

# NHMRC Grant Review Process

Ron Plotnikoff

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> of January, 2014

# ***GRP & The Process***

- Allocated to specific GRP on basis of key words & title – important to land your grant in the right GRP panel.
- Grant gets **three** assessments
  - Two expert assessors, *plus* SP1 report (with input from SP2)
  - SPs & assessors **NOT** chosen by GRP chair



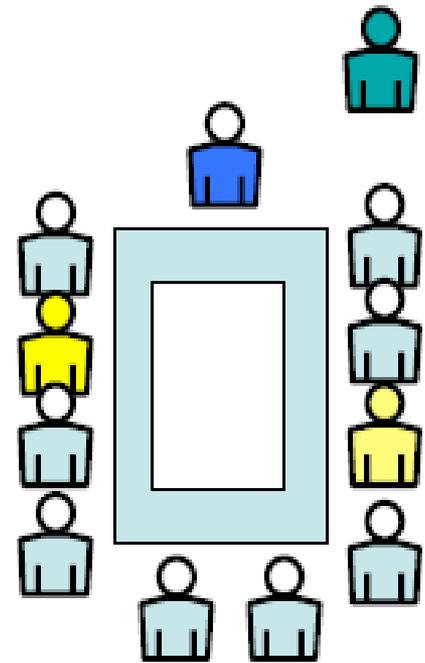
# ***2013 GRP Protocol***

Prior to panel meeting:

1. Grant assigned to SP1 and SP2 (note: expertise of SP's to your grant can be variable)
2. SP1 writes his/her report with input/comments from SP2. Both SP1 and SP2 submit their independent scores
3. SP1 and SP2 are provided with the two external reports and the rebuttal. They are then able to adjust their scores if they desire
4. The SP1 and SP2 scores will determine if the grant is triaged or not (External Reviewers' scores are not factored into this)

# GRP & The Process

- GRP has 10 - 12 members + chair
- GRP has >100 grants (4 - 5 days)
- NO official corporate memory on panel - assessed by what's in grant as presented at GRP
- SP1 - has 8 grants and 3 - 5 min to present & “promote” or “sink” your grant
- SP2 - has 8 grants - presents rebuttals
- SP1 & SP2 declare their scores & views
- Some discussion; 20 minutes per grant
- Voting (all members) - science (50%), significance (25%), track record (25%) - Range 1 - 7
- Grant gets a score - budget discussed if score >4; must get > 5 for funding



# *Grant Review Process*

Stated principles of Peer Review include:

- 1. Fairness**
- 2. Transparency**
- 3. Confidentiality**
- 4. Impartiality**
- 5. Quality and excellence**

My thoughts/experience:

- 1. A 'very rigorous' process**
- 2. High integrity panel members**

# *What makes an NHMRC grant stand out to the Grant Review Panel?*

1. Topic is exciting / novel / important
  - The Enthusiasm Factor
2. Justifiable literature review of key & current studies -- ideally including references of the CIs' own work
3. Clearly/intelligently presented
  - 'Art and science' of the presentation: Enough detail for the experts but written generally enough for the non-experts
  - Background section: write to the non-expert academic; Methods section: more emphasis on this section and with enough detail for the experts
  - Use headings and summary sections; avoid density
  - Obtain professional services for final presentation/formatting; perfectly polished (NO minor errors);

# *What makes an NHMRC grant stand out to the Grant Review Panel?*

## 4. Methods

- Clarity and validity of measures
- Clarity of analyses
- Sample size calculations
- Primary time points / primary outcomes – and linked to the above
- FEASIBILITY

## 5. The research team

- Strong track record by CI's
- Caution: too many junior investigators can dilute the score for the team track record

## 6. Knowledge translation

- ## 7. Other:
- Good rebuttal- address all other points if possible (Remember one the three reviewers will be the SP<sub>1</sub>)



*Thank you....*

*..... and GOOD LUCK!*