VA OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Centralized Positions Overview
Submission to IRBNet
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- Purpose of Centralized Positions

- Overview of Changes

- Initiating and submitting Packet

- Documents required

- Timelines for Submission

- Resources

- IRBNet Demo

What are Centralized Positions?

- This process evaluates promotions for professional research scientists in non-supervisory Title 5 positions funded by ORD

- This process is not for Hybrid Title 38 employees even if performing research

- Can be:
  - Promotion for existing research position (to GS 14 or 15)
  - Or new position (i.e. New Merit awardee requesting GS 14 or 15)

- There is no time in grade requirement (i.e. it is possible to go from GS 13 to 15, if <u>candidate meets standards in RGEG</u>)

- Major duties must include scientific investigation (25% or more)

Centralized Positions at GS 14/15:

- Hybrid Title 38 (HT38), Administrative and/or supervisory positions are not eligible for this process.

- Must meet the standards in the OPM Research Grade Evaluation Guide

- Positions must have a minimum of a 5/8ths VA salaried appointment unless there is a waiver in place.

- Supervision cannot be part of the Major duties

Note for Hybrid Title 38 Positions

- Hybrid Title 38 (HT38) occupations appointments and promotions are managed by the VISN/Facility HR Staff

- However, promotions to GS 14/15 for HT38 positions funded by ORD still require CRADO/DEAN sign-off

- See the appropriate VACO funding service's Promotions POC for details and procedures

DISCOVERY ★ INNOVATION ★ ADVANCEMENT

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Research and Development

Overview of Changes:

- **Move to IRBNet for submissions on June 30, 2021 Packet changes:**
  - Cover sheet is now part of IRBNet Smart Form for Centralized Promotions
  - Research Impact Statement is now pasted into Smart Form
  - Current VA funding, non-VA funding and funding history are entered into Smart Form.
  - Budget pages and other funding documents are not required

Updates to attachments uploaded as supporting documents:
- **Letter from VA Medical Center – replaces MCD, R&D and ACOS letters**
The memorandum must be signed by the Medical Center Director, with co-signatures by the Associate Chief of Staff for Research and R&D committee Chair.

- **Three Letters of Support from colleagues**

Initiating Submission

- Please follow directions found at:
  https://www.research.va.gov/resources/centralized_positions.cfm

- **Go to: https://gov.irbnet.org**
- **<u>All nominations must be initiated and submitted by the local VA R&D Service and not by the nominee.</u>**
- In IRBNet, click on 'Create New Project.'
  Project Title format: Promotion_VA Service_NAME_VAMC_GSLevel
  (i.e. Promotion_RRD_Smith_San Francisco_GS14).

- In Designer, click on 'Start A Wizard' and select the smart form entitled: 'VA Promotions Cover Sheet'.

IRBNet Smart Form:

- **Choose the type of submission**
  - **Current employee or New appointment**
- **Follow Smart Form prompts to enter Nominee and position information**
  - **Click on next to advance to each new page.**

- **Research Impact Statement**
  - **Copy and paste into the Smart Form (2500 words maximum).**
- **Research Statement should include:**
  - nominee's research area
  - relevance to and impact on VA healthcare
  - Include specific research accomplishments that led to impacts on patient care or the VA system
  - description of the complexity of the research problems undertaken originality used in resolving research questions

- **Current Funding Information:**
  - **Select type of funding: 1) VA Funding, 2) Non-VA Funding, or 3) Both, then click on 'Next.'**

Using the Smart Form fields provide:

- **Current VA funding**

- **Current Non-VA Funding**

- **Funding history (last twelve years)**

Do not upload any NOAs or pages from the grants. Only the information requested on the smart form are required.

IRBNet Smart Form, Continued:

- Continue to Cover Page Complete section
- Review the list of additional documents needed

- Then click on "Save & Exit"

- This will take you back to the Designer page

- **Use Attach New Document' button on the Designer page to upload supporting documents**

Supporting Documents to Upload:

- **Upload each as a separate document**

- **Ensure you select document type**

- **Documents types will be: 'Letter', 'CV/Resume', 'HR Document', 'Publication Material' or 'Other'**

- **Use the Standard Descriptors for each document**
  - **See descriptors in parentheses in following slides**

1. "Medical Center Letter"

- Signed by the Medical Center Director, Associate Chief of Staff for Research R&D committee Chair
- For new employees should describe how they will contribute to VA

2. "Curriculum Vitae "

> **See instructions**

3. "RCS Mid Term Progress Report"

> **Only if Applicable**

4. "Letters of support"

- **3 Letters from colleagues as a single PDF**
- Majority should be from scientists outside of local VA/University

5. "Publications"

Any 2 of the following:

- Publications: Accepted, in press publications can be included.
- Patents directly relevant to the project.
- Chapters from review or textbooks.

6. "OF-8"

- Please upload OF-8 as a separate, <u>editable</u> form
- Common issues:
  - Include VISN CCU PD number in box 1
  - Should be marked as new in box 2
  - Box 10: These positions must be <u>excepted service</u>
  - Item 15d: needs to be completed and initialed by the VISN CCU HR classifier.
  - Item 15e: needs to indicate title of position, series and proposed grade
  - Block 20 must be signed by the Supervisor (i.e. ACOS/R) not the AO.
  - **Box 21 not signed by VISN CCU –** is left BLANK for the VHACO HR Classifier's signature.
  - Make sure VISN CCU completes box 24

7. "Position Description (PD)"

- Upload in **MS Word format**

- Must be a 4 factor Research format PD for Title 5 positions

- Must not be supervisory

- Do not use the 9 factor FES PD template

8. "**Local Panel Evaluation**"

- Upload as Single PDF to IRBNet

- 3 Position Classification Worksheets (VA Form 4670) –

- Each member completes and **signs** VA Form 4670

- Include VISN CCU HR classification Specialist as a technical advisor during local panel meeting

Note on Local Panel

- Local SMEs should not have real or perceived conflicts with the nominee (e.g., subordinates, collaborators, family members or close personal relations, anyone who would gain financially from the nominee's promotion).

- VA personnel from other VA medical facilities may serve on the local panel when there is an insufficient pool of scientists at the requesting VA medical facility.

- Panel members must be at a level equivalent to or higher than GS level sought by nominee

Note: local panel

Total Point Value must be consistent with the requested grade level
 (e.g. GS-14 = 36-44; GS-15 = 46-50), and must meet the factor level fully to be credited at the level (i.e. D or E)

POINTS BY FACTOR AND LEVEL

Level	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
A	2	2	2	4
B	4	4	4	8
C	6	6	6	12
D	8	8	8	16
E	10	10	10	20

Grade Level – To determine the grade level of a position, add the point values for all assigned factor levels. Use the Grade Conversion Table below to convert the total points to a grade.

GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Point Values	Grade
8 – 14	GS-11
16 – 24	GS-12
26 – 34	GS-13
36 – 44	GS-14
46 – 50	GS-15

9. "Position evaluation statement"

- Local classifier completes and signs Research Position Evaluation Report (ORD Form 2020-1)

- NOTE: If the ORD Form 2020-1 is not signed by the VISN Classifier the promotions package will be returned without action.

10. "Org Chart"

- SIGNED "Official" current organizational chart

- (Appropriate signatures will vary with local policy).

- Must indicate where the new GS 14 or GS 15 position fits in the local VA Research Program's organization.

- **Before Submission, an R&D office Representative must electronically sign the package**
  - See left menu bar for the 'Sign this Package' option,
  - Select 'Department Representative' for the signing role from the drop down.
  - Use your IRBNet Username and Password to sign.

- **Once the Smart Form is complete, supporting documents are uploaded, and the package is signed:**
  - Choose 'Submit this Package' from the left Menu bar in the Project Administration menu
  - Select Board: VA Centralized Positions, Washington, DC
  - Follow the submission prompts
  - Submission type should be 'New Promotion/Nomination' or 'Other'

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW FOR HSR&D

- Submit promotion packets by IRBNet

- a. Deadline for receipt of nominations is March 1 and September 1.
- b. Committee review of nominations will be in July and January.

- **SUBMISSION AND REVIEW FOR BLR&D, CSR&D:**

Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis to IRBNet

- Committee review of complete nominations will be on a bi-monthly basis (i.e. first week of February, April, June, August, October and December)

- Complete and correct nominations must be received at least 30 days before the next scheduled meeting to be included in that meeting.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW FOR RR&D:

Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis via IRBNet

For RR&D, promotion panel review of complete nominations will be done on an *ad hoc* basis upon receipt.

Instructions:

- For contacts and instructions on how to prepare and submit nomination packets:
  https://www.research.va.gov/resources/centralized_positions.cfm
- This webpage also has:
  - Forms
  - FAQs
  - Webinar Recordings and handouts

Guidance

- VHA Program Guide 1200.03 for Centralized Positions: https://www.research.va.gov/resources/policies/ProgramGuide-1200-03.pdf

- OPM Research Grade Evaluation Guide (RGEG): https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/classifying-general-schedule-positions/functional-guides/gsresch.pdf

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Research and Development

Contacts for questions:

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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
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IRBNet Demo

To learn more about VA research:
www.research.va.gov

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