Composing the NIH Cover Letter

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The most important function of the cover letter is to make sure your (brilliant and carefully designed) work is reviewed (and appreciated) by the right group of scientists.

Here are some tips:

- Address letter to the Center of Scientific Review (CSR) Division of Receipt and Referral (DRR)
- Make sure you identify your name, University of Michigan, project title, and funding mechanism (PA or RFA)
- In one line request specific study section, e.g. – Molecular Oncogenesis Study Section (MONC)

See CSR Study Section Roster
• In one line list the Institute(s) or Center you want to consider proposal, e.g. – National Cancer Institute (NCI)

You can check the NIH RePORTER to find similar projects along with which Institutes funded them, and which study sections reviewed them [here](#).

• Provide explanations for each special request in a separate paragraph, e.g.,
  - Identify Conflicts on the Roster, e.g., former student, co-author, direct competitor
  - List name and reason for conflict

• Other issues (one paragraph each), e.g.,
  - State if you have attached any required agency approval documentation, e.g., those required for budgets of >$500,000
  - Special sub-awards
  - If your proposal is past the due date, explain why, e.g., your service on a study section.

If you have questions, please review the guidelines in Section 5.2 of this [online document](#).