

Transcript – Virtual Meetings for Reviewers in IAR

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This tutorial will walk reviewers through the process of participating in a virtual scientific review meeting in IAR.

With virtual meetings, reviewers can skip traveling to a face-to-face meeting; instead, the discussion and other actions all take place online.

The initial steps during the Submit and Read phases remain the same, with one small addition. During the Submit phase, when reviewers are ready to submit critiques for their assigned applications, a new 'Initial Comments' box on the *Submit Critiques and Scores* screen will let reviewers add a few comments about the applications to set the stage for the actual discussion.

In addition to the Submit and Read phases, Virtual Meeting has two new phases that follow – the Introduction phase and the Discussion phase. A sub phase, called Cluster Discussion phase, may also be added by the scientific review officer to group certain kinds of applications (such as R01s, small business, new investigator, etc.) for discussion.

The central hub during a virtual meeting is the new *Virtual Meeting List of My Assigned Applications* screen.

During the Introduction phase, reviewers can go to this screen, where they will have the opportunity to 'rescue' any applications that the SRO has marked not for discussion. These applications will be listed with a 'Y' in the ND Candidate (Lower Half) column on the screen. Reviewers will click on the blue 'Rescue' button in the Discussion column if they want to bring a lower half application back to the list of applications that will be discussed. A warning will pop up. They will then click OK to have the application included as one that can be discussed.

It should be noted that in some scenarios, the Introduction phase will not be used. The decision to skip the introduction phase will be made by the SRO of the IC responsible for reviewing the applications.

During the Discussion phase, reviewers can participate in individual discussion threads on each application on the *Virtual Meeting List of My Assigned Applications* screen, by clicking on the Go to Discussion button in the Discussion column. This will take reviewers to the *Virtual Meeting Discussion Board*. Each application will have a unique screen displaying select topics, added by the SRO, and corresponding discussion threads where reviewers will interact with one another and the SRO as needed.

The Discussion Board has the following information:

- The meeting identifier
- Announcements from the scientific review officer
- Meeting information
- A cluster name, if applicable
- Application Navigation, allowing reviewers to jump to another application from a drop-down menu or click the next button to move on to the next application.

Reviewers will begin their participation in the Topics, Counts and Documents section and viewing the discussion or associated documents. The unread /total column shows how many discussion items have not been read out of all items. Clicking on the Go to Discussion button will take them to the *Virtual Meeting Discussion Comments* section.

Reviewers will enter comments there on the individual application discussion thread. Note that the megaphone icon represents comments by the SRO, while the 'person' icon represents a reviewer.

The SRO will provide comments only when needed on the *Discussion Board* screen. Note that the reviewer can view the comments on the application in chronological order or conversational order. In the latter order, the replies are nested within the original comment.

On the Virtual Meeting Discussion Board screen, reviewers will enter 'Discussion scores'. While these scores indicate their initial enthusiasm for the application, they are used to set the range for final voting. So it is important reviewers enter these scores. Discussion scores range from 1 to 9, with 1 being the best. Reviewers will click on the Enter Discussion Score button to enter the score; they can update their scores as many times as they wish during the Discussion phase. The general scoring process for virtual meetings remains the same as it is for face-to-face meetings.

The SRO can place the meeting on hold. When this happens, reviewers will be able to see existing comments. Reviewers can continue to post new comments and reply to existing posts. When the meeting is resumed, the reviewers' new comments and replies will be available to the other reviewers, and the unread count information will update to show the new comments.

Following the discussion, reviewers enter their final scores for applications during the final scoring phase. The rest of the meeting follows the same pattern as a face-to-face meeting.

A variety of resources are available to you for Virtual Meetings. Help is only a click away... Clicking on any of the question marks on the VM screens will bring you to the Online Help for that topic with step by step instructions and screenshots.

If you still have questions concerning Virtual Meetings, contact the eRA Service Desk. This concludes this tutorial on Virtual Meetings in IAR for Reviewers. Thanks for watching.