



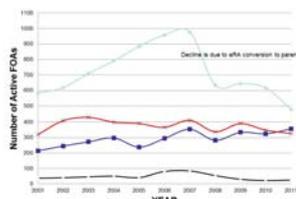
A Natural History of FOAs, 2001 – 2011

Rebekah S. Rasooly, PhD, Jill Mattia, PhD, Merrill Mitler, PhD
Office of Extramural Programs, OER

SUMMARY

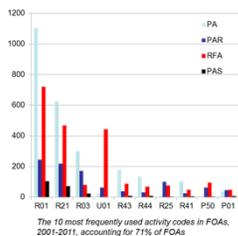
In order to understand how FOAs are used by the ICs and the research community, OEP undertook an analysis of applications and awards made in response to FOAs over an 11 year period, using a dataset provided by DSAR. This study looked at FOAs for all grant and agreement mechanisms, excluding the parent FOAs. We performed in depth analysis of FOAs soliciting R01s and R21s, and detailed subanalyses were carried out using FOAs soliciting R01s in a single year, FY2007. For these subanalyses, each R01 FOA was studied to identify whether or not it had predecessor or continuation FOAs, and the number of applications/awards for the entire initiative, including all of the versions of the FOA, was evaluated. The data captured many interesting properties about the use of FOAs, including the fact that the number of FOAs has declined markedly since 2007 and that FOAs are used for the R01 and R21 three times more frequently than any other activity code. No type of FOA (RFA, PA, PAR or PAS) had a consistently higher success (percentage of reviewed applications receiving funding) rate than the overall NIH FOA success rate, although PASs had a significantly lower success rate. Most notably, the study found that more than half of all FOAs soliciting R01s and R21s received fewer than 20 applications and made 5 or fewer awards over the multi-year lifetime of the FOA. Nevertheless, most R01 FOAs were reissued multiple times and were active for an average of 8 years, without notable changes in the average number of applications or awards per year over that time. While FOAs are a major activity of NIH's extramural business, it is evident that many end up supporting only a few funded projects, raising questions about how to evaluate the success of an individual FOA.

Descriptive Statistics: How many FOAs are active each year?



Data for 2011 are incomplete as they were reported for FY11

Descriptive Statistics: What activity codes are used?



R01 and R21 are the most popular activity codes for FOAs

The 10 most frequently used activity codes in FOAs, 2001-2011, accounting for 71% of FOAs

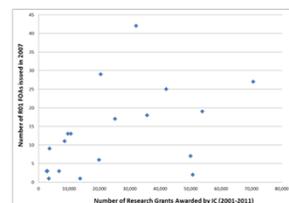
2007 Cohort of R01 FOAs: Longevity of initiative by FOA type

FOA type	# of FOAs	# of Applications	# of Awards	Avg. Length	Avg. Awards/yr.
PA	212	18,833	3345	8.3	1.9
PAR	40	6568	1211	8.9	4.0
PAS	12	699	151	5.8	2.2
Total	264	26,100	4707	8.1	2.3

R01 FOAs tend to continue over many years

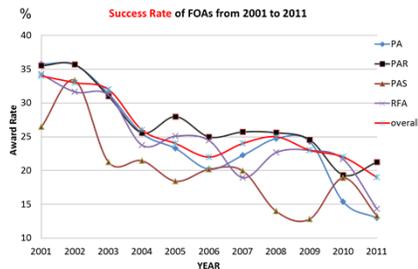
Starting with R01 FOAs issued in 2007, and excluding RFAs, we identified predecessor and successor FOAs and grouped them into a single 'initiative' and calculated its length.

2007 Cohort of R01 FOAs: Relationship between IC size and number of R01 FOAs issued



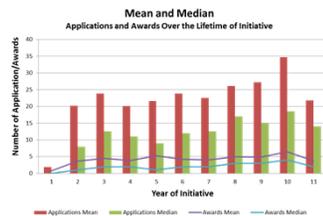
X-Y scatter plot and Linear Regression (p>.05) indicate that IC size, as measured by number of grants awarded, does not associate with the number of R01 initiatives issued by the IC in 2007.

What is the success rate for FOAs?



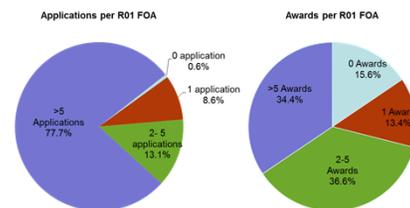
PARs tend to have a slightly higher success rate
PASs have a consistently lower success rate

2007 Cohort of R01 FOAs: Response over Lifetime of Initiative



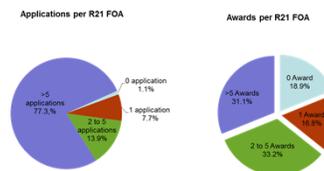
There is no indication that initiatives grow stale or gain popularity over their lifetime

In-depth look at R01 FOAs: applications and awards per FOA*



*over the lifetime of the FOA

In-depth look at R21 FOAs: applications and awards per FOA*



*over the lifetime of the FOA

