Attachment 2: Sample Letters to Applicants

Sample Notification to Applicant: Accepted

Dear Dr. X ,

I am pleased to inform you that you have been accepted for participation in the Early Career Reviewer (ECR) program at the Center for Scientific Review (CSR), National Institutes of Health. Your name, contact information, and areas of expertise will be added to our ECR database along with your eRA Commons ID.

How SROs Select ECRs

As scientific reviewer officers (SRO) assemble study sections, they search the ECR database for reviewers with expertise in areas relevant to the applications under review. They also verify the recent scholarly activity of reviewers by checking for recent publications and grant submissions through NIH and institutional websites. Your inclusion in a review panel will be up to the judgment of the SRO. Therefore, it is important that you continue to strengthen your program of research and publish your work.

Timing – What to Expect

CSR holds three review rounds per year, with reviews occurring primarily in January/February, June/July, and September/October. Recruitment for study sections usually occurs two to three months prior to each review meeting.

Please note that enrollment in the program does not guarantee that you will be recruited to a panel. The demand for the program is higher than what CSR can meet. SROs recruit two ECRs to participate in each standing study section they conduct. Depending on a match of your expertise to the needs of individual study sections, you may be invited to review very soon or it may take some time for your expertise to be needed. We welcome and encourage you to directly contact the SROs for panels that fit your expertise and express your interest in serving. We want to hear from you!

Participation in the ECR program is not a requirement to be invited to serve on a panel as a temporary or standing member. As you strengthen your program of research and build your publication and grant history, you may be invited to serve on a study section, outside of the confines of the ECR program. CSR is diversifying its panels in terms of professional rank and there is no requirement that temporary or standing members be of a particular rank.

Updating your profile

Please take the time to complete or update your eRA Commons profile (see https://era.nih.gov/register-accounts/manage-personal-profile.htm and https://era.nih.gov/erahelp/commons/default.htm#cshid=1027).

Thank you again for your interest in the ECR program. We look forward to having you join the review process.

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Sample Notification to Applicant: Not Accepted

1. Not accepted due to: **R01 or equivalent awarded**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. This program was developed to help emerging researchers advance their careers by exposing them to a peer review experience that may make them more competitive as applicants. Given your success in R01/R01-equivalent funding, you have achieved this aim and are no longer qualified for the ECR Program. If you are interested in serving as a temporary reviewer, we recommend that you forward your CV and expertise terms to the SROs that manage the study sections you selected.

2. Not accepted due to: **Has previously been a reviewer at NIH**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. This program was developed to introduce less experienced investigators to the grant application review process and provide them with an opportunity to participate. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the ECR program because you have previously reviewed grant applications for the NIH. We appreciate your prior service and look forward to your continued involvement.

3. Not accepted due to: **Does not currently hold a faculty position or equivalent**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer Program. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the program at this time. Eligibility requirements include having a faculty appointment or equivalent and an active independent research program, as evidenced by publication. Because you indicated that you are not currently in a full-time faculty position or its equivalent, you do not qualify for the ECR program at this time. We encourage you to reapply when your employment status changes.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

4. Not accepted due to: **Is currently a post-doctoral fellow**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the program at this time. Eligibility requirements include having a faculty appointment or equivalent and an active independent research program, as evidenced by publication. Because your biographical information indicated that you are currently a post-doctoral fellow, you do not qualify for the ECR program. Once you have completed your training and have transitioned to a faculty position or the equivalent, we encourage you to reapply.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

5. Not accepted due to: **No doctoral degree**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Your application has been vetted by the ECR Vetting at the Center for Scientific Review. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the ECR program at this time. Eligibility requirements include having an active independent research program, as evidenced by publication. The information you provided shows that you have not yet completed a doctoral degree. We encourage you to reapply once you have completed your doctorate.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

6. Not accepted due to: **Has not had a faculty position for at least one year**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Your application has been vetted by the ECR Vetting Committee at the Center for Scientific Review. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the program at this time. Requirements for admission to the program include having a faculty appointment or the equivalent for at least one year. After you have had more time in your position, we encourage you to reapply.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

7. Not accepted due to: **Has not yet established an independent program of research**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Your application has been vetted by the ECR Vetting Committee at the Center for Scientific Review. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the program at this time. Requirements for participation include having an active, independent research program, as evidenced by peer-reviewed publications. Your biographical information shows that you are early in your professional career and not yet at the stage where you could benefit most from the ECR program. After you have had more time to establish your independent program of research and strengthen your publication record, we encourage you to reapply.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

8. Not accepted due to: **Insufficient number of senior-authored publications**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Your application has been vetted by the ECR Vetting Committee at the Center for Scientific Review. Unfortunately, we are unable

to include you in the ECR program at this time. Eligibility requirements for participation include having at least one senior-authored research publication in the last two years, in addition to at least one senior-authored publication since finishing your doctoral degree. The information you provided indicates that you do not meet this requirement. Please note that we only evaluate publications listed in your CV that have been published or accepted for publication. We encourage you to reapply when you meet this requirement.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

9. Not accepted due to: **The candidate is too senior**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. This program was developed to introduce less experienced investigators to the NIH grant review process. Given your many accomplishments to date, we are unable to include you in the ECR database. If you are interested in serving as a temporary reviewer, we recommend that you forward your CV and expertise terms to the scientific review officers that manage the study sections you selected.

10. Not accepted due to: **Has not submitted a grant application and received the summary**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Your application has been vetted by the ECR Vetting Committee at the Center for Scientific Review. Unfortunately, we are unable to include you in the ECR program at this time. Requirements for inclusion in the program include having submitted a grant application to the NIH and received the associated summary statement. We encourage you to reapply to the program if and when this changes.

We wish you well with your career and look forward to hearing about your progress.

11. Not accepted due to: **Other**

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program. Your application has been vetted by the ECR Vetting Committee at the Center for Scientific Review using the specific criteria described on our website. Unfortunately, based on their evaluations we are unable to include you in the program at this time. If you have any questions, please contact us at CSREarlyCareerReviewer@mail.nih.gov.