Centralized Positions Overview
Submission to IRBNet
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Overview

• 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 candidate meets standards in RGE)
• Major duties must include scientific investigation (25% or more)
Other Considerations

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
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
- All nominations must be initiated and submitted by the local VA R&D Service and not by the nominee.
- 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’.

VA
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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
IRBNet Smart Form, continued:

• **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, **editable** 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 **excepted service**
  - 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.
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Values</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 – 14</td>
<td>GS-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – 24</td>
<td>GS-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 34</td>
<td>GS-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 44</td>
<td>GS-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 50</td>
<td>GS-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.
Submitting Packet

• 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.
Timelines (continued)

• **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

Contacts for questions:

HSR&D:
Robert Small; E-mail: robert.small@va.gov

BLR&D/CSR&D:
Carol Fowler, Ph.D.; E-mail: carol.fowler@va.gov

RR&D:
Ricardo Gonzalez; E-mail: ricardo.gonzalez@va.gov
IRBNet Demo

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