the introductory letter, the Science and Technology Policy Institute will provide instructions for completing the web-based survey (see 1 below). The introductory text for the Extramural Reviewer Interview Guide is also below (see 2 below). The letter sent with a hard copy of the General Survey for Applicants is in section 3 below.

### **1. Survey web site access**

#### **General Survey for Applicants (including Awardees)**

Welcome to the NIA Candidate Survey. There are nine sections in the survey. Please provide responses to the following questions to the best of your ability. You may choose not to answer specific questions and it will not affect your ability to submit the survey.

After choosing a response, please click "next" to view the next set of questions. If you would like to go back and change a response, you can use the "back" button on the survey or the pulldown menu at the bottom of the page. Please do not use your browser's navigation buttons.

If you would like to save and come back to the survey, click the "save" button at the bottom of any page. The survey and interviews should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Please consult the NIA website to review the Request for Applications (RFA), criteria, or processes: <http://nihroadmap.nih.gov/newinnovator/>

Please note that participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no effect on your current or future NIH funding status.

Your responses will be kept strictly confidential: If you choose to participate, respondent confidentiality will be protected to the extent provided by law, and STPI will report only aggregate information concerning overall impressions of the process to the NIH.

Additionally, you may click on underlined words in the survey, which are hyperlinked to the appropriate document.

### **2. Extramural Reviewers Informal Discussion Guide**

#### **STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT**

The Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI), a federally funded research and development center based in Washington, DC, has been requested 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:

- (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 evaluation process. These informal interviews are one mechanism that will provide important information concerning the overall NIA process, and will hopefully highlight aspects of the award process that may need to be revised or improved for future rounds of awards. We anticipate conducting approximately 92 such interviews.

Please note that:

- **Your responses will be kept strictly confidential:** If you choose to participate, respondent confidentiality will be protected to the extent provided by law, and STPI will report only aggregate information concerning overall impressions of the process to the NIH.
- **Your participation is entirely voluntary:** You are under no obligation to interview with us, but we strongly encourage you to do so. A successful evaluation of the NIA awards process depends on a high response rate to gather as much information and as many perspectives as possible. There are no consequences or risks for participating. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue the interview at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.
- **Whom to contact for additional information:** For additional information about the study you may contact Bhavya Lal, STPI project director (blal@ida.org). 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 Office of the Director's 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 interview. 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.

### 3. Requested mailed survey

To increase response rates, individuals who are unable to fill out the survey on the web will be supplied with a hard copy (or email copy):

Date

Dear Prof. \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the NIA survey sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. As you requested, we are sending the survey to you by mail. Please note that your answers will be kept confidential and you will not be quoted by name in the report of the evaluation findings.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the postage-paid envelope. If you prefer, you may return the completed survey by fax to 202-223-1695.

If you have any questions about the study, please call Marybeth Hughes at 202-419-5487 or Stephanie Shipp at 202-419-5498. In the meantime, thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Bhavya Lal  
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