Grant Reviewing for The Partnership for Native American Cancer Prevention
Key Components of a Grant Proposal

- Investigator’s Biosketch
- Project Description (abstract)
- Relevance
  - Progress report (continuing projects)
- Research Plan
  - Specific Aims
  - Significance
  - Innovation
  - Approach (Experimental design)
Relevance

- Significance relative to NACP goals
  - Relevance to Native American health concerns
  - Disparity in cancer burden among Native Americans
  - Does the application address one of the concerns outlined in the RFA?

- Training opportunities
  - Does project provide a learning environment

- Building research capacity at NAU

- Progress (for continuing projects)
  - Evaluated relative to expectations
Research Strategy

- Includes 3 subsections:
  - Significance
    - Does the project address an important problem. If the aims are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved?
  - Innovation
    - Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms? Are the concepts, approaches, methodologies or interventions novel? Is a refinement, improvement or application of new theoretical concept proposed?
Research Strategy (cont.)

- **Approach**
  - Is the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
  - Are potential problems identified and alternative strategies proposed?
  - What is the likelihood that this project will be competitive for independent funding if completed?
  - If the project involves clinical research
    - Are there plans for protection of human subjects?
    - Are minorities and both sexes included in the studies?
## Scoring Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
<td>Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Very strong with only some minor weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Strong but with at least one moderate weakness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Some strengths but with at least one major weakness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Marginal</td>
<td>A few strengths and a few major weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-numeric score options:** NR = Not Recommended for Further Consideration, DF = Deferred, AB = Abstention, CF = Conflict, NP = Not Present, ND = Not Discussed

**Minor Weakness:** An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact

**Moderate Weakness:** A weakness that lessens impact

**Major Weakness:** A weakness that severely limits impact
Scoring Individual Review Criteria

- There are 5 “core” criteria for most types of grant applications
- For example, the core criteria for R01s are:
  - Significance
  - Investigator(s)
  - Innovation
  - Approach
  - Relevance
- Use the 9-point scale (1 = exceptional, 9 = poor) for the five “core” review criteria.
- Consider criterion strengths and weaknesses of the application in determining an overall impact/priority score.
Significance:
1. Does the project address an important problem or critical barrier to progress in the field?
2. If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved?
3. How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field?  
(Assumes that all the proposed experiments are feasible)

Overall Impact:
Reviewers will provide an overall impact score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved.
(Overall assessment of significance and relevance combined with feasibility)
Preparation of Critiques

When writing your critiques:

- Use bulleted points to make succinct, focused comments
- Short narratives may occasionally be appropriate, but should be rare
- Focus on major strengths and weaknesses (ones that impacted your overall rating of the application)