

Grant Writing 101

Lisa Schwiebert, PhD

UAB Graduate School

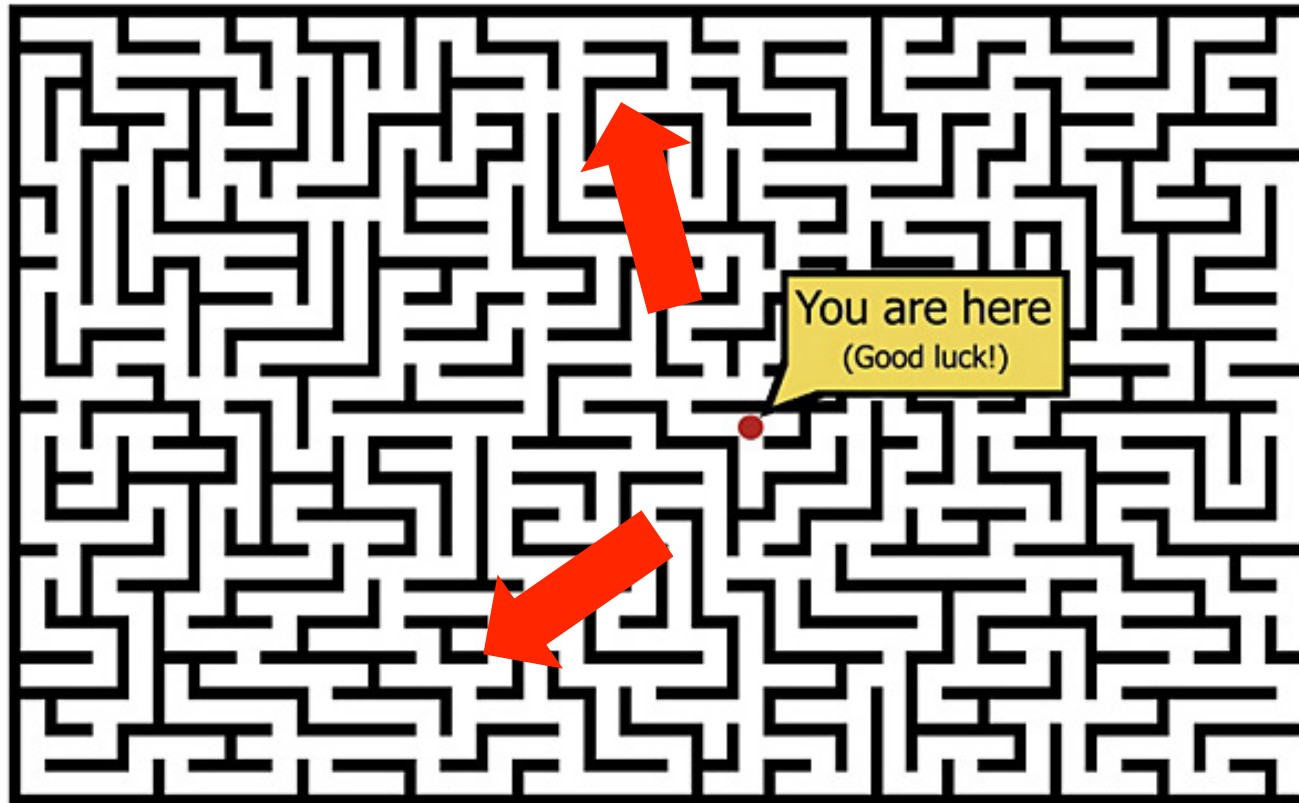
*“Inspiring minds today to transform
tomorrow”*

Objectives

- Find the 'right' grant mechanism
- Navigate grant submission
- Understand how grants are reviewed

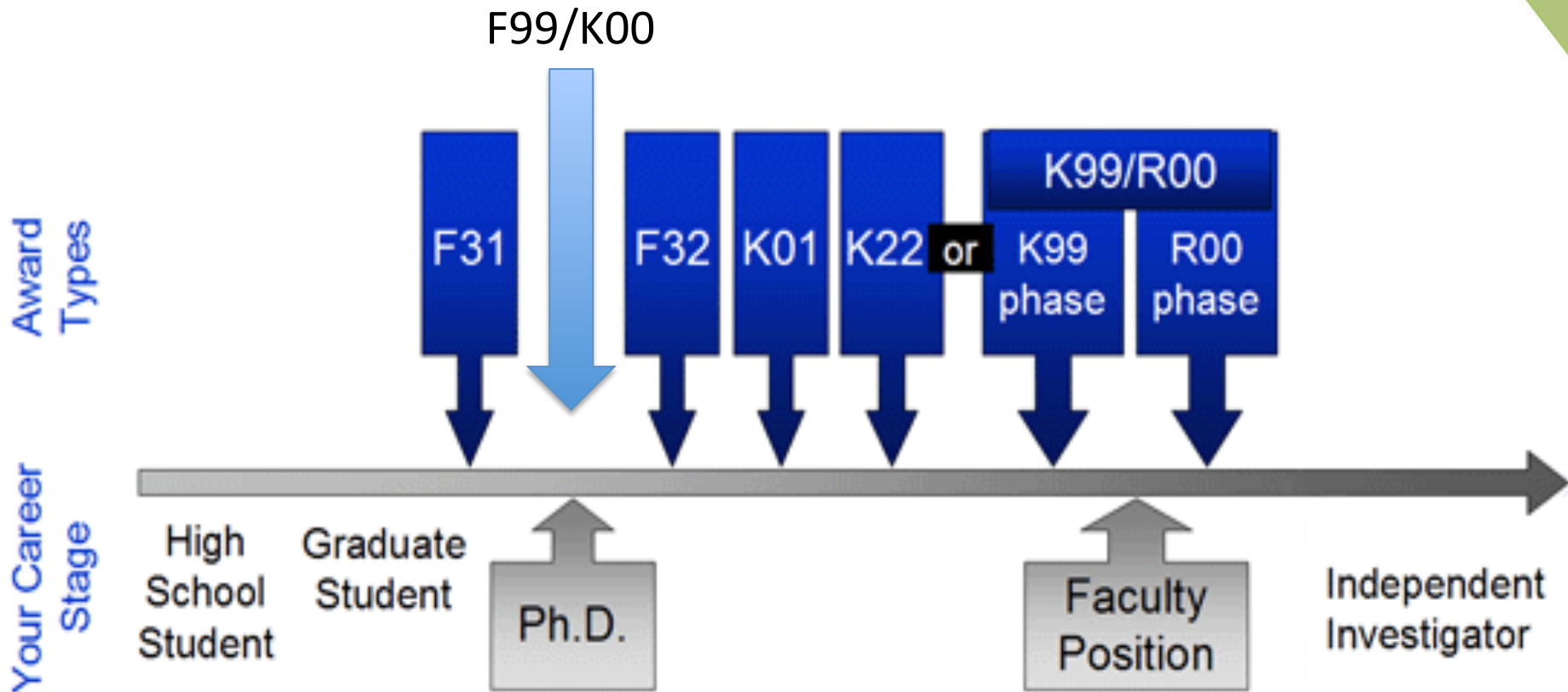
Where do you start?

Federal Grants (NIH, NSF, DoD, etc)



Non-Federal (Private Foundations)

NIH Career Award Wizard



NIH NRSA F Awards

- **Duration:**
 - F30 – up to 5 years aggregate
 - F31 – up to 5 years aggregate
 - F32 – up to 3 years aggregate
- **Eligibility:** US citizen / Permanent Resident
- **Due Dates:** April, August, and December
- **Overall Success Rate:** 23% (FY2016)

F99 / K00 Individual Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Fellow Transition Award

- The purpose of this award is to facilitate the transition of talented graduate students into successful research postdocs.
- Provides up to 6 years of support in two phases:
 - The initial (F99) phase will provide support for 1-2 years of dissertation research (final experiments, dissertation preparation, and selection of a postdoctoral mentor).
 - The transition (K00) phase will provide up to 4 years of mentored postdoctoral research career development support, contingent upon successful completion of the dissertation degree requirements and securing a postdoctoral position for further research training and career development leading to research independence.
- The two award phases are intended to be continuous in time.

National Science Foundation Portal

- Special Programs
 - Trainee status
 - Business
 - Veterans
- Program Areas
 - Topic
 - Discipline



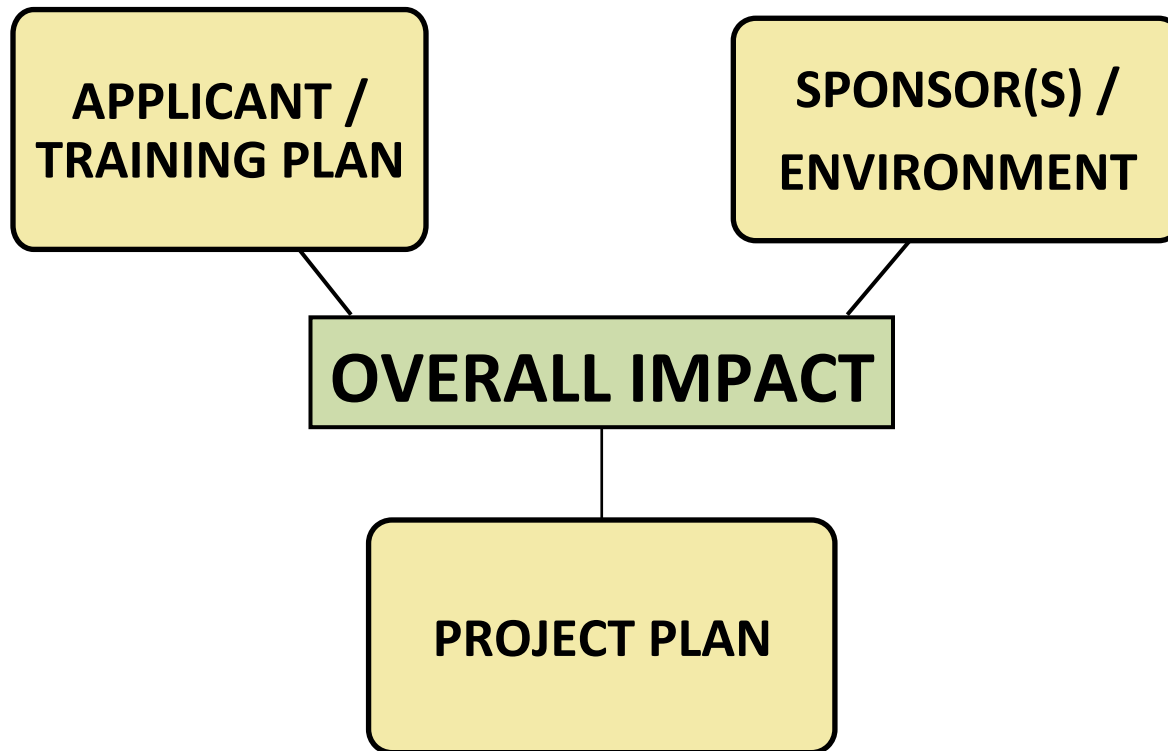
National Science Foundation
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN

Finding Grant Mechanisms using UAB's Integrated Research Administration Portal (IRAP)



Powered by Software from InfoEd Global, Inc.

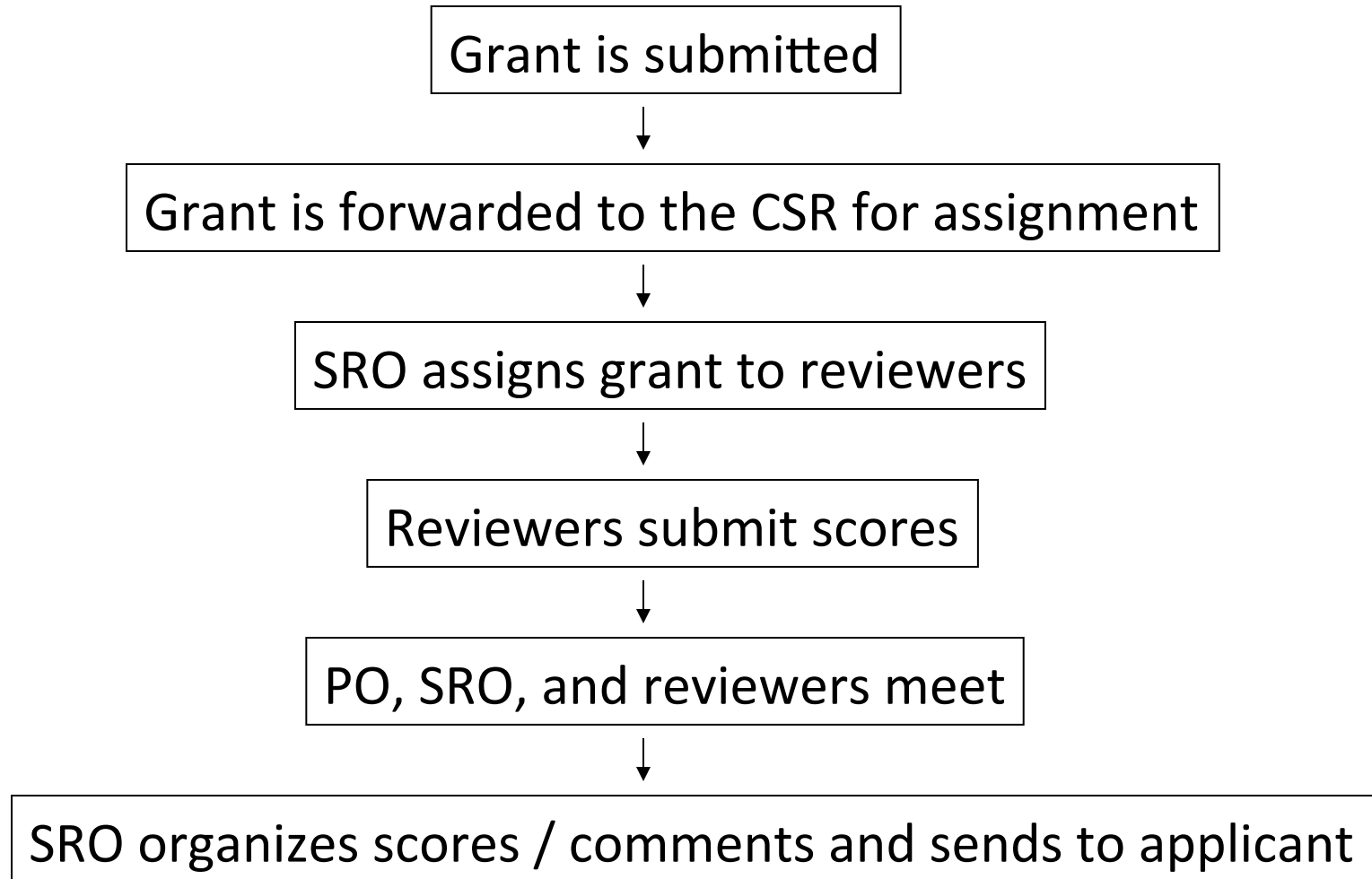
Scoring Grant Sections



Grant Submission

- [UAB Office of Sponsored Programs](#)
 - Draft Review – 7 business day deadline
 - Final Review – 2 business day deadline
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) Commons:
https://era.nih.gov/commons/faq_commons.cfm
- NSF Fast-Lane:
<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/fastlane.jsp>

Overview of the grant review process



How are grants assigned to a study section?

- The applicant can request assignment to a particular institute and study section in a cover letter.
- If a letter is not provided, the CSR will assign the application based on title and abstract content.

<http://public.csr.nih.gov/StudySections/Pages/default.aspx>

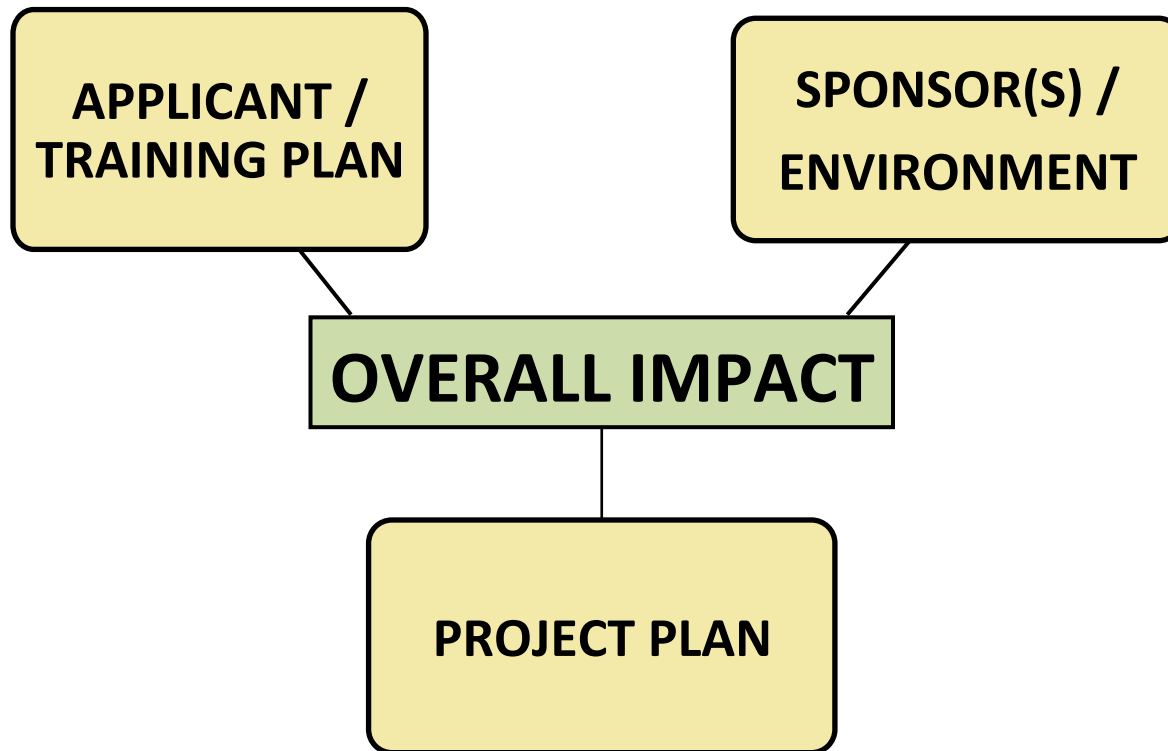
What is an SRO (Scientific Review Officer)?

- Administrator of the study section
- Checks each grant for completeness
- Assigns reviewers
- Communicates with applicant and reviewers regarding:
 - assignment
 - supplemental information

How are reviewers assigned?

- SRO assigns reviewers based upon the grant content and matched expertise of the reviewers
- Permanent study section reviewers
 - Established investigators
 - Serve 4 year terms, reviewing grants each cycle
- ‘Ad-hoc’ reviewers
 - Provide needed expertise, which is lacking in permanent members
 - Serve only for designated cycle

Scoring Grant Sections



NIH Scoring System

Impact	Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses
High	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Medium	4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
Low	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses
<p>Non-numeric score options: NR = Not Recommended for Further Consideration, DF = Deferred, AB = Abstention, CF = Conflict, NP = Not Present, ND = Not Discussed</p>			
<p>Minor Weakness: An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact</p>			
<p>Moderate Weakness: A weakness that lessens impact</p>			
<p>Major Weakness: A weakness that severely limits impact</p>			

Overall Impact

- Reviewers will provide an **overall impact/priority score** to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved from the five core review criteria.

What happens during study section meeting?

- Before the meeting, reviewers submit preliminary scores; these are compiled by the SRO.
- In general, grants with 'non-competitive scores' are not discussed during the meeting.
- Grants with competitive, fundable scores are presented by the reviewers and discussed by the entire panel during the meeting.
 - each study section member scores all applications that are discussed

NIH Review Panel Video

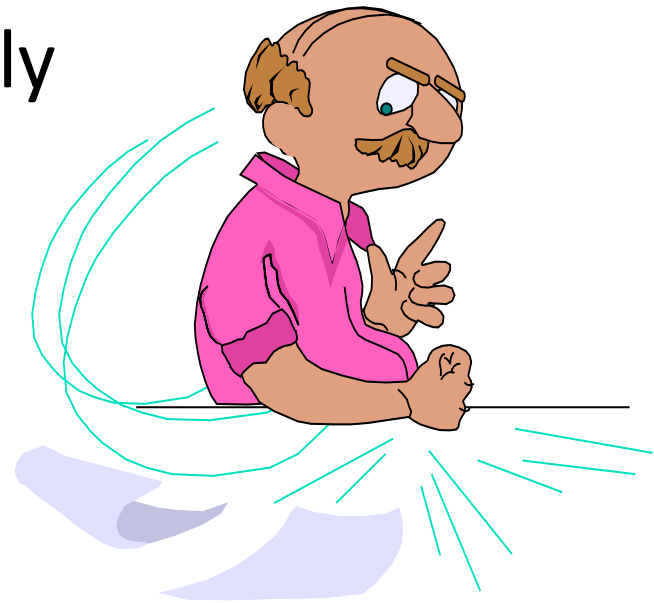


If you have questions / concerns about the reviewers' comments...

- Read the comments several times
 - Ask others to read them as well
- **DO NOT CALL THE SRO OR ANY MEMBER OF THE STUDY SECTION!!!**
- Call the Program Official...

Handling Rejection

- Don't respond in anger
- Address all points
- Reread document critically
- Seek advice



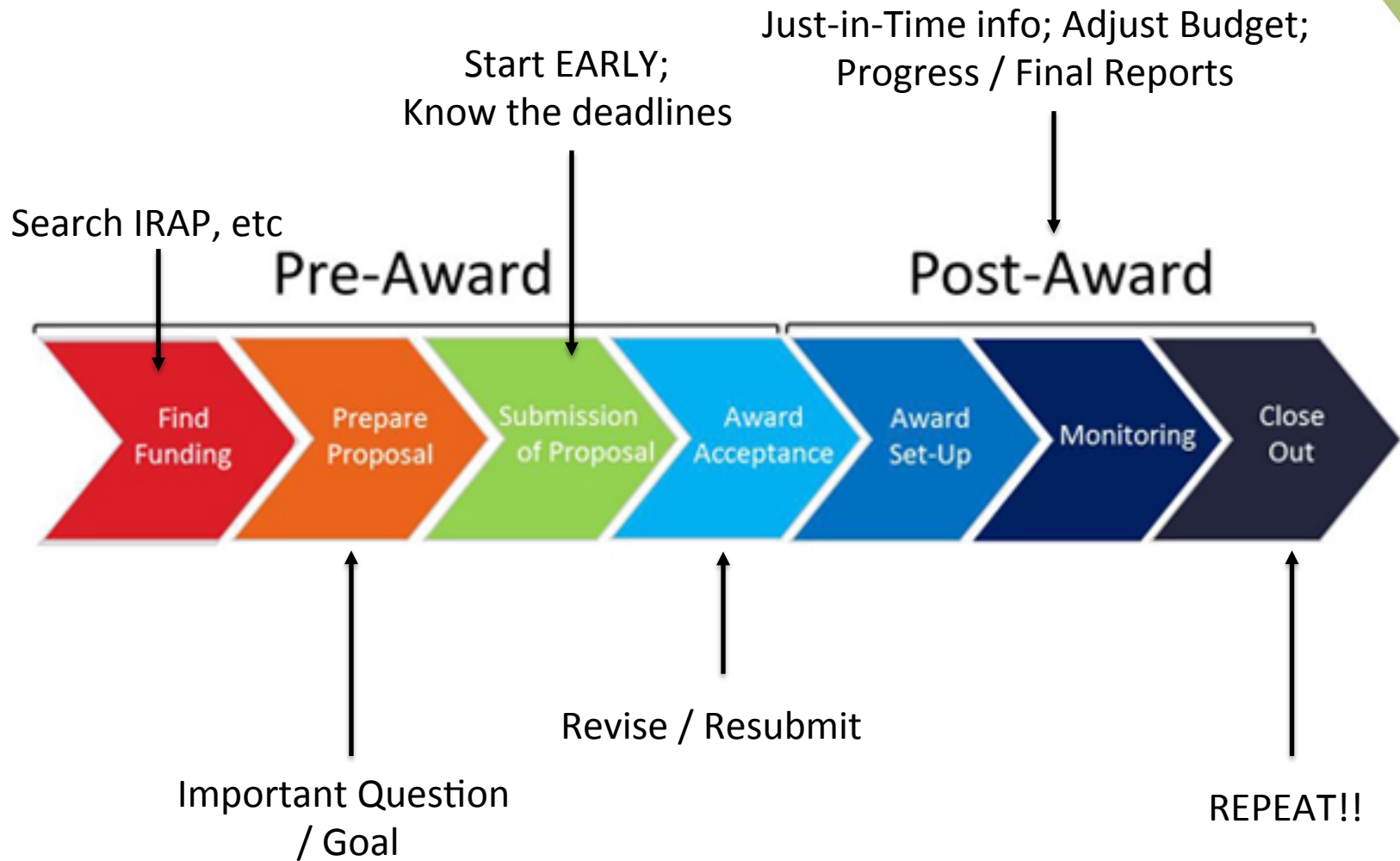
Current NIH policy on resubmissions

- As of April 2014:
 - Following an unsuccessful resubmission (A1) application, applicants may submit the same idea as a new (A0) application for the next appropriate due date.
 - NIH will not accept a resubmission (A1) application that is submitted later than 37 months after submission of the new (A0) application that it follows

NSF Resubmission Policy

- Proposals that have been declined are not eligible for resubmission for one year from the original date of submission and must be substantially revised to be considered.
- Resubmittals that have not clearly taken into account the major comments or concerns may be returned without further review.

Summary



UAB Resources

- UAB Graduate School Professional Development Program
<http://main.uab.edu/Sites/gradschool/programs/professional>
 - Writing Fellowships (GRD 709)
 - Guide to Effective Grant Writing (2012)
- UAB CCTS Research Commons:
<https://www.uab.edu/ccts/researchcommons>
- UAB Grad School: <http://www.uab.edu/traininggrants/>
- UAB Faculty Reviewers on CSR Study Section Rosters
http://www.csr.nih.gov/Roster_proto/searchby.asp
(but NOT if they are on a study section where you intend to submit an application)

NIH and Other Resources...

- NIH Extramural Training Mechanisms
<http://grants.nih.gov/training/extramural.htm>
- NIH RePORTER: searchable database of funded NIH grants
<http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>
- *Science's* ScienceCareers.org –
<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/where-search-funding>