

Guidelines for Think Tanks and Mock Reviews
The Office of Research and Scholarship
Rush University College of Nursing

Think Tanks: Think tanks can be held as a strategic planning sessions at any stage of research development. They can be held to brainstorm about the directions of a proposal or how to respond to an RFP. They can be held in stages so that more than one think tank is held, leading to a proposal. It is recommended that think tanks be held after drafting the introduction and specific aims prior to mock reviews. Think tanks also can be held to review summary sheets, review data and develop plans for publications and presentations. Each session two to three faculty members, generally who are active researchers, will act as a creative team to brainstorm directions or review background and aims or discuss dissemination.

- Think tanks are scheduled once a month on Wednesday from 10 to 12:00 am in room 1060B. However, additional times will be added if the demand is high. Contact the Office of Research and Scholarship to schedule a think tank (2-8754).
- You are encouraged to use a tape recorder or have an additional note taker available.
- As PI, you are encouraged to invite key co-investigators.
- Schedule the think tank at least 4-6 months prior to submission if the study is in the formative stage.
- Schedule a think tank 2 - 3 months prior to submission if the introduction and aims are drafted.
- A draft of the introduction and aims should be sent to Darlene Chatmon-Dudley at darlene_dudley-chatmon@rush.edu for distribution to the reviewers 2-5 days prior to the Think Tank.
- Typically they take 1 hour.
- Doctoral students and faculty are invited unless the investigator requests a closed session.

Mock Reviews: Mock reviews are designed to put a grant proposal through a process that represents the actual review process at a funding agency, most particularly the NIH. The purpose is to identify areas for strengthening the aims, background, and methods, and packaging the proposal to be successful/competitive at the outside review. The author(s) should not think of it as a defense of a proposal but rather an intellectual interchange to strengthen it scientifically. Two to three faculty members, who have experience participating on NIH review panels, become the reviewers for the grant proposal. Typically, these review sessions take two hours. Space is made available for doctoral students to observe the process and learn from scientific critique.

- Think tanks are scheduled once a month on Wednesday from 10 to 12:00 am in room 1060B. However, additional times will be added if the demand is high. Contact the Office of Research and Scholarship to schedule a mock review (2-8754).
- As PI, you are encouraged to invite key co-investigators.
- You are encouraged to use a tape recorder or have an additional note taker available.
- Schedule the mock review at least 4 to 6 weeks prior to submission.
- A completed or near completed draft should be emailed to Darlene 3-5 working days prior to the meeting for distribution to the reviewers.
- Doctoral students and faculty are invited unless the investigator requests a closed session.