

Key messages

Explaining changes to the Notice of Decision (NOD) and Notice of Recommendation (NOR) templates

What is changing?

- CIHR has updated the Notice of Decision (NOD) and Notice of Recommendation (NOR) templates that applicants receive to learn whether they received funding through the Project Grant competition.
- The new NOD and NOR templates will be used beginning with the Fall 2024 Project Grant competition. For this competition, NORs will be released on January 15, 2025, and NODs on January 29, 2025.
- Outside of the visual format, little is changing. However, with this new template, applicants will learn the zone in which their application ranks (e.g., in the bottom 25%, between 25% and 50%, between 50% and 75%, between 75% and 90%, or 90% and above), rather than their specific ranking.

Why did CIHR make this change?

- We made this change to the NOR and NOD templates, in large part, to protect the privacy and confidentiality of CIHR applicants. This is especially important now that CIHR's equalization measures—that is, measures to ensure that grants funded are proportional to applications received from groups known to experience barriers within the health research system—have expanded to include applications from investigators who self-identify as racialized or as a person with a disability.

What should applicants do in light of this change?

- We know that applicants are keenly interested in receiving feedback on their applications. That is why CIHR provides applicants with various sources of information about their applications, including reviewer notes, Scientific Officer notes (if the application was discussed during the committee meeting – that is, if the application was not streamlined), their percent rank zone, and a final rating. Taken together, these are important sources of information for applicants about the relative strengths of their applications and can help them determine whether they'd like to reapply to the next cycle of the Project Grant competition.
- All applicants who were unsuccessful in the Project Grant competition may resubmit their application to a subsequent Project Grant competition.
- If an applicant is wondering if they should resubmit their application, we encourage them to consider the many data points received (reviewer notes, Scientific Officer notes if applicable, percent rank zone, and final rating). Reviews and Scientific Officer notes should

inform improvements to the application and the response to reviewers that can be included with the resubmission.

- While applicants will no longer receive a specific rank, they can consider the percent rank zone in which their application falls when deciding whether to resubmit. Applications ranked in the 75-90% zone have been determined by peer reviewers to be scientifically meritorious and just missed receiving funding. Differences in rank in this zone are not meaningful and we encourage applicants who fall in this zone to reapply to the next cycle of the Project Grant competition.
- Percent rank zone should not be the only deciding factor for applicants considering resubmission. Currently, approximately 50% of the applications received to a given Project Grant competition are resubmissions from across all ranking zones.
- CIHR acknowledges that, with this change, the number of applicants at the NOR stage who cannot determine if they are receiving funding has gotten slightly larger. These applicants are encouraged to register for the next cycle of the Project Grant competition as they await final results.