An Evaluation of Emory University School of Medicine & Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's **K-Club Program** 2017

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Executive Summary

The K-Club program, an early career development resource, was conceived in 2009 with the objective of providing an educational support forum to assist fellows and faculty with successful career development award applications. The K-Club meets monthly during the academic year and covers topics related to the conception, development, submission, and post-award process of career development awards. After several years of successful operations, K-Club leadership recognized a need to extend the scope of the program to further support the needs of attendees. This evaluation aimed to understand the needs of those who seek grant funding, and elicit ideas for program development and expansion.

In spring 2017, three focus groups were conducted with participants stratified by career stage: Group A) Early career- currently seeking first award, Group B) Early career- with some funding (as defined by having obtained 1-3 extramural awards and actively seeking additional funding in transitioning to independence), and Group C) Senior mentors, faculty mentoring those seeking awards. Evaluators from the Georgia Clinical & Translational Science Alliance (Georgia CTSA) led focus group sessions, each consisting of 8-10 past K-Club attendees. Sessions were audio and video recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

Two coders conducted a thematic analysis of the transcripts utilizing MAXQDA software. Results were analyzed by identifying common themes heard in the three transcripts. Seven broad themes, most with more specific subthemes, were identified and incorporated into a codebook which guided the ensuing analyses. Attendees' comments were coded independently by each coder into themes and subthemes. Aggregated findings were evaluated to form the following recommendations:

Table 1. Summary Findings & Recommendations

Evaluation Finding	**Recommended Action Points**
Participants are especially interested in engaging with K-Club session material through smaller groups and individualized feedback	• Create small break-out groups where a mix of junior and senior participants provide feedback for one another • Facilitate simulated grant review workshops • Contract a qualified grant writing professional to extend 1:1 feedback to more individuals
Mentors acknowledged a need and interest in more structured training on effective mentoring. Mentees also believe that mentors need more formal training	• Develop a mentor toolkit to include career development resources for mentors to relay, and person-management tips and tricks • Offer training workshops designed for mentors
Mentees want more resources and support to position themselves for research funding success	• Develop a systematic navigation tool that provides a roadmap guiding early career research investigators through career development enhancing awareness of the resources and support relevant and available at each stage of research funds-seeking process.
K-Club participants are interested in more formal grant writing education	• Develop or provide referral to a formal grant writing curriculum
Re-branding is required to clarify the program's mission and target audience	• Adjust program name to reflect refinements to the target audience and program objectives

Opportunities exist for enhanced use of technology	• Utilize more user-friendly webinar tools to allow for easier access and the ability to better interact including allowing Q&A during K-Club sessions in real time.
Attendees endorsed a multi-pronged approach to ongoing program evaluation	• Continue collecting both quantitative and qualitative evaluation data including paper surveys during sessions for a quick evaluation, and email surveys for more in-depth feedback.

Background

Emory University's School of Medicine and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta offer an abundance of resources to help internal faculty, fellows and postdocs secure grant funding. The K-Club program, one of Emory's grant writing resources, was conceived in the fall of 2009 by Dr. Paul Spearman and was executed via the efforts of faculty members Drs. Andi Shane, Miriam Vos and Stacy Heilman. The program is supported by the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance (Georgia CTSA), Emory's Department of Pediatrics, Emory's Department of Medicine and the Center for AIDS Research.

The objective of the program is to provide an educational forum to assist fellows and faculty with successful career development award applications. The club meets every month of the academic year and covers topics related to the conception, development, submission, and post-award process related to career development awards. The sessions usually consist of an introductory presentation, followed by a panel or group discussion with input and participation by attendees. Recordings are available for remote and future viewing on the program website. The program has had strong attendance, averaging 72 attendees per session in the 2016/2017 year, and has been exceptionally well-received by participants, with 99% of post-session survey respondents stating that the session was 'Good' or 'Excellent', and 86% stating that it was 'Very-' or 'Extremely likely' that they would recommend the session others.

The purpose of this evaluation was to evaluate the best practices of the K-Club structure and brand, and to elicit targeted feedback about the future expansion of the club. The results of this evaluation will inform our understanding of how to improve and expand the K-Club to better meet the needs of early career research investigators.

Evaluation objectives are as follows:

- Understand the needs of junior research investigators seeking career development awards
- Gather programmatic expansion ideas from program stakeholders at the early career- award seeking, early career-funded, and mentor levels
- Create strategic recommendations based on focus group results to inform K-Club program development

Evaluation questions include:

- In what ways can the K-Club improve and expand to increase the career success of Emory University's postdocs, junior faculty and fellows?
- How can the K-Club structure be adjusted to better meet the needs of early career investigators?

Data for this explorative and formative evaluation were collected via a series of focus groups conducted in March and April of 2017. The goal of the focus groups was to understand the needs of faculty, fellows and postdocs who are seeking grant funding and to gather ideas related to the future program expansion and development. The first group consisted of early career faculty seeking their first extramural award. The second group also consisted of early career faculty that *have* received some extramural funding and are actively seeking additional funding in transitioning to independence. The third group consisted of senior-level faculty that have been well-funded over several years and serve as mentors for junior-level faculty.

Logic Model

The following logic model (Figure 1) depicts the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes involved in evaluating the K-Club. Stakeholders include the Program Directors, Emory Departments of Pediatrics, School of Medicine, and Rollins School of Public Health leadership, Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance leadership, and K-Club participants. Materials included pre-focus group surveys, incentives for participation, and facilities for conducting, recording and transcribing the focus groups. The outputs that resulted from this evaluation included three sets of data collection tools, focus groups, data, and a report representing evaluation results/findings, conclusions and recommendations. It is hoped that evaluation outcomes will lead to increased career development resources and ultimately funding for early career investigators seeking to establish careers as independent health related researchers.

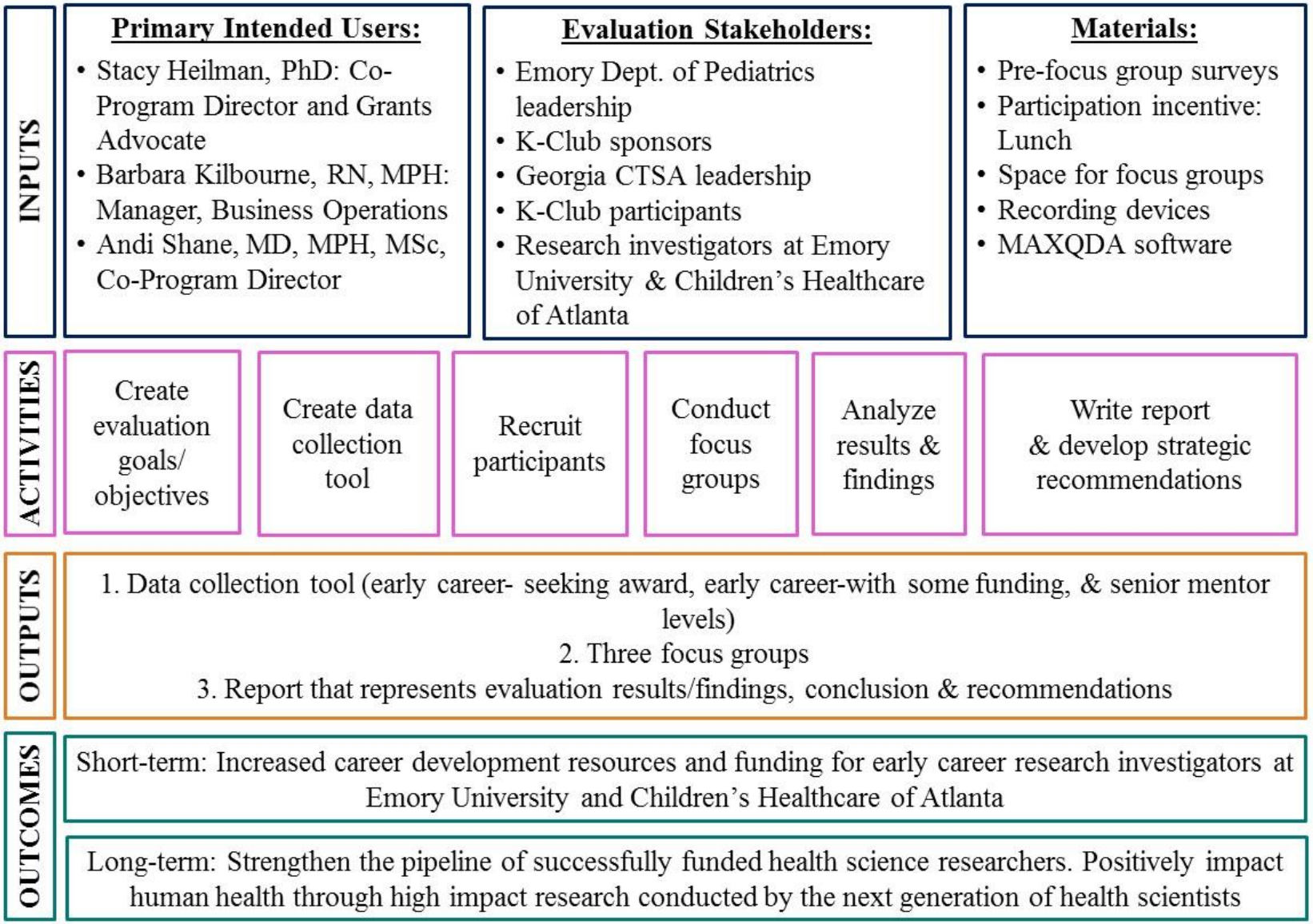

Figure 1. Evaluation Logic Model

Approach

This formative evaluation was conducted in the spring of 2017 at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Egleston Hospital in Atlanta, GA. The evaluation stakeholders included staff and faculty at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Emory Department of Pediatrics, K-Club participants, and Georgia CTSA leadership.

In March and April 2017, Nicole Llewellyn, PhD, and Jamie Adachi, MPH, from the Georgia CTSA evaluation team, led a series of three 2-hour focus groups with participants stratified by stage of career:

- Group A) Early career- seeking first award, 8 participants
- Group B) Early career- with some funding, 9 participants
- Group C) Senior Mentors, successfully funded senior faculty mentoring those seeking awards, 9 participants

In the winter of 2017, current K-Club program participants were recruited via email requests and announcements during K-Club sessions. Volunteers were placed into one of the three focus groups depending on their career stage. To fill gaps in focus groups, former K-Club attendees were directly emailed and further leads were generated through department heads and other Emory leadership. After choosing times and dates that worked for most candidate attendees, final dates and logistical information were provided via email. Participants were asked to complete a brief demographic and background information survey prior to their focus group, 22 participants completed this survey (see Table 2) and 4 participants did not. Results of this survey indicated a reasonable distribution of participants across different demographic indices, and across different research areas and experiences. Most participants across all groups are affiliated with Emory School of Medicine (72%). There was not a notable difference in affiliations among the three focus groups. There was not a notable difference in research classifications among the three focus groups. The largest number of participants self-identified as basic science researchers. Senior mentors in Group C were asked to indicate their mentoring experience, which showed that they had mentored, on average, 6 pre-doctoral mentees, 11 post-doctoral mentees, and 8 junior faculty mentees each.

Data collection instruments were developed in collaboration with Dr. Stacy Heilman, K-Club Program Director and Grants Advocate, Barbara Kilbourne, Manager of Business Operations, Jamie Adachi, Georgia CTSA's Tracking & Evaluation Research Associate, and Dr. Nicole Llewellyn, Manager of Research Projects for Georgia CTSA's Tracking & Evaluation Program. Guides and protocols were carefully tailored to the specific composition of each group (See Appendix A). Actual focus group conversations deviated somewhat from these pre-formulated guides, based upon the questions and comments that arose during each focus group.

Focus groups were audio and video recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim (see Appendix B). Two Georgia CTSA team members, Jamie Adachi and Hannah Eisen, conducted a thematic analysis of the interview transcripts using MAXQDA 12 Standard software. They reviewed the transcripts, field notes, and interview guide to develop a code book. It included deductive themes derived from the interview and inductive themes that emerged from the transcripts, for a total of seven codes, most with sub-codes. The two coders coded each of the transcripts independently and then compared their analyses, discussing discrepancies and reconciling differences until reaching agreement. Frequency analysis of the coded themes was conducted, by group type and by theme, to determine the relative prevalence of each theme in the focus groups discussions. Although prevalence in the discussions is not necessarily the same as importance of the topic to participants, we took frequency information into account, along with subjective evaluation of importance, when forming recommendations.

Table 2. Focus Group Participant Demographic & Background Information

Focus Group Participant Pre-Survey, N=22					
	Group A n=6	**Group B n=8**	**Group C n=8**	**Total**	**Total Percent**
Age					
25 to 30 years old	1	0	0	1	5%
31 to 35 years old	4	0	0	4	18%
36 to 40 years old	1	6	1	8	36%
41 to 45 years old	0	2	0	2	9%
51 years old and older	0	0	7	7	32%
Sex					
Female	3	6	2	11	50%
Male	3	2	6	11	50%
Ethnicity *(checked all that applied)*					
White	4	5	6	16	70%
Black/African-American	0	2	1	3	13%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0	0	1	4%
Asian	1	1	1	3	13%
Affiliation					
Emory School of Medicine	3	4	7	14	72%
Emory School of Medicine & Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	2	3	1	6	21%
Emory School of Medicine & VA Hospital	0	1	0	1	3%
Emory School of Medicine Pediatrics & Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	1	0	0	1	3%
Research Classification *(checked all that applied)*					
Outcomes Research	1	1	0	2	5%
Basic Science	6	6	6	18	41%
Clinical Science	3	3	4	10	23%
Translational Science	4	4	6	14	32%
Mentoring Experience *(over entire career, for Group C, Senior Mentors only)*					
Number of Pre-doctoral mentees			50	50	25%
Number of Post-doctoral mentees			91	91	45%
Number of Junior faculty mentees			63	63	31%

Note: 4 focus group participants, 2 from Group A, 1 from Group B, and 1 from Group C, did not complete the pre-survey.

Findings Overview

Table 3 lists the definitions of the specific themes that emerged from the analysis of the three focus groups with: Early career- award seeking, early career- with some funding, and senior mentor-level research investigators. Figure 2 depicts the relative frequencies of these themes across all three focus groups.

Table 3. Definitions of Final Themes

Themes	Definition
1. Format of Sessions	Feedback on K-Club format and structure, including meeting times, locations, frequency, desire for breakout groups, individualized feedback and invited experts
2. Mentorship	Discussion of resources that would improve mentorship, including resources for mentors, matching mentees with co-mentors, and support to help mentees better work with their mentors
3. Grant Application Resources	References to grant writing support, including locating and navigating grant resources, finding appropriate grants, grant writing, compelling storytelling, and revising for resubmission
4. Ambiguity of Brand	Confusion regarding the K-Club's target audience and services; lack of clarity around the program's mission/vision/purpose
5. Technology	References to what people want from various types of technology; conversation surrounding useful technology that can be incorporated into sessions
6. Marketing & Communication	Discussion of the means through which information about the club spreads, including both intentional promotional efforts and word-of-mouth
7. Evaluation	Conversation around best practices in K-Club evaluation methods

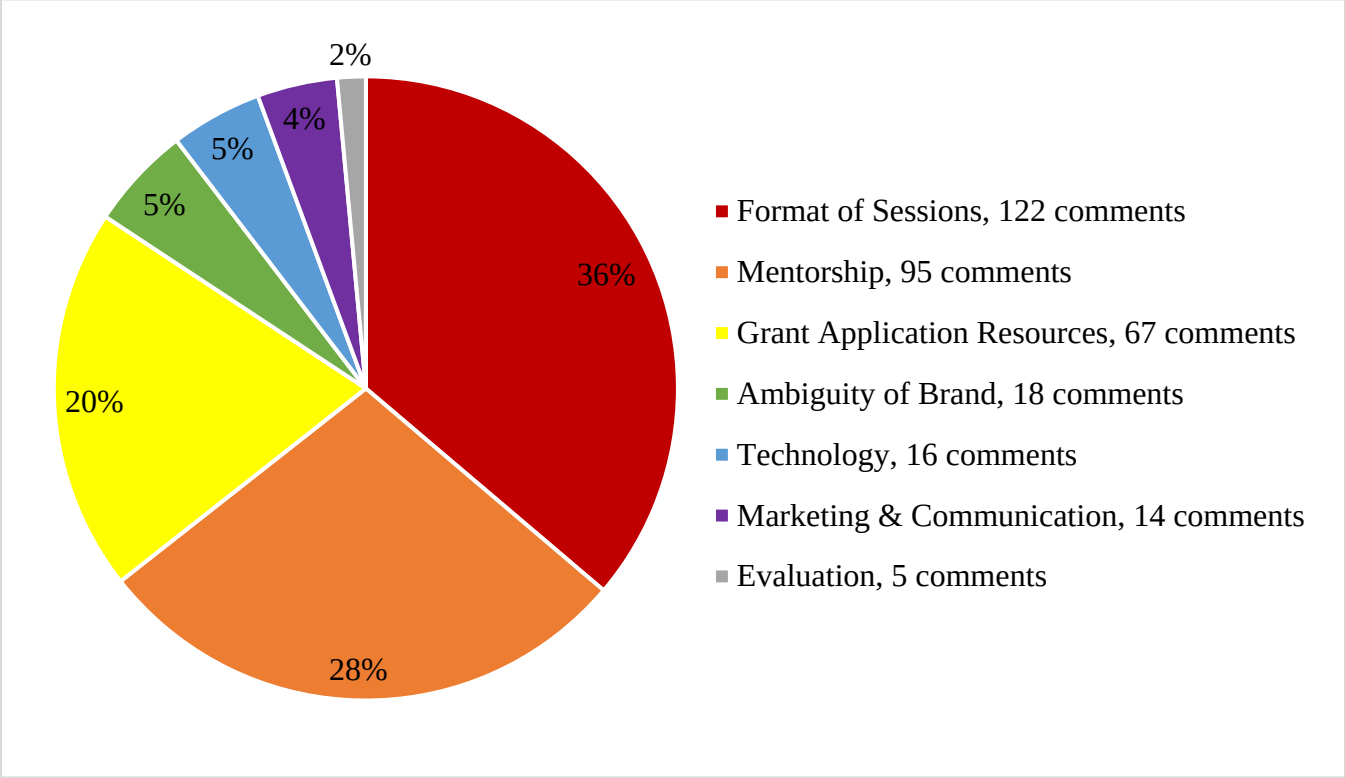

Figure 2. Overview of Theme Frequencies

Detailed Theme Descriptions

Theme 1: Format of Sessions

Participants discussed the advantages of changing how frequently the club meets and its location, as well as changes to the structure of meetings and the support offered to attendees.

Timing, Frequency, and Location of Sessions

Participants offered diverging opinions about the timing and location of K-Club. Junior and senior participants remarked that attending noon meetings at Children's excluded clinicians and others working at satellite sites. A senior participant explained, "I would love for my mentees to come, but the location isn't central and timing is in the middle of everything. If you are doing the morning clinic, you don't finish by 12. If you're doing an afternoon clinic, you have to leave around 12 to make clinic at 1." Conversely, other junior and senior participants felt that the consistent meeting time and location made it easy for them to protect the time in their schedules.

However, both groups agreed that the career development benefits from attending K-Club were significant and worth any scheduling inconvenience. An early career- award seeking participant based at a satellite clinic recounted, "I had actually known about the K-Club and wanted to go, but I just have a busy schedule and when you put travel on either end, [attending requires] more than an hour. But, once I realized the benefit…it was then easier to protect the time to come over here." To alleviate the inconvenience, attendees recommended offering parallel sessions after 4:00 pm for clinicians or holding meetings at different sites.

Creating Small Groups within K-Club

Both groups of early career attendees agreed that incorporating small-group activities would benefit K-Club members. Conversely, senior-level participants did not emphasize small groups. The most common suggestion from the three focus groups was to assemble groups whose members were at varied stages of career development who would "put into practice" material covered in K-Club sessions, such as writing specific aims sections or a biosketch. Members would review each other's work, providing peer mentoring and review. Early career-funded and senior participants recommended that each group contain several senior people to "provide structure" and distribute "responsibility for feedback, coaching, and advice."

Providing Individualized Feedback

Participants described the benefit of receiving individual feedback from experts, such as Janet Gross who is an independent PhD grant consultant who specializes career development award grant writing. An early career-funded participant explained, "[my mentors] give general feedback, but they're not very detail-oriented. When [Janet] reads grants, she is." Echoing this sentiment, a senior participant said, "A big thing [Janet] helps with is all of the new requirements and formatting issues. She's a professional grant writer so that really helps our junior people who aren't as experienced to have somebody who is attentive to how things sound."

However, participants recognized that offering individual sessions with Janet Gross for all was not realistic and recommended creating the small groups described above as an alternative, though there were concerns about quality control. Additionally, an early career-funded participant said that providing access to a technical writer would help K-Club attendees and an early career- award seeking participant recommended making funds available for external review of proposals.

Inviting Guest Speakers

Both groups of early career participants suggested guest speakers for future K-Club sessions. While early career- award seeking participants were interested in guest speakers with specific types of expertise, early career-funded participants were more interested in learning from the experiences of guest speakers. For example, the early career- award seeking focus group suggested inviting division heads and scientific review officers from the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and other funders to explain "their priorities for junior faculty and what they like to see on an application." An early career- award seeking participant mused that having outside speakers from the NIH would act as a 'carrot' for mentors to attend sessions. Early career-funded participants were interested in panel discussions and hearing how other scientists have developed their ideas with available resources.

Theme 2: Mentorship

Participants discussed resources that would improve mentorship, including resources for mentors, matching mentees with co-mentors, and support to help mentees better work with their mentors and take ownership of their own careers.

Resources for Mentors

Across the focus groups, two common ideas emerged to improve mentorship. First, as discussed above, both groups of early career participants suggested that K-Club share more information with mentors regarding the content shared during club meetings and the resources available at Emory to support research. An early career- award seeking attendee explained how making her mentor aware of the information shared during the club would have helped her:

> I felt like one of the most frustrating parts of when I would go to a K-Club meeting and learn something new was that I have a very senior advisor. It was difficult sometimes to convince him that someone had just told me something slightly different that we should do with the grant. I think that if he heard it not from me, but somebody else first, it might have been easier to bridge the gap of him saying I should do one thing and the person that just talked to me saying I should do something different.

Both groups of early career participants also recommended sharing information with mentors about the resources available at Emory. An early career- award seeking attendee noted that doing so would "educate the senior faculty on how to help the junior faculty. The senior faculty actually want to help, they just don't know what resources are available here." An early career-funded attendee echoed this sentiment, saying, "I think having senior mentors aware of the opportunities for their mentees is beneficial."

The second idea that emerged was to offer training on mentorship. A senior attendee explained, "I've never received mentorship training so some forum to get structured training on how to be an effective mentor would be something that the K-Club can do, that would help". One senior attendee described attending a three-day workshop that the San Francisco CTSA organized where a "seasoned coached [described] how to manage your role as a mentor and how to effectively engage the mentee." Another described a program by the Atlanta Best Mentor program where she learned techniques for managing her mentees based on what motivated them.

Providing Well-Rounded Mentorship

Participants expressed interest in improving mentorship by helping to match mentees with secondary mentors. Early career- award seeking participants noted that they were interested in meeting co-mentors outside their discipline who shared their research interests, co-mentors with active R01

grants, or female co-mentors for female mentees. An early career-funded participant recommended co-mentorship to "maximize the positives and minimize the negatives" of her mentors. Senior participants reiterated the importance of co-mentors, with one senior mentor describing working with a co-mentor whose skills were complementary to hers as "a beautiful combination because [the mentee] got the best of both worlds…and a cheerleading group." Another said, "I'm not the expert of all things," and suggested creating a list of senior faculty and their expertise that mentors could use to refer junior faculty and fellows to people with appropriate expertise.

Mentee Responsibilities and Ownership

Early career-funded and senior participants discussed the importance of the need for mentees to be accountable and show dedication in the mentor-mentee relationship, in their research projects and in their own careers. One senior mentor struggles most helping mentees who are less internally driven: "It's hard for me when someone's not driven, highly focused and productive…part of my struggle is how do I get them to that point…when they're not necessarily that type of person…how do you move them in a productive way…so that they're making progress and achieving?" Another mentor expressed frustration when mentees try to rush the career development process and do not trust their mentors and take the advice offered, instead looking for "fast success". Another struggle described was having the time to prompt junior people to be more curious and open to research opportunities. "There's so many great unknowns that we have to fix in our field and they want to sign out and get out. …[It would be good to have more] one-on-one time [to] really help push junior people in ways that need to be pushed [towards] developing your niche and figuring what's interesting."

In addition to the importance of cultivating research commitment and curiosity, early career-funded and senior participants also discussed the critical nature of career timing, setting milestones and mentee dedication to meeting those milestones starting early in their careers. Many agreed that junior researchers should begin preparing for K grants earlier in their careers. An early career-funded participant explained:

> If you're starting to think about a K when you get your first faculty position, you're too late to be a good candidate. I think sometimes the fellows think that anyone can do research and I think it's more like the Army: there's a few good women or men out there who can do it. [We should do sessions saying] 'If you get passionate about these ideas and following scientific questions, here's the timeline you should follow.

Senior participants echoed the importance of preparation, saying that, "fellowship is the time to get your pilot data…if you're trying to get it as junior faculty, you just don't have enough protected time."

A second theme that emerged in this area from the early career-funded and senior focus groups was the need for the development of efficient and effective communication skills. This was discussed as foundational to scientific career development, and was also noted as something that will facilitate better communication and help build stronger mentor-mentee relationships. It was suggested that mentees could benefit from having access to resources geared towards improving their general communication strategies, public speaking and visual presentation skills. Early career-funded and senior participants noted that K-Club could help mentees build necessary skills to be a better one-on-one communicator and mentee. A senior participant commented "making phone calls every week and sending them emails saying, 'I need X, you know Y and you're supposed to do this,' is draining…and sucks out the life from mentorship." Improving communication skills used in group venues was also discussed including a need for mentees to learn how to explain their research

projects and findings in multiple venues and formats and making aesthetically clear PowerPoint presentations. One senior mentor expressed dissatisfaction over junior researchers lack of visual presentation skills lamenting that some mentees "spend all this time making a presentation that isn't going to show well," further stating, "I'm surprised at how many junior faculty that have never done it before that are starting from scratch. It would be nice to have some place to send them…to learn the basics of how you do a PPT."

Theme 3: Grant Application Resources

All three groups extensively discussed grants in various contexts including: consistent help locating & navigating grant resources, finding appropriate grants, grant writing, compelling storytelling, and revising for resubmission.

Locating & Navigating Grant Resources

Conversation among early career- award seeking participants focused on their desire to learn more about available resources from NIH and Emory. One recommended, "It would be good to do a session and have a NIH Program Officer Skype in or WebEx in to talk about the best way to maximize their resources." Another added, "Even though I've done all my training here at Emory, there are so many resources that I just am either not really aware of, or that I'm not aware of how to tap into them."

Early career-funded and senior-level participants shared interest in learning more about resources offered by NIH and Emory University. One early career-funded participant commented, "NIH actually has a lot of the resources and many people don't use them. But they have a lot of mock reviews and they have a lot of information." A senior-level participant further described available resources from NIH, saying, "The NIH already has a number of outstanding grants that they put on their website. One of the institutes, I don't recall which, there's links to it from the DOM website"

Participants expressed a desire for personalized navigational support; one suggested, "Maybe more specific mentorship….Like specific to me and my situation…Personal." Another said, "…if there's a mechanism where you have an opportunity to have a 1:1 studio consultation with an expert. This could be an expansion of this program, if this was available it would be extremely helpful." They also discussed the benefit of continuity of support across time, such as with groups that commit to meeting regularly to discuss navigating the grant process: "…idea would be you would have a senior guide maybe for 4-5 people and you're going to meet regularly and you would discuss whatever you want to but the K-Club sessions might be a jumping point for topics even"

Finding Appropriate Grant Funding Opportunities

Early career- award seeking participants expressed interest in receiving more support and guidance on choosing an appropriate grant that aligned with their interests and stage of career development. An exchange between the moderator and a participant demonstrates this:

Moderator: What do you think? What things would help you to succeed?
Early career- award seeking participant: Grantmanship…I think many of us do great data. But…
Moderator: Like where to apply to?
Early career- award seeking participant: Yeah, where to apply and the structure of the grant. I think having one-on-one close peer review of grants and having Janet Gross and other people's input about how a grant should read [would be helpful].

"Nuts and Bolts" of Grant Writing

A second area of support in which early career- award seeking participants expressed interest was receiving more education on grant writing and feedback on their work. An early career- award seeking participant described a clinical research boot camp she had attended that offered the type of support she thought would benefit K-Club attendees:

I received very practical advice and there was a session that talked about the nuts and bolts of how to write a grant. Just very practical advice. You know, like, 'This is what each section of the grant is,' 'This is what you should never put.' Things like that that you don't know. That's good for people at the early stage when they're first starting. Kind of like big lectures and nuts and bolts.

Compelling Storytelling

Early career-funded participants emphasized the importance salesmanship of both the investigator and the scientific idea when writing grants. However, early career- award seeking and senior-level did not emphasize the importance of salesmanship. One early career-funded participant offered advice, saying, "Be bold, novelty. The [scientific] idea is so important when you're starting. [Reviewers] give you a lot of brownie points. The reviewer, in general, is very willing to forgive a lot in a newer investigator if the idea is cool and sexy." A second early career-funded participant agreed and described the guidance he thought it was important for new investigators to receive:

Really teaching somebody how to write and tell a story and to put together an argument is so foundational. It's almost like an 'Aha!' moment that goes off and now you understand how to make this argument and get the funding move up to where it's not a question any more. It's 'I'm getting scored every time and getting funded.'

Simulate Review Process

Participants at all three levels valued a simulated review process for junior research investigators as a means of improving their proposal. An early career- award seeking participant explained, "I would appreciate if you guys would organize some small sessions that simulate how the reviewer reviews your proposal. Because I think that if we know how to think from that angle, we can definitely improve how we write our proposals."

Revising for Resubmission

Senior-level participants emphasized the importance of providing guidelines on grant revision and resubmission to junior research investigators. A senior participant demonstrated the value of providing guidance to investigators with an anecdote:

I was involved in one of the resubmissions where an investigator was reviewed and got a pink sheet back. The [name of organization] faculty put together a group of investigators. We had a conference call of three or four of us where we reviewed a pink sheet, the critiques and responded. We spent about an hour on the phone for this conversation. We were able to have the investigator walk through how to respond to this critique.

Theme 4: Ambiguity of Brand

Both groups of early career participants expressed confusion regarding the audience that the club targeted with sessions and outreach. Senior-level participants did not discuss K-Club's brand. An early career- award seeking participant stated that, "[K-Club must make] sure that people understand that this isn't just for medical fellows, not just for PhDs, that it's for everybody, including first year post-docs and research career-oriented."

Early career-funded participants wondered if including 'K' in the club's name limited the club's purpose and vision and discouraged people who were seeking other types of awards from attending. One exchange demonstrated this concern:

> Program Director: Is the K-Club a misnomer?
> All participants: Yeah.
> Program Director: It's kind of our brand right but is it a detraction?
> Participant: Yeah, I thought it was more directed towards post-docs because and I see that it's more for junior faculty. So, for me K ends with your post-doc.

Theme 5: Technology

Discussion about using technology to improve K-Club was limited. Early career-funded participants did not discuss technology, however, both early career- award seeking and senior participants indicated that finding ways to foster interaction and engagement for people viewing the sessions off-site or on their own time was important. An early career- award seeking participant remarked that WebEx was "really confusing" to people who did not use it regularly, and another agreed, saying, "you have to install all the components, so if you're not really computer savvy," it could be challenging. Additionally, an early career- award seeking participant suggested adding a link to the recorded sessions that would allow attendees to submit questions via email. A senior participant also noted this limitation, saying that while viewers can access content via recordings, "they can't ask questions," which a second participant noted was valuable.

Theme 6: Marketing & Communications

Both groups of early career participants discussed K-Club's current promotional efforts and identified areas for improvement. Senior-level participants did not discuss the importance of marketing and communication. Most participants had discovered the club through email newsletters, word-of-mouth, or pamphlets. Both groups of early career participants emphasized the importance of engaging senior-level research investigators in the club's purpose and activities so that they could refer their mentees to the club. An early career- award seeking participant stated, "So, I would agree with what people are saying about letting mentors know. I think that by letting PIs know [about K-Club], it will trickle down." An exchange between the moderator and an early career-funded participant further supported this idea:

> Moderator: And, what do you think is the best way to get the word out to people [about K-Club]?
> Early career-funded participant: I think also having senior mentors aware of the [K-Club program] for their mentees is probably beneficial.

Theme 7: Evaluation

To improve evaluation, both groups of early career attendees recommended collecting rapid quantitative feedback at each session's conclusion, which could be complemented with more detailed qualitative feedback collected via email. Senior-level participants did not discuss the importance of evaluation. To incentivize attendees to complete online surveys, an early career- award seeking participant said that making him eligible for a travel grant to support his professional development would incentivize him to complete surveys. He elaborated:

> You would have to attend six meetings out of the year and then you have to do the grant review session and a travel grant session. Or whatever you want to do, you just have to check three boxes and then you become eligible...You don't necessarily have to have a large pot of money for this cause not everybody is going to go through all the check boxes.

Another early career- award seeking participant recommended that "repeat attendance is a really good metric. When I think about K-Club, as well as other things I put on my calendar that I really want to do, I think about whether I actually protect that time is an indicator of how useful I think it will be." A early career-funded participant echoed this, saying that, "people vote with their feet," so attendance would be a good measure of the club's usefulness.

Table 4. Frequencies of Themes & Subthemes for All Focus Groups

	Early career-award seeking Focus Group **A**	Early career-some funding Focus Group **B**	Senior Mentors Focus Group **C**	**Total**
Theme 1. Format of Sessions				
1.0 Operations	25	24	13	**62**
1.1 Small groups	10	11	2	**23**
1.2 Individualized feedback	4	9	7	**20**
1.3 Networking	7	3	2	**12**
1.4 Guest speakers	3	2	0	**5**
TOTAL	**49**	**49**	**24**	***122***
Theme 2. Mentorship				
2.0 Mentorship	3	0	11	**14**
2.1 Resources for mentors	15	18	9	**42**
2.2 Incentivizing mentoring	1	0	1	**2**
2.3 Being a good mentor	8	12	4	**24**
2.4 Being a good mentee	2	4	7	**13**
TOTAL	**29**	**34**	**32**	***95***
Theme 3. Grant Application Resources				
3.0 Grant Funding 101	1	1	3	**5**
3.1 Finding appropriate grants	17	7	10	**34**
3.2 Nuts and bolts of grant writing	8	0	5	**13**
3.3 Compelling storytelling	0	8	1	**9**
3.4 Simulate review process	1	0	1	**2**
3.5 Navigating NIH	0	0	1	**1**
3.6 Revising for resubmission	0	0	2	**2**
3.7 Navigating Emory bureaucracy	1	0	0	**1**
TOTAL	**28**	**16**	**23**	***67***
Theme 4. Ambiguity of Branding				
4.0 Unclear target audience	3	9	2	**14**
4.1 Unclear vision/purpose/goal	0	4	0	**4**
TOTAL	**3**	**13**	**2**	***18***
Theme 5. Technology				
5.0 Functions wanted from technology	7	0	4	**11**
5.1 Type of technology	4	0	1	**5**
TOTAL	**11**	**0**	**5**	***16***
Theme 6. Marketing & Communication				
6.0 Methods & content to promote K-Club	9	5	0	**14**
TOTAL	**9**	**5**	**0**	***14***
Theme 7. Evaluation				
7.0 Evaluating the K-Club	4	1	0	**5**
TOTAL	**4**	**1**	**0**	***5***

Recommendations & Conclusion

Recommendations

Collectively, the findings of this focus group evaluation informed the following recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1: The format of the sessions should be adapted to meet the growing needs of attendees**. In addition to the monthly session, the program could incorporate small breakout groups and/or more targeted and intense educational offerings to accommodate the diversity and specific needs of program participants. Since participants noted their desire for more individualized feedback, breakout groups can vary based on interest. For example, a group of individuals can conduct an informal peer review, or individuals can form multidisciplinary groups to collaborate on a research project. We recommend engaging specialized professionals such as grant writing consultants, communication specialists, visual/graphic designers, and institutional and organizational behavior leaders to address these needs.

- **Recommendation 2: Mentors need more resources and support to effectively engage and support their mentees.** Mentors acknowledged a need and interest in receiving more structured training on effective mentoring. Early career- award seeking participants believe that it is key for their mentors to be more aware of and promote NIH, Emory University, and K-Club resources. We recommend creating a mentor toolkit to include various career development resources for mentors to vet and people management tips and tricks.

- **Recommendation 3: Mentees need more resources and support to position themselves for research career success.** Mentees acknowledged a need and interest in receiving more structured, personalized, and consistent support (grant writing, submission and revision guidelines, navigating available resources, etc.), and mentors identified an additional need for mentees to develop the ability to take ownership of and better drive the mentor-mentee relationship towards cultivating all areas of career development.

  Recommendation 3a: We recommend developing a systematic navigational tool that provides a roadmap guiding early career research investigators through career development, enhancing awareness of the resources and support relevant and available at each stage of the research funds-seeking process and overall career development. An emphasis on seamless continuity in support throughout each step of the process would be of benefit to investigators who are working towards developing their independent research careers.

  Recommendation 3b: We also recommend offering a customized and tailored approach to targeted cohorts. Create an algorithm to identify the junior researchers that would derive the most benefit from targeted and intense experiential educations efforts in separate areas including i) grant writing labs; ii) management training; and iii) communication skills and leadership development. Small group educational offerings engaging a carefully selected cohort would provide tremendous benefit to meet the breadth of junior researcher needs targeted to specific career stages. For example, researchers who are preparing their first grant application may benefit most from a grant writing lab that provides targeted education and support through a comprehensive grant writing curriculum to include: where to look for grants, how to write applications, simulated peer-review, how to revise and resubmit, and personal branding. Once researchers secure their first award, they may benefit from a management course that offers insights and training on how to best design their own research program, develop talent and manage research funds. Finally, researchers who are ready for the K to R transition or who are

working to develop their local and national reputation and brand may benefit most from a course to help them polish their communication and leadership skills.

- **Recommendation 4: Re-branding is required to clarify the program's mission and target audience.** Focus group attendees expressed confusion regarding the program's overarching purpose, including whether the club was specifically for K grants, or for help with funding from all sources (including industry, pilot grants, etc.), or to support professional advancement beyond funding. Similarly, attendees expressed confusion about who could or should attend K-Club sessions (i.e. senior mentors, fellows, post-doctoral, just clinicians, etc.). We suggest adjusting the name of the program to clarify the target audience and purpose of the club, beyond holding or securing K awards. Also, we recommend revisiting goals and objectives to clarify the program's ongoing purpose and expanding reach. We also recommend targeted and tailored promotion strategies to explicitly call out the groups that the club is trying to reach.

- **Recommendation 5: Consider innovative ways of incorporating technology into the K-Club.** A focus group participant in the early career- award seeking group suggested the use of a tool where grant seekers can download a sampling of successful grants, other NIH-required application materials and share reviews and best practices.

- **Recommendation 6: Consider ongoing best practices in evaluation.** We suggest an ongoing, multi-pronged evaluation approach including both qualitative and quantitative data to ensure that the sessions are helpful, effective, and continuously improving. A pen and paper quantitative satisfaction survey can be distributed before the monthly session ends for quick feedback, while, a digital qualitative survey can be distributed through email to capture richer qualitative data from participants.

Conclusion

The K-Club program is an important resource for early career research investigators that provides much more than K award funding support. The K-Club offers rich career development, educational, and networking opportunities for early research investigators. Participants across all the focus groups noted their high level of appreciation for the club. One early career- award seeking focus group participant stated that "it [does a] nice job keeping me on task. I think I go to a meeting and it [is] kind of a repetition, application of something I already heard. It kind of made me remember that this is something I really want to do and to prioritize." Despite the fact that participants are extremely busy, all focus group participants indicated that individuals consistently protect time in their schedules for the monthly club. This protected time is a testament to the value it offers to the participants. Program evaluation results indicate that a few targeted enhancements to the program's session format, mentorship program, marketing, communications, and resource offerings can easily take the club to the next level.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Data Collection Instruments & Guide Materials

Below are the scripts guides and intended questions used for Focus Groups A through C. Actual transcripts deviated somewhat from these pre-formulated guides, based upon the questions and conversations that arose in each focus group.

Group A Early Career- Not Yet Funded Focus Group Guide

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this K-Club focus group. My name is Nikki Llewellyn and I'm the manager of evaluation research for the ACTSI, which is one of the co-sponsors of the K-Club. I will be your moderator today and this is Jamie Adachi, soon-to-be public health graduate at Rollins, she will be assisting with the focus group and taking notes evaluation research for the ACTSI, which is one of the co-sponsors of the K-Club. I will be your moderator today and this is Jamie Adachi, soon-to-be public health graduate at Rollins, she will be assisting with the focus group and taking notes.

We are really excited to have you all here today. We have been planning this focus group for a long time and we can't wait to get your valuable input on the future of the K-Club program. Stacy and Barbara are going to be writing a grant to get some funding to expand the program, so we're hoping that this interview will help the directors of K-Club gain some valuable insight and ideas for areas of expansion and improvement to really take the program to the next level. We really want to hear your stories, your ideas, your frustrations, your wish list!

We've split the respondents into several different focus groups based on different stages of careers. This way we thought we could get some really tailored ideas to fit the needs of different types of people who use the K-club. From your group, we're specifically interested in learning what types of support and education you believe will be instrumental in allowing you to develop a successfully funded research program.

I want to let you know that there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions. We just want to know about your experiences with the club and how it has impacted your career. We would like everyone to get a chance to speak. If you feel uncomfortable answering a question, you can always pass.

And we want to let you know that we'll be recording the session today so that the results can be very carefully analyzed after this. The only people who will listen to the recording or see the transcript will be the K-Club leadership and you'll only be identified by first name.

Okay, so is everyone ready to begin? Okay, we'll start the recording now.

Introductions*: I just want to start with some introductions so that we all get to know each other a little bit before we get into it. We're going to go around the circle, introduce yourself:*

- *say your first name,*
- *your department,*
- *your general research interest*
- *and tell us what is the best advice you've ever received from a mentor?*

I'll start: Again I'm Nikki, I'm with the ACTSI at the Emory School of Medicine, my PhD is in developmental psychology, where I studied mental health in young people, but since grad school I've moved into health evaluation research, most recently I've been focusing evaluating the bibliometric output

of ACTSI, our publications. The best advice I remember is just to expect failure, roll with it, learn from it, and be pleasantly surprised when you actually succeed.

Jamie, why don't you go next…

2.) Okay, here's my second question that I'd like to ask of everyone in the group: What is the best professional development program or event that you've ever attended, and why?

- Probe A: What did you learn?
- Probe B: What did you like and NOT like about it?

3.) Thank you! Okay, My next easy question is, how did YOU hear about the K-Club and what do you think would be the best way to reach colleagues like yourself? Anyone can jump in as they think of something they want to say, we don't have to go around the table, necessarily and please speak up if you think of something you want to add to what someone else says…

4.) That's great, thanks, Now I want to turn to some feedback about the format of the K-Club sessions themselves- So, what do you think of the timing and spacing of the sessions? Are these working for you? Anyone…

- *Probe A: Is there a better time/length, in your opinion?*
- *Probe B: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?*

5.) Next question about the current K-club- What kinds of sessions have been most effective in your opinion and Why?

6.) And, are there any topic areas that you would really like to see covered in a future session?

7.) Thank you, Next I'd like to talk about really improving and expanding the k-club. So I want you to imagine there were unlimited funds available for this- Within reason!- What investments would you recommend that would be most valuable in helping you secure funding for your own research program?

- *Probe A: What kind of technology could be incorporated into sessions? Like response clickers?*
- *Probe B: What about Peer networking opportunities? Social Events? FB group? What would be the best medium?*
- *Probe C: What about an expanded mentor program? How do you think that should look like?*
- *Probe D: What kinds of experts would you like us to bring in to lead discussions in various topics?*
- *Probe E: Do you think mock grant reviews would be worthwhile?*

8.) What type of feedback survey do you think would help inform the organizers of the value of each session and what other topics to address? (Electronic, paper, etc)

- *Probe A: Any suggestions for improving the response rate?*

9.) That was wonderful, okay last I just have a couple of big picture questions before we wrap up. So, outside of the K-club what do you think have been the most helpful resources for your research success?

10.) What do you think mentees need the most in order to increase their changes of successfully obtaining research support and funding?

11.) And, is there anything else anyone would like to share with us?

Closing Remarks:
Thank you all so much for sharing your perspectives and experiences with us! Your comments will help inform the K-club development. We appreciate the time that you have spent with us! We will send you an executive summary that describes the outcomes of this project and please do let us know if you go home and think about it some more and come up with anything else you'd like to add to the conversation we had today- Thank you!

Group B Early career-funded Focus Group Guide

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this K-Club focus group. My name is Nikki Llewellyn and I'm the manager of evaluation research for the ACTSI, which is one of the co-sponsors of the K-Club. I will be the moderator of this discussion today and this is Jamie Adachi, soon-to-be public health graduate at Rollins, she will be assisting with the focus group and taking notes.

We are really excited to have you all here today. We have been planning this focus group for a long time and we can't wait to get your valuable input on the future of the K-Club program. This is really all about you, supporting you, helping you to reach goals, so your opinion is what we really need. Stacy and Barbara are going to be writing a grant to get some funding to expand the program, so we're hoping that this interview will help the directors of K-Club gain some valuable insight and ideas for areas of expansion and improvement to really take the program to the next level. We really want to hear your stories, your ideas, your frustrations, your wish list!

We've split the respondents into several different focus groups based on where people are in their careers. This way we thought we could get some really tailored ideas to fit the needs of different types of people who use the K-club. From your group, we're specifically interested in learning what types of support and education you believe have been most instrumental in allowing you to successfully fund your research program. What really made a difference, and what would make a difference going forward?

I wanted to tell you a little more about the format of this focus group. We want everyone to get a chance to have their say, so please jump in or raise your hand to let me know if you have something to add to any question or comment. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions and we want to get diverse responses, so don't feel that you have to agree with others in the room- just speak your mind. We just want to know about your experiences with the club and how it has impacted your career. We'll be calling you by name a lot, that's to help with coding, and it would be helpful for you to identify yourself when you chime in as well- like, 'this is Nikki, and I think…'. If you ever feel uncomfortable answering a question, you can always pass.

And we want to let you know that we'll be recording the session today so that the results can be very carefully analyzed after this. We don't want anything you've said to go to waste. The only people who will see the recording or the transcript will be the K-Club leadership and you'll only be identified by first name. Recording the session on video helps us to know who is speaking when and to get the full meaning of what people are saying, things like gestures and so forth, so does anyone mind if we use video rather than audio recording today?

Okay, are there any questions before we begin? Okay, we'll start the recording now.

Introductions*: First I want to start with some introductions so that we all get to know a little bit about each other before we get into it. We're going to go around the circle, introduce yourself:*

- *say your first name,*
- *your department,*
- *your general research area,*
- *and tell us what is the best career advice you've ever received from a mentor?*

I'll start: Again I'm Nikki, I'm with the ACTSI which is part of the Emory School of Medicine, my PhD is in developmental psychology, where I studied mental health in young people, but since graduate school I've moved into health evaluation research, most recently I've been focusing on evaluating the bibliometric output of ACTSI, the publications that have come out of the program. The best advice I remember is just to expect failure, roll with it, learn from it, and be pleasantly surprised when you actually succeed- especially true for grant applications

Jamie, why don't you go next…say your name, department, area of interest, and the best career advice you've received…

1.) Thank you! Okay, here's my next easy question: how did each of YOU hear about the K-Club and what do you think would be the best way to reach colleagues like yourself? We'll go around the circle once more

- *Probe A: How do we reach the audience that can benefit? Facebook, Twitter, Email newsletter?*

2.) Okay, here's my next question that I'd like to ask the group- , We don't have to go around the table, anyone can jump in as they think of something they want to say, and please speak up if you think of something you want to add to what someone else says…

I want to turn to some feedback about the format of the K-Club sessions themselves, to begin with, what do you think of the timing and spacing of the sessions? Are these working for you? Anyone…

- *Probe A: Is there a better time/length, in your opinion?*
- *Probe B: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?*

4.) Next question about the current K-club- What kinds of sessions have been most effective in your opinion and Why?

5.) Who do you think can benefit from K-Club? People who have not yet been funded or those who already have funding or both?

- *Probe A: Can one size really fit all?*

6.) Thank you! Next I'd like to talk about really improving and expanding the k-club. So I want you to imagine there were unlimited funds available for this- Within reason!- What investments would you recommend that would be most valuable in helping you secure funding for your own research program?

- *Probe A: What kinds of experts would you like us to bring in to lead discussions in various topics? Science writers? NIH?*
- *Probe B: What would be the benefits of expanding focused workshops? (idea that those who receive personal help will be required to help others)*
- *Probe C: Do you think mock grant reviews would be worthwhile?*
- *Probe D: What kind of technology could be incorporated into sessions? Like audience response clickers/app?*

7.) Are there any other topic areas that you would really like to see covered in a future session?

8.) What type of feedback survey do you think would help inform the organizers of the value of each session and what other topics to address? (Electronic, paper, etc)

- *Probe A: Any suggestions for improving the response rate?*

9.) That was wonderful, okay last I just have a couple of big picture questions before we wrap up. So, outside of the K-club what do you think was the best professional development program or event that you've ever attended, and why?

- *Probe A: What did you learn?*
- *Probe B: What did you like and NOT like about it?*

10.) What do you think mentees need the most in order to increase their chances of successfully obtaining research support and funding?

11.) What advice would you give to someone starting the application process?

12.) And, is there anything else anyone would like to share with us?

Closing Remarks:
Thank you all so much for sharing your perspectives and experiences with us! Your comments will help inform the K-club development. We appreciate the time that you have spent with us! We will send you an executive summary that describes the outcomes of this project and please do let us know if you go home and think about it some more and come up with anything else you'd like to add to the conversation we had today- Thank you!

Group C Senior Mentor Focus Group Guide

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this K-Club focus group. My name is Nikki Llewellyn and I'm the manager of evaluation research for the ACTSI, which is one of the co-sponsors of the K-Club. I will be the moderator of this discussion today and this is Jamie Adachi, soon-to-be public health graduate at Rollins, she will be assisting with the focus group and taking notes.

We are really excited to have you all here today. We have been planning this focus group for a long time and we can't wait to get your valuable input on the future of the K-Club program. This is really all about you, supporting you, helping you to reach goals, so your opinion is what we really need. Stacy and Barbara are going to be writing a grant to get some funding to expand the program, so we're hoping that this interview will help the directors of K-Club gain some valuable insight and ideas for areas of expansion and improvement to really take the program to the next level. We really want to hear your stories, your ideas, your frustrations, your wish list!

We've split the respondents into several different focus groups based on where people are in their careers. This way we thought we could get some really tailored ideas to fit the needs of different types of people who use the K-club. From your group, we're specifically interested in learning about the value that the K-club has brought and strategic ways to grow the mentoring support aspect of the program.

I wanted to tell you a little more about the format of this focus group. We want everyone to get a chance to have their say, so please jump in or raise your hand to let me know if you have something to add to any

question or comment. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions and we want to get diverse responses, so don't feel that you have to agree with others in the room- just speak your mind. We just want to know about your experiences with the club and how it has impacted people's career. We want you to think about your whole career, both your experiences as a junior investigator and later as a mentor to junior investigators.

We'll be calling you by name a lot, that's to help with coding, and it would be helpful for you to identify yourself when you chime in as well- like, 'this is Nikki, and I think…'. If you ever feel uncomfortable answering a question, you can always pass. We also want to be strategic about the limited time we have to go over a lot of topics so in the interest of time I may have to cut off a particular topic so please don't be offended if I have to stop you to go on to the next question if Jamie signals that the clock is ticking.

And we want to let you know that we'll be recording the session today so that the results can be very carefully analyzed after this. We don't want anything you've said to go to waste. The only people who will see the recording or the transcript will be the K-Club leadership and you'll only be identified by first name. Recording the session on video helps us to know who is speaking when and to get the full meaning of what people are saying, things like gestures and so forth, so does anyone mind if we use video rather than audio recording today?

Okay, are there any questions before we begin? Okay, we'll start the recording now.

Introductions*: First I want to start with some introductions so that we all get to know a little bit about each other before we get into it. We're going to go around the circle, introduce yourself:*

- *say your first name,*
- *where you're from originally,*
- *your department and general research area,*
- *and tell us what is the best career advice you've ever received or given to a mentee?*

I'll start: Again I'm Nikki, I'm originally from here in Georgia, I did my undergrad here at Emory. Now, I'm with the ACTSI which is part of the Emory School of Medicine, my PhD is in developmental psychology, where I studied mental health in young people, but since graduate school I've moved into health evaluation research, most recently I've been focusing on evaluating the bibliometric output of ACTSI, the publications that have come out of the program. The best advice I remember is just to expect failure, roll with it, learn from it, and be pleasantly surprised when you actually succeed- especially true for grant applications

Jamie, why don't you go next…say your name, where you're from, department and area of interest, and the best career advice you've received…

1.) Thank you! Okay, for my next question that I'd like to ask the whole group- , We don't have to go around the table, anyone can jump in as they think of something they want to say, and please speak up if you think of something you want to add to what someone else says…

I want to turn to some feedback about the current K-Club sessions as they are, to begin with, what do you think of the timing, frequency, and format of the sessions? Are these working for you? Anyone…

- *Probe A: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?*
- *Probe B*: With what frequency should topics be repeated?
- *Probe C*: As a panelist or speaker, what have been the best or most satisfying formats?

2.) Next question about the current K-club- What kinds of sessions have been most effective in your opinion and Why?

3.) Who do you think can benefit from K-Club? People who have not yet been funded or those who already have funding or both?

- *Probe A: Can one size really fit all?*
- *Probe B: what would make you more likely to promote the K-Club or advocate it to others?*

4) What incentivizes you to participate in K-Club? (As a panelist or audience member)

5.) Thank you! Next I'd like to talk about really improving and expanding the k-club. So I want you to imagine there were unlimited funds available for this- Within reason!- What investments would you recommend that would be most valuable in helping to take the K-Club to the next level?

- *Probe A: What kinds of experts would you like us to bring in to lead discussions in various topics? Science writers? NIH?*
- *Probe B: What would be the benefits of expanding focused workshops? (idea that those who receive personal help will be required to help others)*
- *Probe C: Do you think mock grant reviews would be worthwhile?*
- *Probe D: What kind of education-based technology have you used that could be incorporated into sessions? Like audience response clickers/app?*
- *Probe E: Are there any other topic areas that you would really like to see covered in a future session?*

6.) Expanded programs might require more senior level faculty involvement. What would incentivize you to dedicate measurable effort?

- *Probe A: Would you be willing to be paid discretionary money to review a few K applications and then participate in a mock review to be recorded and watched?*

7.) What would be the most helpful addition to support you as a mentor in providing the best mentoring?

- *Probe A: Are there innovative mentoring techniques you'd like to learn more about?*
- *Probe B: How can the k-club fund mentoring efforts?*
- *Probe C: What do you need to help mentees become mentors?*

8.) That was wonderful, okay last I just have a couple of big picture questions before we wrap up. So, outside of the K-club what do you think was the best professional development program or event that you've ever attended, and why?

- *Probe A: What did you learn?*
- *Probe B: What did you like and NOT like about it?*

9.) What have you seen to be the most frequent pitfalls of junior faculty not succeeding in research?

10.) What do you think mentees need the most in order to increase their chances of successfully obtaining research support and funding?

- *Probe A: What are objective measures of success?*
- *Probe B: What would be a positive model*

11.) What one piece of advice would you give to someone just starting out in the application process?

12.) And, is there anything else anyone would like to share with us?

Closing Remarks:

Thank you all so much for sharing your perspectives and experiences with us! Your comments will help inform the K-club development. We appreciate the time that you have spent with us! We will send you an executive summary that describes the outcomes of this project and please do let us know if you go home and think about it some more and come up with anything else you'd like to add to the conversation we had today- Thank you!

Appendix B: Full Transcripts

Focus Group:	Focus group A, Early Career- seeking first award transcript
Date:	3/16/2017
Attendees	Ximei, Shan, Kristy, Samuel, Laura, Brian, Jordan, Mindy

2.) Thank you! Okay, here's my next easy question: how did each of YOU hear about the K-Club and what do you think would be the best way to reach colleagues like yourself? We'll go around the circle once more

Ximei: I think I learned K-Club from uh, I guess I saw like a sign thing at a seminar. I'm interested in this talk. So, I think out of blue, because I don't think I know K-Club exists before.

Nikki: Is it like a paper? Or online?

Ximei: Yeah, it's like a paper. I collaborated with the people in the ECT building and Windship and I think I saw one of the signs. And I think the best way maybe email list best way to distribute I guess.

Nikki: Like people like you we're trying to get, how would you have liked to hear about it if it would be ideal?

Ximei: I think in multiple format it would be ideal to reach out.

Nikki: Okay.

Shan: I think when I came I had some idea that K-Club exists. Um. So. And after […]. Met with Stacy Hellman, and

Nikki: Kind of like word of mouth?

Shan: After that I was on the listserv, I kept getting the emails. As to how we can broaden the reach, um, I'm not sure whether established PIs are on the list or not like encourage established PIs to attend the training

Nikki: Kind of get the word out to other people…

Shan: Career websites been helpful even for clinical fellows to sort of many of them research career, knowing that something like this exists will be helpful for the k grants

Nikki: Maybe letting people know about….

Shan: Fellowship program should be adding their fellowship candidates and junior faculty alike

Nikki: Maybe convincing help people by communicating the success of the K-Club? Like you mentioned like that it's a good program that if we could get data or feedback about that…

Shan: And fellowship program at Rutgers they have certain things for a clinical fellow they have protected time to go once a month. Certain curriculum. Make it…

Nikki: Make it mandatory?

Shan: Yeah. Something like that.

[00:35:07]

Kristy: I'm pretty sure I heard about K-Club through an email listserv. And I think it's a good way to reach people in general. Cause if it's a topic that people are interested in, they'll see it. I will echo Shan's idea of reaching out to clinical fellows, coming from that perspective. Maybe each year there's an orientation for the new clinical fellows who come in. Gary Worshaw I think is director of all the clinical fellowships here at Peds. And so maybe there could be a plug for K-Club. I mean, there may already be I'm not sure on that day. You know tell them from the beginning that there's an opportunity to learn more about you know getting involved in research and planning for your future.

Nikki: Right off the bat? Yeah, okay.

Kristy: Some people might see a flier and not think it's for them. They may think faculty is not for me. Just let them know…

Nikki: It can be hard to know.

Kristy: Yeah.

Nikki: Make it very clear for who for, who it's going to help.

[00:36:16]

Samuel: I learned of the K-Club from the email flier, but then I asked around an nobody knew what it was. So my mentor was quite senior at the time, still senior, so he never really had any junior faculty come up under him. So I'm one of the first ones to stay at Emory at least. He wasn't really familiar with the K-Club either. Um. I asked my division director about it, he said, oh yeah we have some fellows that go to that so check it out. So I did. I've been to a couple per year. Sometimes the timing doesn't work out. So outreach via email and also I think having a toolkit for mentors to use and know about at least something to point to would beneficial. Cause a lot of the stuff I found out on my own my mentor didn't necessarily know. So the fliers obviously help. Um. The emails help. But also making sure that people understand that this isn't just for medical fellows, not just for PhDs, it's for everybody including 1st year post-docs or research career oriented and to me it sure they understand that. So…

Laura: Um I think I first heard about it through one of my lab mates um at the time was she'd gone before cause she was applying for a k at the time. She was like oh hey there's this seminar on this topic you should go. And I knew my boss had mentioned it, you should be going to K-Club. When I was writing grants, Janet Gross was like K-Club is something that Emory has but I had already been going. Um. But I don't remember ever seeing an email till I came and was on the listserv I think it's in the department of medicine weekly newsletter. But I've never seen it on the office of postdoctoral education

newsletter. I don't know how broad you're trying to reach. But I've never seen it on one of those emails.

Nikki: But you feel like it would be helpful people like that.

Ximei: ACTSI weekly newsletter.

Nikki: Weekly round up? Reaches a lot of people.

Brian: So yeah, PhDs have an orientation and that would be a great place to plug all the tools and resources from all of the departments and divisions within Emory. They usually just focus on the DOM, right? The orientation.

Nikki: Kind of getting outside the bubble of it would help.

Brian: Yeah.

Jordan: I received a forwarded email from my mentor in the department of pediatrics, one of my mentors about the K-Club. Kind of wanted to know more about it. The department of pathology doesn't really still doesn't have a clue about the K-Club. Say although I'm one of four research track trainees and all four of us go based on word of mouth so for me if you're trying to get broader group of people I would try the a targeted approach. My fellowship director, doesn't know anything about a k grant. Can't tell you anything about it. And that's fine cause she's a clinical fellowship director. But she does forward me all the OP research type grants. But um yeah a targeted email approach would be the highest yield. And or if you can approach mentors. I think they get a lot of emails so some go in and out but um, that kind of approach. Yeah I often wonder about K-Club is it gears for K08 or K01 I got the sense it's for both towards the end. But clarifying this is all Ks, K08 and K01 can come you know we'll discuss that would be probably helpful because my PhD.

[00:40:44]

Jordan: While I was on my clinical fellowship I was part of a working group through CORF and so I got on a listserv via that. So when I join faculty I continued to get those emails so that's how I first heard of K-Club. I think to broaden the reach, um you know there is a specific clinical psychology fellowship and so as part of that program through Emory, there are didactics on Monday afternoon, so I think that K-Club being at noon on a Monday could fit well kind of within that protected time. So um potentially reaching out to Nadine Caslo who runs the clinical psychology fellowship program and potentially offer that as some protected time. Um for the psychology fellows who are interested in research could be helpful.

Nikki: So it sounds like targeting on particular areas of people that we think would be benefited by this and going to them specifically and saying make sure you know that this is for you too could be helpful it sounds like.

[00:41:53]

Mindy: So it sounds like I would agree with what people are saying about letting mentors know. I think that by letting PIs know it will trickle down. I also think going to specific sites. So the way I got involved was Janet came to Marcus because there were a few people interested in a k award there and

she came there a few reoccurring meetings. Um and then I found that very helpful and she encouraged me to come over here. I had actually known about the K-Club before and wanted to go. But I just have a busy schedule and put you put travel on either end of it, it's more than an hour and stuff just kept getting scheduled over it. But once I realized the benefit from meeting with [Janet] at Marcus it was then easier to protect the time to come over here. So if there are other centers that have a lot of researcher that would benefit from it maybe one every other year at their site might pull in more people.

Nikki: Traveling show.

Samuel: I have a suggestion. So um all of our grants go through [..can't understand.. omus pete?]. So wouldn't they know which departments are submitting k's. So division directors…department faculty…

Nikki: Go in and look at those records and see. Great. Okay thank you so much.

[00:43:13]

3.) Okay, here's my next question that I'd like to ask the group- Anyone can jump in as they think of something they want to say, we don't have to go around the table, necessarily and please speak up if you think of something you want to add to what someone else says…
What is the best professional development program or event that you've ever attended, and why?
Probe A: What did you learn?
Probe B: What did you like and NOT like about it?

Jordan: I think for me, this is Jordan. Um it was when Janet Gross did the new NIH biosketch like when the new biosketch came out and you were having to go from… it was pretty easy and simple to put together. Something that required more thoughtful grantsmanship in your biosketch. Um so that was very helpful. And to know um from her perspective what was acceptable and what was not acceptable junior faculty members. Cause you can't tell that from the examples online.

Nikki: So something very applied and concrete like this. So just tell me what I really need to know about that.

Samuel: So this is Sam. I tend to get a lot more out of smaller meetings, scientific meetings, with people in your field. So um those are also people that are reviewing your grants or your papers. Um. I'm not entirely sure how to recapitulate that here, for everyone. But I know that travel to small meetings is something that has really helped me understand both my science as well as understand the people in my field and get to know them. So if there's any type of K-Club um related like for travel grants. How to write a travel grant. Where to apply for travel grants. That'd be very helpful

Nikki: Like bringing people together within disciplines you're saying? Maybe disparate places?

[00:45:30]

Shan:
As fellow let into grant, present k proposal, being there amongst the critics how they think, we know what they're working on and how they're doing it. Having junior faculty. Have an idea how this really helps.
Nikki: Kind of seeing examples? Knowing what the inner circle says.

Shan: Yeah.

Nikki: Yeah that's great. Have any other ideas to share?

Laura: Yeah so one of the things that helped me, grant writing 3x workshop with Janet gross and was working on a k. that was helpful. She did a great job of like breaking it down. All the parts of the grant which we go over some of it in K-Club like once a week for a month. We got a lot more details, which was helpful. And then something I found helpful I was at an early career event conference um and they had similar topics to K-Club cause it was for early career people. But, I guess they had a bunch of tables and so there was maybe 2 senior faculty and there was a topic at the table and there were 10 people and so being able to ask questions a lot more like it was a lot more interactive and sort of pick people's brain and stuff, I thought it was helpful and something different from large format lecture type.

[00:49:33]

Ximei: I think for the most people that don't have any idea how to write a proposal like that I think the large lecture is beneficial. So I think I learn most of the uh grant writing skills through the K-Club. But I also at this stage appreciate if you guys would organize some small sessions that, as Shan suggested, like kind of simulate how the reviewer um review your proposal things like that. Because I think that if we know how to think from that angle we can definitely improve how we write the proposal. Something like that.

Nikki: Simulation. I like how you put that.

Ximei: Yeah simulation. Something like that. Ha.

Nikki: You guys are answering my future questions here. Ha-ha. Anyone else have any other favorites?

[00:50:41]

Kristy: Clinical research boot camp, cause its very practical advice and there was a session that talked about the nuts and bolts about how to write a grant.

Nikki: kind of from the very beginning of the process.

Kristy: Just very practical advice. You know like... this is what each section of the grant. This is what you should never put. Things like that that you don't know. That's good for people at the early stage when they're first starting. Kind of like the big lectures and nuts and bolts.

Nikki: Okay.

Kristy: Maybe as you get further into the process, more of the interactive workshopping.

Nikki: We're coming up with something. I like this.

4.) That's great, thanks, Now I want to turn to some feedback about the format of the K-Club sessions themselves- So, what do you think of the timing and spacing of the sessions? Are these working for you? Anyone…
Probe A: Is there a better time/length, in your opinion?
Probe B: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?

Ximei: I think it's perfect time and space. I think everything is perfect. Ha-ha.

Nikki: Great!

Shan: clinical cycle, [noon] timing isn't good for clinicians, like noon sometimes. Clinical [can't understand] aflack… If you're asking for timing 4pm would be better, we wouldn't be able to make it at noon.

Nikki: So when do you say is good for you? 4 o'clock?

Shan: Yeah, for us by then you are done with clinical rounds late afternoon tends to be lighter.

Nikki: You're ready to finally have lunch. Okay.

Mindy: I would actually agree. For me, very early in the day or at the last thing of the day would be easier just from client care perspective.

Nikki: So like the beginning or end of the day, rather than right in the middle. So if you're traveling I guess it would be nicer for that as well.

Samuel: That would be tough to rope in everybody.

Shan: I might be selfish in saying that ha ha.

Samuel: But if you had two tracks, one for basic science and one for clinical science. Clinical sciences can come at 4pm or something. You know, better for their clinical schedule. Basic science.. everyone loves free lunch… so

Nikki: And they have a more open schedule, maybe?

Samuel: Yeah.

Nikki: Versus clinicians who have booked time.

Samuel: That's right.

Nikki: I see. Maybe if there was some diversification [of times] that could be really helpful.

[00:53:49]

Jordan: I would say, that if you're considering moving it to later in the day that 4 o'clock would be ideal, as opposed to sometimes career development things at Emory are at 5 or 530 and for people who have

childcare responsibilities um in the early career phases would be difficult to get to. Things that are wrapped up by 5 are ideal.

Nikki: Unless they're going to provide daycare or something.

Jordan: Right

All: Ha-ha

Brian: Can't you just poll all your people and see what time is ideal for them to come?

Nikki: If we knew all the people. Yeah.

Brian: Well if they send in their email when they respond for lunch or whatever, right? I just feel like if you make one change it's going to be less convenient for others if you make another change. Noon works pretty good. I agree if you have clinical responsibilities you can't always get there. But you know they put the presentation online and stuff it's very accessible. I just worry that if you put it at 4 or 5 you're going to lose a lot of other people. Maybe experiments already got around again you know I don't know. I would…

Nikki: you're thinking they're doing the best they can with what they have.

Brian: Right. I mean. I just feel like you have a bell curve, noon might hit most of your respondents and actually show up the most. I may be totally off but I just the small sample size might not be representative of everyone. I always think that 12 is fine when I'm on service as a pathologist. I don't think we should change it all cause of that. So…

Nikki: What about the length of time? is an hour good a good amount of time to devote to this?

[all say yes]

Nikki: Sounds like a consensus. What about the monthly spacing?

[all say yes, good, reasonable]

Nikki: I guess no one is burning to have more or less of these. Okay.

Mindy: I think more would be better, but I don't know that I would accommodate it more frequently in my schedule

Samuel: I don't know if the large format would be better. But maybe if you have a smaller focus group every month as well.

Nikki: So not more for everybody? But maybe if you're having different people at different times. More options could be helpful. But no one person's going to come more than this [one time] you think?

(don't know) Yeah, cause I normally have another meeting Mondays at noon. And I skip it once a month. But I wouldn't want to skip it more than once per month.

Nikki: thank you

[00:56:32]

Brief stretch

5.) Next question about the current K-Club- What kinds of sessions have been most effective in your opinion and Why?

6.) And, are there any topic areas that you would really like to see covered in a future session?

[01:02:20]

7.) Thank you, Next I'd like to talk about really improving and expanding the K-Club. So I want you to imagine there were unlimited funds available for this- Within reason! - What investments would you recommend that would be most valuable in helping you secure funding for your own research program? Probe A: What kind of technology could be incorporated into sessions? Like response clickers?

[01:07:45]

Samuel: So we have a lot of private foundations use um… "proposal central". So if we had something like that in house that Emory would sponsor. Then we would be able to submit our grants online go through the process of submitting the grants um

Nikki: It's like a simulation?

Samuel: It's like a simulation. You download grants. Upload our reviews to get through all of the technical things that are required for actual NIH reviews.

Nikki: so you're not caught up with that. So what's it called again?

Samuel: "proposal central"

Nikki: "proposal central". so that's an in-house thing?

Samuel: No that's nationwide.

Nikki: So we don't have it.

Samuel: Private foundations use

Nikki: But we don't have access to doing that.

Samuel: I remember I think the department of pediatrics has something similar to that. I remember using it one time when I was a reviewer for internal grants. I don't remember what it was called though. Or where it was housed.

Nikki: Okay. Sounds useful. What about more feedback during the sessions that we have? Response clickers or something to get people like more kind of real time feedback during the session. About things that we or they want to know.

Kristy: Never found those useful.

Ximei: that's for undergrad education. Because you want that to attract student's attention. I think for this group; most people are really wanting to devote the time to learn. I guess the benefit to spend lots of time and energy to that technology you don't get that much of benefit. That's my opinion.

Nikki: Any other ways you think it could be useful?

Kristy: Just having access to lectures afterward and being able to look at them later. Making that really easily accessible so they can…. [can't understand]

Nikki: So the WebEx system you think is a good use of the technology it's clear do people use those ever? Does it feel as good as being there?

[01:10:23]

Mindy: So I've used it but I've also used WebEx clinically I would suggest for somebody else that were to clinician and doesn't use WebEx and she said it was really confusing and she didn't end up logging in. um so it might be.

Nikki: Has anyone tried it that doesn't use it already?

Samuel: I've used it recently I didn't think it was that bad. I mean yeah you have to install all the components and stuff so if you're not really computer savvy.

Nikki: So it's not the most user-friendly thing that you…?

Samuel: So once you install it it's fine but I don't know if you can sponsor a link to the IT department to do it remotely something like that.

Mindy: She did say that by the time she logging in it was already like 10 minutes late. I don't know what she did wrong but… um… I like the WebEx version but I also use WebEx daily so it's a pretty easy task for me.

Samuel: The thing I found a little frustrating was the WebEx seminars, you can't submit a question afterwards, right? So it would be nice if you could submit a question um but after the fact.

Nikki: During?

Samuel: Not necessarily, well, during would be nice too. Um but after the fact so say I didn't make it to the K-Club meeting and I watched it the Thursday I still have a question, there should be a linked to say submit questions via email or something.

Ximei: but you can fill out through the feedback. You always get email from Barbara to submit feedback. You can ask questions that way.

[01:11:55]

Nikki: place to ask you know have a question whether they'll answer it or not but maybe that could get added.

Ximei: whether that

Nikki: Maybe that's a good place to add it

Ximei: I think it's always included if you have any comments or questions.

But you are talking about question for the speaker?

Nikki: like you want to.

Brian: just email whoever the speak is. Departmental people know if you contextualize the email, like I saw this I'm sure they would most of them would answer. Some might be too busy.

Nikki: Has somebody tried to contact someone afterward? Or wanted to? Follow-up question?

[all]: Not really

Probe B: What about Peer networking opportunities? Social Events? FB group?

[01:13:02]

Samuel: Social events are usually pretty helpful just to even get to know faces. Um. I would not do a Facebook group.

Nikki: wouldn't get on the message board?

Samuel: I don't like to mix work and play or anything

Kristy: I think that focus would help the network

Nikki: so small break out groups? In real like life? Not online.

X: yeah

Kristy: to talk about science not necessarily like a social event

Nikki: shared experiences

X: that will automatically be with your network.

Mindy: I like the idea of having social group, I don't know if it would help with my k application. But a lot of people writing k's are in similar spots in their careers. And they're always good people to you…

you probably have some similarities I like the idea from a social perspective. I don't know if it would make my k application any stronger necessarily.

Samuel: moral support.

Mindy: yeah just another way to meet people who are probably at a similar spot in their career.

Nikki: kind of an indirect way

Mindy: I mean it might help. Exactly.

Laura: I guess I like your idea focus group. I'm not likely to attend things that are just purely social events. Like in the middle of the day or after work. If there's some sort of like structured discussion topic or like that I think I'm going to get something out of more than just meeting new people, I'm more likely to go more likely to prioritize an experiment or a paper or whatever else I'm working on. But that might just be me.

Jordan: No I agree with that most people stay pretty busy so If you're in the middle of something and it's new the likelihood of me doing something work focused would be much more likely for me to go and break away and like have lunch. We do a Tuesday lunch for all of the psychologists here at Egleston. And half the time people can't go and it's cause it's purely social um I think that through [cork?] we used to have working groups and so one of the working groups was focused on um transition and so people from all different divisions and all different stages of careers came together on a regular basis and talked about like transition issues and that was really helpful for me in terms of finding mentorship and making connections with people in other divisions that are doing similar things. Um and so I think you know because I'm a clinical researcher I would do things like wellness physical activity or transition readiness health self-management, mental health those sorts of like break out groups. I'm sure there are other groups that basic scientists could suggest that would be helpful to bring people together.

Nikki: topics to bring people together.

Jordan: Yeah, and to help them to not only meet junior faculty in their area but maybe associate professors that could serve as mentors or collaborators.

Nikki: So more networking with people across different career stages as well would be helpful.

Mindy: And to clarify what I was saying I would completely agree so that if it was at noon I am not there's no way I'm breaking my schedule I was actually thinking more of an annual happy hour that I would probably go to. I don't think I'd end up freeing up my schedule to come over like at noon for something that's just a social.

Nikki: yeah and for people that would feel like they'd automatically want to do that anything that would get you over the hump? Any kind of incentivizing that would get you to do thing you wouldn't otherwise do?

[all]: no

Jordan: I'm being honest. I'm a full time working mom of a toddler like I don't get to see my friends from outside of work. There would be very little that would bring me in on a weekend or afternoon hours' event purely social event.

Kirsty: I think one big thing like an annual happy hour one big thing on a more routine basis I think that people would be more willing to do networking if they also perceived that it was an investment in their own professional development.

Nikki: Okay sounds like you really want it to be tied to that.

[01:17:43]

What would be the best medium?
Probe C: What about an expanded mentor program? How do you think that should look like?

Samuel: it's not necessarily wanting to be connected to more senior faculty it's more educating the senior faculty on how to help the junior faculty cause I think a lot of the senior faculty actually want to help they just don't know what the resources are here at Emory.

Nikki: So we need to focus on them?

Samuel: Yeah. Absolutely. So um I feel pretty well connected with a lot of the senior leadership that I work on a daily basis or weekly basis um but a lot of the times they don't know anything. I ask them something specific well we don't really know but they'll point me somewhere. So if they actually had a toolkit or a monthly newsletter for them for your junior investigators you know these are the things we're focusing on this month. You know cause you can't really ask for an hour of their time either because they're extremely busy too but if they get bored enough to browse an email or have lengths of you know these are the k programs that we're doing or these are the NIH initiatives now or you know or grant related stuff mentoring related stuff then they would be able to pick up on what is important to them. And then letting us junior faculty know this is going out to the mentors and we poke and prod them and say hey did you read this newsletter? This is really interesting. So it makes it more like a team work thing rather than a putting all the pressure on them to do the right thing for us.

Nikki: you already feel like your mentor relationship or your mentoring system is in place well and that's not something that needs attentions. But that they need to work on the relationships you already have rather than informing new relationships with new mentors.

Samuel: yeah

Jordan: I would say that it might be nice in the same way um that the program sponsors 1:1 help with Janet gross it would be great if we had unlimited funds the program could sponsors some 1:1 funding for you to get some outside scientific merit like mentorship and counsel and have somebody else to review your grant from another

Nikki: like a more objective person?

Jordan: Like a more objective person and to have some funds to kind of support that. I know at other institutions um junior faculty as part of their package have some access to mentorship funds. So I don't

know if that could be provided for everyone. Or if there's a certain pool of funds and people would submit applications um to have access to those. But I think that that could be really helpful.

[01:20:43]

Samuel: so to piggy back on that in our division we do get development funds. And I don't know if that's something new because of the stupid salad money division stuff that's coming back to the DOM in the form of overhead through our grants we get money so um but to have a K-Club sponsored travel grant for some kind of monetary value for doing these kind of outreach things um finding somebody to review your grant or having a group of people that are willing to it at an outside institution that would be helpful.

Nikki: Speaking of these sorts of personalized benefits that you might benefit from um would people be willing to if they received some sort of support from the K-Club would they be willing to then pay it back pay it forward and sort of I got mentoring support I will be a mentor in the future I will pass it onto someone else. Is that something that you buy into? Are you interested in that idea?

[all]: yeah

Nikki: I didn't know if people would say I wouldn't want to commit to a future thing.

Samuel: I think a few that are serious about it would be willing to commit.

Mindy: yeah I mean it helps it's a Vida line as well you get something out of it for mentoring

Nikki: you can see the positive on both ends.

Mindy: I would hope I would do it out of the goodness of my heart anyways. But there is a benefit as well.

Samuel: I mean more likely you're going to have a mentee at some point.

Mindy: Right.

[01:22:13]

Nikki: it's good practice in general.

Mindy: But based off of what Samuel said first I completely agree about educating mentors. I felt like one of the frustrating parts of when I would go to a K-Club meeting and learn something helpful but then I have a very senior advisor and it was difficult sometimes to convince him that someone had just told me something we should do something slightly different with the grant and I think that if he heard it not from me but somebody else first it might have been easier to bridge that gap of he saying I should do one thing the person that just talked to me saying I should do something different. Challenging in the application.

Samuel: Maybe having a R or T club.

Mindy: Yeah there you go.

Nikki: and that would be a part of it. Support the k.

Samuel: I think a lot of our training grants have to include obviously training potential. Right? So showing that the mentors are also training in how to mentor. Would be a strength in our training grant proposals.

[01:23:12]
Laura: when you were asking about mentoring or expanding the mentor program were you talking about improving our mentor relationship with our scientific mentor on our grants? Or like career mentoring?

Nikki: Both it's just open ended still. Just the idea of having different kinds of mentors coming from a different area.

Laura: I think what might be helpful I know so one of my colleagues… so my mentor is also the division director so when she was trying to get a promotion it made like discussing negotiating hard. Because her mentor who she should be going to for advice is the person she is negotiating with. Because he's the person hiring her. And so like yeah the idea just sort of a career development or a mentor not necessarily directly tied to your science I think would be helpful. I just like getting more opinions without goal. My mentors a male so it would be nice to have a female mentor. Um.

[01:24:15]

Nikki: So you favor that idea?

Laura: yeah.

Kristy: I think the department of pediatrics as a mentor check-ins for junior faculty. I don't know if K-Club is involved in any of that at all.

Nikki: What's it like?

Kristy: it's a mentor check in. They pair junior and senior faculty and they go through goals. For an hour.

Nikki: it's a one-time sort of thing?

Kristy: like an annual thing but it's just with those mentors that one time but that wouldn't cover everybody in the K-Club.

Mindy: it was described to me as mentor speed dating, so it's basically like people set up a table and people get advice. It's supposed to be very helpful I've heard.

Kristy: Getting different perspective from people in your circle.

Nikki: and if you received that, you would be willing to provide that to somebody else?

Kristy: I would definitely be willing I don't feel qualified to mentor somebody right now but I would do that.

Samuel: Well you do if you have an undergrad, it's just a different type of mentoring.

Shan: and talking about the mentorship um like for a person who comes from a different institution coming in as a fresh sort of PI who could mentor. Like I didn't know many of the researchers at Emory initially confining myself to my division of pediatrics but having a sort of previous people willing to mentor ped k application that would track people. People to come in and say my interest is this this is my mentorship committee I would like to have a nephrologist disease biology.

Nikki: Connected with people based on disciplines. Helpful too?

Shan: if you have a pool of not everyone that's willing to take on mentorship and everything being good at it

Nikki: If you want to connect with someone from a particular background that you might need to collaborate.

Jordan: Almost like matchmaking

[all]: yeah

Jordan: Like I think that would be…

Nikki: Dating and matchmaking

[all]: ha-ha

Jordan: I think some of my most fruitful collaborations with other people in other divisions that I would of never met. I'm in peds team hoc and they are some people I collaborate with now with public health but like I didn't know these people at all but Courtney McCracken worked on my grant and she works on their grants. And she was like hey you should talk to X about Y. I think that that has happened for me organically that cause I've been here for like 7 years. For people who haven't been here as long to come in and have somebody sit down and talk to you about your research interests and help make connections for you would be incredibly helpful.

Nikki: Yup

[01:27:45]

Samuel: to piggy back off that idea I'm looking for people in nutrition and diabetes and I am left. And I don't know what to do. So I'm going to go to their seminars and try to meet some people right but if there was something to facilitate that meeting to bring other departments together and form a more collaborative environment not only for mentoring but also for science.

Nikki: and grant writing

Samuel: and grant writing. That would be extremely helpful.

Nikki: I see a lot of nodding. Okay. Great ideas wonderful. Um.

[01:28:23]

Probe D: What kinds of experts would you like us to bring in to lead discussions in various topics?

Samuel: if we had more money than people at the NIH, NSF….

Nikki: like a real guest star

Samuel: Foundation. Grant people. Review officers. Um. division heads.

Nikki: have them skype in or something.

Samuel: even that. Yeah.

Nikki: the more higher ups the decision makers.

Samuel: Or people who can tell us what the priorities are for mentees or junior faculty and the NIH you know having a SRO discuss that oversees a k grant that comes into the NIH or NHOBI or something. Discuss what they like to see on an application. That would be really helpful for us researchers.

Nikki: Maybe more cutting-edge really up to the minute what's going on right now.

Samuel: Yeah and that expands your horizons to because you would get more ideas of what other institutions are doing just by asking these people. You know. We each stand to benefit a lot from having a professional people come in from the outside.

Nikki: Cross talk with other institutions. Any other ideas? Other kinds of experts or brains you would like to pick?

Jordan: It would be good to um maybe do a session and have a NIH program officer skype in or WebEx in and talk about the best way to maximize their resources. Um cause you know everybody always told you, you should call your program officer. But like okay I call my program officer. What am I supposed to ask them? Um. And come up with how to work through that relationship. What do they think are helpful questions?

Nikki: Interactive kind of sessions.

Kristy: I think even though I've done all my training here at Emory, there's so many resources I just am either not really aware of or I'm not aware of how to tap into them.

Nikki: across the whole university?

Kristy: yeah I mean I keep learning about new things that are available to us. Like I felt at the clinical research boot camp and with these new IT [unclear] that we're having um Emory pediatric IT so I don't know I think those particles which is what's available and how can we tap into it?

Nikki: Need to hear that.

Kristy: Like what's here and how can I interact with it now.

Nikki: maybe keep us up to date on those things. Would probably be good for mentors as well. For them to know. Any other ideas about just those unlimited funds? What you would do with it? IF you could design your perfect K-Club? Any resources outside of the K-Club that you've used that we could steal? Maybe?

[01:32:02]

Unknown: I've gone to talks at conferences and reviewers for journals where they've talked through kind of what they're looking for. I know places do that. I think that's kind of been touched on.

[01:03:14]

Probe E: Do you think mock grant reviews would be worthwhile?

Kristy: I mean it sounds like people would benefit from having small groups maybe on their specific research on their specific aims so maybe if you kept the monthly didactics just once per month but had a 1x/month focus group session.

Nikki: So keep what exists and add to that the smaller groups. What about 1:1 sessions? Do you think that would be helpful.

Mindy: This is Mindy. When I met with Janet and we actually reviewed my application and she approved it when she went through my biosketch and kind of could give specific feedback I think was that probably had the biggest impact on whether or not I get funded.

Samuel: Yeah 1:1 is ideal.

Ximei: Yeah 1:1 is ideal but you may not have that much resources.

Nikki: For everybody.

Ximei: Uh huh, for everybody

Nikki: So, small groups where you can kind of bounce ideas off of each other and work together would be good investment if it can't be 1:1?

Ximei: Or like 3 junior… or 1 or 2 senior for 3 or 4 junior.

Nikki: So pairing senior with junior people to work together.

Shan: I think that for sets… [very hard to understand]

Nikki: That way so each of you are discussing your own program, but it benefits everybody hearing about it. So that's kind of a good compromise between being 1:1 and the bigger group. I think that'd be useful.

Laura: I think if there was some way to facilitate interaction or community, like whenever… a piece of advice someone always gives in grant writing is like have other people read your grant. Not necessarily just your mentor. And not necessarily just your lab mate. But it's hard I guess to find people that are still vaguely in the field or at the same level. You know. That's who you interact with. But if you can somehow facilitate, you're both working on grants and so your willing to take time out.. cause when you ask people who are super busy they may or may not be inclined especially if they are not your good friend. But if you can sort of facilitate a group for people to help each other. Aims or something.

Samuel: So the graduate school has a grants class. They go through all of the stuff. How to write a grant as well as review grant. And that seems to be very helpful for graduate students. I feel like the postdoc office and K-Club more diffuse on this. They don't really have a grantmanship class for K-Club members. We have lectures but it's not 1:1, it's not trading grants between people writing the grants, it's not reviewing them and going through the critiques and I also remember and I forget who put this on um but there manuscript review session or something I think we met 2x. Went through the premise of what we wanted to do and who was writing manuscripts the first time. The second round we were assigned manuscripts and to critique and the second time we actually met with those people in a group of 4 and talked about our critiques and what it was supposed to mean. Clarified a lot of things. We don't really have that small group interaction here at Emory for at least the post-docs and junior faculty. I think that that would be one area that I would recommend we expand.

Nikki: If the K-Club could not just be a you know a lecture this one way, but to get the people in the room together in breakout groups would be…

Samuel: Right. And maybe have K-Club develop a checklist of things you go through when reviewing a grant. So that you…

Nikki: Guide that process?

Samuel: Yeah, cause we still need to learn. So we're expected to know how to write a grant, know how to get funded, and know how to review other people's grants without having a grantsmenship class or some kind of formal didactic training on. That's hard. That's really tough. That's one of the things I struggle with at least.

Nikki: That's something that's needed, that's a gap. At that level beyond grad school level when you're at the postdoc and junior level.

Samuel: at the grad school you actually have the grantsmanship classes.

Nikki: Kind of where you are starting

8.) What type of feedback survey do you think would help inform the organizers of the value of each session and what other topics to address? (Electronic, paper, etc.)
Probe A: Any suggestions for improving the response rate?

Samuel: Well do you know the success of people that come to K-Club versus their funding success rate?

Nikki: Like the outcomes of those people?

Samuel: yeah

Nikki: we don't necessarily, we can look into it

Samuel: I think asking us to do surveys although it's a necessary thing not everyone is going to respond to a survey there's metrics you can probably come up with that don't require us to respond. I mean I don't know how most people share that data. Yeah.

Nikki: Rather than asking people look at what actually comes of it and attend. Do you think paper and pencil would work better than the online survey? Or?

Samuel: might need both

Nikki: Both?

Mindy: give people the option to fill it out right there.

Nikki: so you might be more willing to just fill it out before you walk out the door than to click on it later on?

Samuel: or during the K-Club. So have it at the beginning. Pick up your lunch. Pick up the survey.

Mindy: I think that repeat attendance is a really good metric. When I think about K-Club as well as other similar things that I put on my calendar that I really want to do I feel like whether or not I actually protect that time is an indicator of how useful I actually think it's going to be. Compared to being willing to schedule over it when something comes up.

[01:34:31]

Nikki: Would you still come if there's no lunch?

Mindy: um hm, it helps. But I still would come without the lunch. Yeah.

Samuel: it's nice to multitask

Mindy: yeah

Brian: I'll be honest I am not sure I would sign out the survey just to get the cup. So…

Nikki: the cups not doing it for you?

Brian: I do it because you guys need the feedback you want the feedback I would say I am almost always pretty positive on the feedback because it's very helpful. But if you're trying to get more surveys I don't know your response rate, if you're trying to get more you going to have to have a bigger carrot like lunch. To go and select your lunch you have to go and fill out a survey for… I wouldn't do that cause lunch isn't a big draw for me but it might be a good draw for other people. I'm just being honest. I like the cup, I'd use the cup. But I won't fill out the survey to win the cup.

Samuel: Once you have one you don't need two or three.

[unknown]: I have the cup but I still fill out the survey.

X: I would like to know how like do you go through the feedback seriously cause I think I suggested to form this small group quite many months ago but still not seeing any…

Nikki: Yeah that's what the grant is for and hopefully if we can get new resources we could do new things. You know?

Stacy: the carrot isn't that much.

Brian: it isn't that much

Stacy: Are there other kinds of things that would incentivize. maybe we already asked this something that made me think… like a lunch with the speaker or something like that I don't know is that? Lunch with Janet gross.

[unknown]: if we fill out the survey we get that?

Brian: What carrot would make you more likely...

Samuel: I don't know, I think it would be like a travel grant to support professional development. Or like.. you have to attend 6 meetings out of the year.

Nikki: and do the survey?

Samuel: and then you have to do our grant review session on this travel grant session. Or whatever you want to do and you have to do three check boxes and then you can become eligible and you just apply for that. You don't necessarily have to have a large pot of money for this but cause not everybody is going to go through all the check boxes but something that's a big carrot in front of their faces. Even 700 dollars or 500 dollars whatever.

Stacy: then you'd actually have to attend that many and fill out the survey.

Nikki: So your benefits are compounding

[01:37:52]

Brian: yeah

X: that's a good idea.

Jordan: I think that like if I get an email and it comes in at a time when I'm at my computer and I can do it right then, I'm going to do it because it's the right thing to do. If I get an email on a busy clinic day and I don't see it again and it's not at the top of my inbox I'm going to 100% forget about it. So I think that having paper and pencil surveys here to fill out before you leave and just mentioning to people at the end about how important and valuable this feedback is and what it's used for most everybody will fill it out. And turn one back in on the way out.

Nikki: would you all agree with that?

Brian: yeah

Jordan: I know that's a pain because then someone has to enter the data. But I think you're going to get a higher response rate then by trying to follow-up with people after the fact.

X: I still prefer you sit in front of computer and really think about what you want. Because for me like if you're in a hurry, just fill out check marks and you might not get meaningful [data]

Nikki: particularly for the free response section

X: for me I still prefer the link. I think that Barbara always sends it twice something reminder I think that's helpful.

Nikki: multipronged approach

[Mindy?]: so back to the clickers we said we didn't want you can use them for that purpose. I think if it's for the last 5 minutes everybody would be sitting there and probably do it.

Shan: online smart phone and pin that shows up. Some answers don't need a clicker. But for more personalized feedback …..

Jordan: your Probably about getting more free responses via email or something like I mean. But if you want like was this helpful or not that response should be able for people to check that off. People might not write as much on paper. But you miss people that didn't get to the email.

Jordan: If you want quantitative data get it while people are there, if you want qualitative data free response new ideas that's going to probably have to happen after the fact

Nikki: with a big carrot

[01:40:59]

1:40:

9.) That was wonderful, okay last I just have a couple of big picture questions before we wrap up. So, outside of the K-Club what do you think have been the most helpful resources for your research success?

10.) What do you think mentees need the most in order to increase their chances of successfully obtaining research support and funding?

[01:41:46]

X: I think me I uh need some feedback. So like Brian said how fail early and often. But how did you learn from those failures.

Nikki: Personalized feedback

X: I need either peer or senior investigator to because I see the proposal I wrote it didn't get funded. But next year it funded to another person they are using the same disease model. I'm kind of like it's definitely I got the idea but how do I convey to be successful. I need those kind of feedback. That's why I suggested to form these kind of small working group or focus group to kind of critique…. It's similar for at this stage I've reviewed many other people's manuscript so I know how to look for things. It helped me know how to write the paper because I know how the reviewer think about from that angle. At this stage I don't know I don't have that many experience. I don't know how the reviewer think about my proposal. That's why I kind of trial and error. I don't know. That's why that'd be the most important. Another thing is for um maybe not just limited to k maybe for junior faculty for a R21 or some kind of how do we approach that.

Nikki: K to R

X: Yeah.

Nikki: What do you think Shan? The thing that would help you to succeed.

Shan: grantmanship… I think many of us do great data. But um so …

Nikki: like where to apply to?

Shan: yeah where to apply and in terms of the structure of the grant. I think having 1:1 close peer review of it and also having Janet gross and other people about how a grant should read

Nikki: Kind of another stage, data to grant before you've started

Shan: So most of us have be in the lab or in the clinical we have a good idea. But how do we present the main thing. And if multiple involved and having a close peer review. Small groups.

Nikki: What do you think Kristy?

Kristy: Maybe more specific mentorship. Maybe starting out mentorship like a speed dating or whatever you want to call it

Nikki: When you say more specific do you mean like specific disciplined?

Kristy: Like specific to me and my situation.

Nikki: Like personalized?

Kristy: Personal.

X: Last time daily um talk have to find the click, the mentor and the mentee. How do we find other than your scientific advisor how do we find the real good mentor to kind of…

Nikki: Kind of what you need. What they bring to the table.

[01:45:13]

Samuel: Well-equipped mentor team is important. So a lot of the k grants require you to have a mentor team not just one mentor. But if they don't know how to help us... then how is that going to help us in the long run. So I think that's the most important thing.

Nikki: I'm seeing a theme here.

Laura: Um I guess just like getting feedback and advice in grant writing I guess. Knowing um it's like easy to get in a silo and it sounds awesome to you and sounds awesome to your mentor then the reviewers don't get it… apparently you assume they knew something. I don't know like more feedback.

Nikki: Like external feedback.

Laura: like I got questions. Not clearly I didn't mean that. But I guess it wasn't clear. Ha-ha.
[01:46:22]

Brian: I don't know I would echo everything everyone said. Feedback. Chewing it over if you're trying to measure getting a grant from an early stage. Getting feedback to make sure that you're even applying for the right grant. Cause if you're failing it's often not the science it's probably some other part of the application. Or maybe they're not ready or. So I guess early engagement is a different thing I could say for me as a resident. Maybe if I were thinking about doing clinical science to have reached out and started thinking about the k awards and mentorship team for me to build when I was a fellow and then yeah when you get time to start writing the grant where I'm not out first year post-doc if you can get a group of chiseled veterans together and to chew your thing over and make sure all the I's are dotted and t's are crossed. Probably increase proficiency rate.

You know in my department I just have to comment they don't really… this is kind of new for them. So I wouldn't want them to evaluate me for a k award cause they don't really know what the grants looking for… So the other side is getting the faculty on board with coming to these seminars. Knowing about all the different R's and K's grants such that they can provide [not sure what he says here].

Samuel: I think that's the beautify of having outside people NIH or SROs coming in giving us these talks. Not only are we interested in what the K's want to do but the mentors may think can ask questions about R grants or something you know? So have a carrot in front of them to come to these talks.

Nikki: Right

[01:48:12]

Brian: I don't know how much you guys talk about the k01 and maybe directing one of these towards the strict PHD track 99%.. those mentors I think at Emory could be more engaged in
Learning about the application. What sort of science you should be shooting for and what the mentorship team… I think in a large part of what I've seen with the 10 or so people I've known they find that information out on their own and write the application mentor kind of checks out on it. Both mentor and mentee were involved in the K-Club and were in some sort of agreement [hard to understand] application really meet milestones to be successful.

Jordan: I would echo what you were saying about funds to support external review for scientific merit. Um especially for the approach section and the research plan section for the k would be helpful. I also think that some um you know this is tacky. But one of the things that NIH is looking for is that you have

someone on your mentorship team that has a R01 an active R01 right now. UM so I think some targeted match making on like so maybe this isn't your primary
scientific mentor so maybe your scientific mentor doesn't have active R01 funding right now. But this is someone here at the institution that does and is similar in this area and that would be a good relationship to foster. Rather than to NIH reporter search every single person in the institution. Um you know finding some ways to connect to meet that check mark would be helpful too.

[01:50:02]

Mindy: Um I think having examples of current applications was probably the most helpful thing in writing my application um so both during some of the K-Clubs they'd present like good example and poor examples of different parts of the application and then being connected with people who have successful k funding and feel similar to me was really helpful. Those people are willing to share their applications and that was beneficial. Make more of those connection so you can get examples of actual grants that have already be written.

11.) And, is there anything else anyone would like to share with us?

[01:50:44]

Brian: I think the K-Club is really pretty awesome but you know everything can be improved. Thanks for doing the K-Club and having that as a resource for us.
Mindy: it also nice job keeping me on task. I think if I did go to a meeting and it kind of a repetition application of something I already heard it kind of made me remember that this is something I really want to do and to prioritize. I think it was good in that purpose as well.

Nikki: A little external motivation

Closing Remarks:
Thank you all so much for sharing your perspectives and experiences with us! Your comments will help inform the K-Club development. We appreciate the time that you have spent with us! We will send you an executive summary that describes the outcomes of this project and please do let us know if you go home and think about it some more and come up with anything else you'd like to add to the conversation we had today- Thank you!

Focus Group:	Focus group B, Early career –with some funding transcript
Date:	3/30/2017
Attendees:	Staci, Miriam, Ale, Camille, Will, Ravi, Kehmia, Lisa, Beth

12:15: Opening:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this K-Club focus group. My name is Nikki Llewellyn and I'm the manager of evaluation research for the ACTSI, which is one of the co-sponsors of the K-Club. I will be the moderator of this discussion today and this is Jamie Adachi, soon-to-be public health graduate at Rollins, she will be assisting with the focus group and taking notes.

We are really excited to have you all here today. We have been planning this focus group for a long time and we can't wait to get your valuable input on the future of the K-Club program. This is really all about you, supporting you, helping you to reach goals, so your opinion is what we really need. Stacy and Barbara are going to be writing a grant to get some funding to expand the program, so we're hoping that this interview will help the directors of K-Club gain some valuable insight and ideas for areas of expansion and improvement to really take the program to the next level. We really want to hear your stories, your ideas, your frustrations, your wish list!

We've split the respondents into several different focus groups based on where people are in their careers. This way we thought we could get some really tailored ideas to fit the needs of different types of people who use the K-club. From your group, we're specifically interested in learning what types of support and education you believe have been most instrumental in allowing you to successfully fund your research program. What really made a difference, and what would make a difference going forward?

I wanted to tell you a little more about the format of this focus group. We want everyone to get a chance to have their say, so please jump in or raise your hand to let me know if you have something to add to any question or comment. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions and we want to get diverse responses, so don't feel that you have to agree with others in the room- just speak your mind. We just want to know about your experiences with the club and how it has impacted your career. We'll be calling you by name a lot, that's to help with coding, and it would be helpful for you to identify yourself when you chime in as well- like, 'this is Nikki, and I think…'. If you ever feel uncomfortable answering a question, you can always pass.

And we want to let you know that we'll be recording the session today so that the results can be very carefully analyzed after this. We don't want anything you've said to go to waste. The only people who will see the recording or the transcript will be the K-Club leadership and you'll only be identified by first name. Recording the session on video helps us to know who is speaking when and to get the full meaning of what people are saying, things like gestures and so forth, so does anyone mind if we use video rather than audio recording today?

Okay, are there any questions before we begin? Okay, we'll start the recording now.

Introductions*: First I want to start with some introductions so that we all get to know a little bit about each other before we get into it. We're going to go around the circle, introduce yourself:*
say your first name,
your department,
your general research area,
and tell us what is the best career advice you've ever received from a mentor?

I'll start: Again I'm Nikki, I'm with the ACTSI which is part of the Emory School of Medicine, my PhD is in developmental psychology, where I studied mental health in young people, but since graduate school I've moved into health evaluation research, most recently I've been focusing on evaluating the bibliometric output of ACTSI, the publications that have come out of the program. The best advice I remember is just to expect failure, roll with it, learn from it, and be pleasantly surprised when you actually succeed- especially true for grant applications

1.) Thank you! Okay, here's my next easy question: how did each of YOU hear about the K-Club and what do you think would be the best way to reach colleagues like yourself? We'll go around the circle once more

- *Probe A: How do we reach the audience that can benefit? Facebook, Twitter, Email newsletter?*

14:34

Stacy: Barbara Stall. ha-ha. When I was interviewing am mentioned a number of things including the K-Club as something for faculty development and someone early in career. am and the numerous emails we get from Barbara. am. So I think that's it.

Miriam: Well I hear about the ongoing meetings through email. So there's announcements. I was actually co-founder of the K-Club. So I knew about it very early on. Ha-ha. But I did very little work compared to Andy Shane who's a phoneme.

Nikki: And what do you think is the best way to get the word out to people.

Miriam: Um well I think email's very effective cause that's where all of the lectures and am invitations. And I think also having senior mentors aware of the opportunity for their mentees is probably beneficial.

Ale: I knew actually quite late in my stay at Emory I didn't hear much until I was already assistant professor in the last four or five years. Um. And I knew I guess with other post-docs in the division that were coming for the K writing process or different classes. What would be the best way place to reach? I think one is how you communicate and probably email or mentors will be a good way but also maybe more metrics about what you can do if you kind of do this path of kind of ask for help and how is the rate of success of people that is compared to people that doesn't do it.

Nikki: Success stories? Some data maybe.

Ale: Umhm.

Nikki: Okay.

16:53

Camille: Um yeah. I found out about K-Club probably through the department of medicine. They have I think at this point they have a well-established research community and set of resources. And I also you know get I'm part of an email distribution list where K-Club comes up all the time. I think that was kind of in development probably as K-Club also being formed. I think now you know I am trying to get the word out to new faculty so the more that things can be integrated into orientation processes for new people and targeted emails to high you know populations of folks on campus that would be you know targeted folks that would potentially high utilizers. So, like every year the MSCR class their names are going to be fed into the distribution list for K-Club or something so that it's not all on the faculty or other people to mention it but there's some ways if you become part of a certain cohort on campus you're automatically put on some of these distribution lists. I don't know if that's possible or not. But it...

Nikki: Multi-pronged approach there. Different group might be part of okay...

18:09

Will: Same general comment. Email this is the pediatrics um listserv that's coming through. And then I agree it would be really helpful to have the um mentors more involved in encouraging cause a bad transition to attending last often. I've been encouraging my more junior faculty to come to certain groups especially the topics I found most helpful.

Nikki: To specific sessions.

Will: Correct.

Nikki: Okay

18:40

Beth: Yeah and I think I also heard about it through email. I was in the certificate program but for the master's program so maybe early on there too. And I think email is definitely a good way although you run the risk.. we get so many emails... so I like the idea of you know if there's certain targeted groups to make sure um to make it slightly less generic email in a way that might... you know people may notice more than just...

Nikki: What other groups do you have in mind so you said the MSCR group? The incoming orientation.

[Unknown] Anybody that has a k award certainly. But even post doc. There may be post docs groups that we out to be thinking about if we're trying to develop...

Ale: In science I mean in basic research normally k awardees are postdoc. So...

Nikki: Alright. And mentors as well?

19:31

[Will?]: There's a SOM listserv. And I think it's all PIs on grants the SOM has sent out amount [research investigators?]

Nikki: Okay. As much as we can get.

Lisa: And I was going to mention in addition to email cause I definitely with each advancing year of my career I get more and more emails. I am starting to get to a point of like I can't deal with too many emails. Just the visual by the elevators has been really helpful to cue in like oh yeah right that K-Club I saw it I was excited about it and I'll come. You know so I think that's helpful to have a multi-pronged approach of visual stimulation as well that's not a computer. Um so I think that's great. I'd agree that fellows are important to target and I think we need to work on getting them more involved cause as I look back at the K-Clubs I've attended I don't think I've seen that many of our fellows being present. But it's so important for them to get looped in now as they're thinking about k's because that transition from fellowship to k and early faculty is a more challenging one so I think just [funding that?] in our fellowship programs is you know not a required event but a very much of a part of the fellowship would be a good idea.

20:36

Beth: Those would be easy groups to pull.

Kehmia: Yeah I heard through email as well. And I think it would be helpful to get the word out early on and um postdocs career because for my case for example. I think I came in for the 1st time at year at year 3... I did 5 years of postdoc and it may be helpful to start a little early while you're thinking about actually applying.

Nikki: And letting people know that it's for them too. Even if you're not actively applying yet.

Kehmia: Right. So you wait maybe till the very end when you're finishing your postdoc. So maybe it's helpful to start early getting the word out. But emails fine for me too.

Ravi: I also heard about it through email.

21:35

12:35:

2.) Okay, here's my next question that I'd like to ask the group- , We don't have to go around the table, anyone can jump in as they think of something they want to say, and please speak up if you think of something you want to add to what someone else says…

I want to turn to some feedback about the format of the K-Club sessions themselves, to begin with, what do you think of the timing and spacing of the sessions? Are these working for you? Anyone…
Probe A: Is there a better time/length, in your opinion?
Probe B: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?
21:35

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- *Probe A: Is there a better time/length, in your opinion?*
- *Probe B: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?*

Mariam: I think monthly is good and I think an hour is what most people can manage.

Nikki: You designed it so... yeah...

All: Ha-ha

Miriam: No I think it's perfect. And especially providing lunch that helps people actually come.

[Unknown] Gives incentive because we should all hopefully be eating so multitask.

Miriam: Lunch helps a lot cause people don't have to go somewhere else for lunch and come to a lecture for an hour.

Nikki: Saves time.

Ravi: Pretty good at starting and stopping on time. So you feel like you're going to be able to put it in your schedule.

22:34

Nikki: Okay. Do people feel like they want to come every time so or is it more just like I'll come occasionally and it works for that... more or less?

Stacy: So I guess I will say I started with the half day Monday clinic and I came very often initially until I switched to full day and it became a challenge but I think the good thing about it one with the time and is that there's with the WebEx offering and there's related the recording so if for some reason your schedule doesn't permit. I think that's just as important as having food. Um. So for those of us who maybe they're just schedule doesn't let you attend physically for whatever reason.

Nikki: *Probe B: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?*

23:26

Miriam: I think topic depending on the topic. So for example, if you're present a topic and then it's clear that some people would want more detail on that I think it would be to offer a 1:1 would be very helpful.

Nikki: In addition to the monthly session.

Miriam: Yeah in addition to the 1 hour overview. Um. There's something you don't need more time on. There's somethings... like how to structure specific aims everybody would want a 1:1. How to you know find a good mentor a 1 hour talk is great.

Nikki: So depending on the type of thing... What other types of topics would be good for 1:1 or small group?

Kehmia: How would you structure, small group would work

Kehmia: Oh sorry, I think my question was related to that how would you um structure 1:1 because I could totally see Janet having to do several of these. Um.

Nikki: Or maybe small groups?

Kehmia: Yeah. Every speaker that presents a particular topic then you have them offer a 1:1?

Nikki: What would you want?

Kehmia: That's something to think about um. That would be great so maybe a small group yeah would work maybe

Nikki: Break out.

Ale: You can pair people that are at slightly different stage of career. Um they're more available maybe that um say they're writing a grant go over like specific aim pages or where is the right place to send it. Or these type of things that you just...

25:08

Nikki: So like follow up?

Ale: Yeah

Lisa: Like an application, kind of like your putting into practice what it was you know said and done and I wonder if something about small groups that you know say if it was on you know the biosketch then you'd had a small group session where like 5-6 people bring their biosketch and you guys go over those together. Things like that. Really tying the lecture and content with an action and how does this actually impact my career.

25:32

Nikki: A more hands on practical kind of follow-up to some of those

25:36

Stacy: So, I can't think sort of the sessions beyond grant writing. A lot of our comment were related to k preparation would require 1:1 and this maybe sort of my bias and I'm only thinking of the k-related topics and within that Janet already offers her small group 2-3/year sessions and she's available for 1:1 so maybe if we can clone Janet that would be great but I guess outside of that you sort of have a quality control issue when you're doing these different subgroups of sharing biosketches and applications and things like that.

Camille: I wonder if there would be a way of creating an annual academic year um set of small groups that would plan you know kind of the peer mentoring with a senior person that would plan to meet after the monthly session to do some intensive follow up with each other and maybe if it's around specific aims and the next month's topic isn't something as interesting that group might stick with the specific aims topic for a couple of months meetings. So you would have your own little accountability group even that you are meeting with during like a

Nikki: So you're talking about having a group that stays the same throughout the year.

Camille: yeah cause I think logistically trying to set up a small group after a 1 month session would be pretty difficult. So you might set up some small... people that are willing to commit to that set it up for the academic year you would have a chance to meet people from other you know departments and idea would be you would have a senior guide maybe for 4-5 people and you're going to meet regularly and you would discuss whatever you want to but the K-Club sessions might be a jumping point for topics even.

27:39

Nikki: So you've got your big group monthly and then everybody who wants to be split up into these smaller breakout satellite groups that stick together throughout the year.

Camille: Then you might y'all can keep going if you want to or the next academic year you might split up and meet other people

Nikki: What do you guys think about that?

Camille: so it's not a long term commitment

Ravi: It would helpful then you could group people applying for a k99 or versus k23 versus k08 I think you could have people that are in at least more thematically aligned areas. As opposed to the large group.

Nikki: So you can get a little more specificity into what they need.

28:15

Lisa: I think in trying to make it interdisciplinary you know so you have an epidemiologist, an immunologist, you know some people from different realms I think you know the best learning I had during my postdoc was there's a group called Kazazi and we all kind of did maternal and child health work but we were all interdisciplinary so the biostatisticians and epidemiologist you know lab person and that was a real strength and people were at different stages of the career. Um. But all it was all horizontal peer mentoring but there was one person that was a little more senior that would be group. And then it's also small enough so it's not a huge group. So definitely not more than 6ish people.

28:54

Nikki: yeah, okay. Anyone see any obstacles to this idea?

[All] Time, scheduling

Lisa: I don't know too I feel like they get that kind of experience with their own groups though in terms of the research groups that's they're apart of you know fellows feel like they get that from their mentors if they have those kinds of meetings or not

Ale: Time and quality control when you mentioned you don't want to have a lot of people that don't know exactly what they're doing.

All: ha-ha

Ale: That's difficult because always with your more senior expert person, more problems with your time managing that happens so. I don't know how much redundancy also with the university are of this type of things. That is also something that...

Nikki: We want to fill a gap

All: Yeah

Miriam: If the series is focused on k grants it is a fairly narrow audience so it will only be postdocs, fellows who are considering an academic career and first... 1-3 year faculty. After that it's really not a practical or relevant focus. I mean every once in a while you can get a K year 4 or 5 but it's not going to be...

Nikki: Are you thinking of expanding beyond that idea at all...?

Will: Because you'd can tell us exactly what to think because you're doing a focus group to figure out...

All: ha-ha

Will: Focus group to encourage conversation. You I really viewed it as an extension of early faculty development. And I had no intention well I quickly moved away from wanting to write a k for a number of reasons and I used it to help me write grants for other grants. So I almost see we talked about the class uh that everybody seems to be very fond of but I saw the K as an extension of that faculty development.

Ale: It's a little bit different for basic researchers because we do it much earlier. I wrote my got my K in my 3rd year postdoc because you have to be a postdoc to get a k. K99 that's the only one we can apply. So you really you have to target the postdoc very early.

Miriam: Wait you have to be a post doc to get a K?

Ale: A k99 we do is the only one that applies to people who do the type of research the bench research that we do.

Kehmia: I got a K01 though.

Ale: My research is basic and all the people who does the basic research and um they only k that we can get is the k99 and you have to for the k person

Miriam: What about the k08? If you're already faculty as a basic scientist and...

Ale: Maybe. But my type of research no get a k08.

Stacy: But I think to Ravi's point it's maybe helpful to have the subgroups to have the k08, k0, k99 to speak to those specific issues

Stacy Heilman: Is the k-club a misnomer?

All: Yeah

Stacy Heilman: it's kind of our brand right but is it a detraction

Ale: Yeah, actually I thought it was more directed towards postdocs because and I see them for most of you it's more for a junior faculty. So for me K ends with your postdoc.

32:19

Stacy Heilman: So you think a name change...

Stacy: But that's good for people looking for a k...

Stacy Heilman: right

Stacy: Ha-ha

[Camille?] When I saw VA, so we were always wondering do VA career development awards count?

Miriam: "Early Career Development" I mean that's not a catchy name but that's I agree that's how I kind of think of it in my mind and we called it K-Club um

Nikki: "K and Friends"

Miriam: Yeah..

All: ha-ha

[Kehmia?] "K and Friends" is cute and catchy. Cause career development doesn't have the same ring to it.

32:56

Stacy Heilman: So there are people that didn't think the K-Club was for them? Even though you can derive benefit from...?

Ale: Yeah I didn't know because I felt a little bit strange when you start talking because all of you have been in sessions I have never been in any sessions except the one you invited me to about the K and R transition

All: Ha-ha

Ale: ...because I thought that this was directed to mostly postdocs. That was my idea. And um yeah. When I was invited here was kind of to give my and give eldest they was particularly similar to my reality because they were interested in how you transition from k99 to r01 so. yeah.

33:48

Ravi: Coming to the sessions there's a lot of senior mentors that attend as well and even people who do not mentor when things like the new biosketches come out some of those sessions so I think it is broader. I can confess I still come to the K-Clubs probably for the free lunch...

All: Ha-ha

Ravi: I get something out of it even... after that

Camille: How about "Research Rocks" the stepping stones to build your career

Kehmia: I like that...

Ravi: the theme is getting a grant regardless

Kehmia: We need money really bad

Nikki: "We need money club"

Ravi: And what you are teaching is applicable to a lot of the things. Aside from ones that are specific in the development sections in the career development awards. They're pretty broad to most funding

Ale: But K-Club what is your main objective what is your mission. I guess to help people advance their career. But what is the tool that for you guys is more important. Is grant funding? Is I don't know?

Miriam: I was really success in early career is how I thought of it. If I look over the most recent years which I had nothing to do with and it's really done a nice job of covering the spectrum of what you need to be a success in a research containing career. Right? Cause not every that comes is even research primarily. They might be thinking about research.

35:25

Ale: I think what happened is we have a different happening when you have a mixture of different [don't know] that we do research because for us I would say 95% is funding. I mean it's difficult for you to get a faculty appointment if you don't have a good track of funding. And it's different for someone that is position and want to do research because they can get the position and start to apply for a smaller grant or the strategy is different. So for us, I think that it is very focused and successful grant application.

Miriam: We actually have to get funding or they make us go back to clinic.

36:08

All: ha-ha

Miriam: So don't get to do research unless we have funding. So I mean you might get people these day the clinical faculty aren't even getting good packages within the division. But there are some differences but we also struggle.
Ale: Yeah

Kehmia: Or the other way of saying that is we also focus on funding

36:32

Nikki: So there's early career, there's people who are just thinking about it, there's people in the midst of applying and also people... what are about coming back even after you have an award and want to see how things have changed maybe? Keep up to date on things? Is that sounds like a possible area. It also sounds like there's also this sort of trickle down for mentors where mentors might need to come in and know what is going on so they can pass that on to the people they work with?

Will: It's almost like if you're thinking about designing a curriculum and the curriculum um could have a general core meant for basic things like how to write a biosketch or aims page or something like that. And then you can alert the mentors that this is going to be broader you might want to come to this one because it's going to cover these things and that you can kind of branch out from there.

37:20

Ale: And maybe the name can be misunderstand. For me I have fellows working in my lab. I didn't think it would be useful for me to be here to also kind of guide them I don't know.

Ravi: Sometimes all these notices about changes like appendices, rigor, predictability... I think this is at least the only forum I think that at least somebody does the work to do all the work and pair it down for what you need to know.

Miriam: Rollins does a nice job with it too. When there's a change they have education lectures.

Stacy: But that's something that's beneficial to all stages of your career.

Miriam: Rollins targets their broadly. They just say lecture on biosketch changes. Or lecture on research reproducibility.

Nikki: Do you think the K-Club could serve a gap by getting more specific or is it better to be broad like that? Or is that redundant to what they're doing in Rollins.

Stacy: I mean I think... redundancy sometimes is good. I think also feasibility in terms of the realities of our schedules and being able to go. So I wouldn't recommend per se that what's currently known as the K-Club sort of take out the pieces that are at Rollins because then that may mean that several people who can only come to this phase when you get it and I don't think Rollins does WebEx and all the other fun things.

39:05

Miriam: Yeah, no I wasn't saying to use that instead. I totally agree with you.

Nikki: So we like that format

Miriam: Yeah

4.) Next question about the current K-club- What kinds of sessions have been most effective in your opinion and Why?

Beth: I'm thinking of more than one but when people come and are telling their story and you have different voices that are telling their version of whatever that story is and I find those to be very helpful to hear what someone's journey has been what's worked for them what hasn't worked for them.

Nikki: Do you mean on a panel?

Beth: Yeah. But I mean sometimes it's like the last one was...

Nikki: The mentoring one?

Beth: Yeah... like you know he gave a lot of stories within his one story is why it felt similar to me but it wasn't it a panel it was one person. But... um. In general I like hearing people talking about themselves and their experience in whatever venue that is whether it's an individual speaker or panel.

40:20

Stacy: I can't name a specific one. But I feel like each session I've been to I've had a concrete takeaway. There was always something tangible that I left with that I could use. Um and that's very important when time is limited. You want to feel like your time is being used effectively to be able to say that is a good thing.

Miriam: I can't remember the session but I remember like learning about what the reviewers think and back now I am a reviewer and so now it's kind of like ohhhhh ha-ha. But I got grants early on because people were saying this is how reviewer's gonna look at that.

Nikki: getting their perspective.

Miriam: Yeah. Really understanding who you're writing for.

Ale: I haven't been much of the K-Club, but one of the things that definitely helped me a lot was that I start NIH was very interested in introducing junior people to their study session and it had been that I was at a symposium and I started review before I had my R01 and that make a huge difference. Being there and understand how you reply to a the A1 how you do it how like be able to navigate the website NIH and be able to get the information that I need where different institution success rate what can be different from one study section to the other all of that for me was huge.

Nikki: So you like the details that really get into how to navigate

42:10

Ale: I have noticed many people that are quite senior that don't really know them.

Nikki: Can be stymied by that

Stacy: I know Janet does that and parts of the sessions do that where she pulls out things but maybe it would be good to have that as part of the formal curriculum just put up the formal application and review it from the mindset of a reviewer to see non-punitively.

42:33

[unknown]: In Janet's class wasn't there a practice grant reviewing in one of the classes.

I thought she pulled out parts.

No she does do that but I thought there was one class maybe in the master program that we like pretended that we were reviewing grants.

Ale: NIH has a lot of resources.

Helpful to see what it's like if you've never reviewed grants before.

Ale: But NIH actually a lot of the resources that many people don't use them. But they have a lot of mock reviews and well they have a lot of information. Maybe sometimes you can invite... they showed us those videos I remember in class and I looked at some of them.

43:18

Ravi: We have a fairly large k library so maybe good to give people volunteer or have a session or something separate to have people look at different k applications that are related to what they're doing and then have a panel that internally that reviews that would go over thoughts and let people see what some issues are

Nikki: Kind of getting into the discipline specific kind of areas?

Ravi: Not specific but kind of an actual view of what a k application would look like. What people would of thought if it if they had seen it come across their eyes and what the reviewers thought of it when it went to NIH.

Nikki: So it's good for the early stage people?

Camille: We did a mock review couple of years ago with pediatrics and medicine where we had... did.. samples of grants that'd been success but were willing to let their grant be reviewed and had a senior/junior... had a senior/junior pair that reviewed each grant and came together for an actually panel and did the discussion and people really seemed to enjoy it. They're going to do it again this summer I think. But even had one faculty member who played the grumpy reviewer on the panel. Ha-ha. Exactly.
44:44

Ravi: Maybe make it easy so at least... I did one at NICHD that was like a mock but they make you review the whole thing. It seemed like it was a little more of a time commitment for the time they gave. So, even maybe a names page and a career development plan and something that isn't as focused on the science as much as some of the other aspects. Because I think the people on the trial....

Miriam: I might disagree with that though.

Ravi: Cause I think the people that are they may not be as expert on the science.

Miriam: But this is the thing... so I'm on study section and I end up reading 6 grants and at least one of my is a P01, which means its 300-400 pages and so then so literally I will spend like I started tracking

the hours... 16-20 hours reading grants before I go to the study section meeting, which is a 2 day meeting. SO it's incredibly time consuming and one of the things I've learned most importantly that it's such a pain to read these grants. And so I think if I had learned that earlier on, I like all this stuff about kind of making things pop off the page like figures that summarize, it's actually, that's more important than what it says. Because a reviewer who is on hour 18 of reading these dense grants. You just cannot even absorb stuff anymore.

[unknown]: That's why the white space is important.

Miriam: I wish that people, I had learned that earlier and I think if you made people actually read 4 grants in a row...

[all] ha-ha

Miriam: when they... before they write their K. I bet they'll get a lot more grants

[all] ha-ha

46:30

Camille: I mean that could be one of the small group activities is a mock review for the group...

Miriam: And make them read like a bunch of....

[all] ha-ha

Will: Has there been a k-club on how to respond and revise an application based on reviewer comments? I couldn't remember if I had been to one but I think that's a really important skill set I think someone had mentioned rejection... but I'd take more feedback for improvement so learning how to do that. I have a mentor who helped me with that. That really taught me how to nail. I think I've mentioned Larry before. Larry is an excellent guy for bringing to K-Club if you haven't already to go maybe over topics like that and feasibility as well. I think I mentioned that as well.

47:18

Stacy Heilman: I think that sometimes those kinds of topics are a bit difficult to operationalize because do you just pick one person's response to reviewers...? Or do you pick out examples?
Will: or how do you approach the topic of getting feedback. You know? Once you get scored and how to prioritize what you address or what you do not address and what you ignore. To me that would be... I don't know who if there's a handbook behind that. But that would be...

Miriam: And when not to resubmit. Cause I just saw the latest figures. If you don't get reviewed you have a 15% chance of getting funded. If you don't get scored the first time just by the way. So when not to bother.

47:58

Will: We need a hint that you shouldn't go forward with that idea. Maybe... but then if you get scored. The approach differs in where you're falling on the percentiles. Right? And then you're going to

approach this percentile this percentile differently... at least that's the way we've gone about it as a lab. We said okay we have a better chance for this we're really going to target this one. and these are the things we're willing to compromise in terms of the approach...

Miriam: I think that'd be really helpful because the reality is that we are all resubmitting.

Ale: If we're lucky

48:30

Samuel: Approach to rejection or not getting funding the first time.

Stacy: It seems so negative. It's valuable. But maybe a different name.

5.) Who do you think can benefit from K-Club? People who have not yet been funded or those who already have funding or both?
Probe A: Can one size really fit all?

6.) Thank you! Next I'd like to talk about really improving and expanding the k-club. So I want you to imagine there were unlimited funds available for this- Within reason!- What investments would you recommend that would be most valuable in helping you secure funding for your own research program?
Probe A: What kinds of experts would you like us to bring in to lead discussions in various topics? Science writers? NIH?

49:36

Miriam: So can I ask the goal? What's the goal? To get more people funded? To get funded? to get the people who are getting funding to get more funding?

Nikki: What do you think's the most important goal?

Miriam: Better science, curing kids

Nikki: What do you think will get us there?

Kehmi: I guess I think of that 2 ways and this maybe out of the scope I think if I had millions of dollars and I can use part of that to maybe fund pilot grants so that people can get data to then get more funding. Um esp. given the current landscape. If I couldn't do that and we were sort of solely focusing on creating better scientists and um ideally with that doing work that will help their patient population science we are all taking care of kids. Then that goes to some of the other ideas we were talking about in terms of ways to enhance the curriculum.

Nikki: So you are thinking more on the improving science side of things?

Kehmi: yeah, and sort of using your language and trying to think through it too I don't it's sort of hard to define what's good science in some ways. there's good methodological practice if that's a word but um globally defining good science...

Brian: It really comes down to salesmanship though cause your science can be perfect... I have a rule where every grant I fall asleep 3 times then I'm done. Um and so like cause if you can't tell a good story it's just like writing a good journal article right you're selling something. The presentation.

Kehmi: those skills are translatable across all that we do.

Brian: Correct. And really teaching somebody how to write and tell a story and to put together an argument is so foundational. It's almost like an aha moment that goes off and now I understand how to make this argument and get the funding uh and move up to where it's not a question any more it's I'm getting scored every time and getting funded.

51:54

Ale: And why give some funding and try to engage private funding's to research. I think really is kind of the future where we are going to move. Especially if Trump stay in the government so I don't know. To me I don't do any kind of translational research so it's always harder for me to think how to do it but I'm sure that the funding of research even at the university would start depending on private funds and people don't know... like philanthropy or companies that want to put money in research because they can get something I mean... I don't know. I think it would be a challenge for universities to do that to try and engage society that have no idea of what we do

Nikki: How to make the science speak to a larger audience.

52:56

Stacy: So I may be ignorant, but does the K-Club have sessions on non-NIH funding as well as um partnering with industry for research.

Stacy Heilman: We've touched upon industry. The may session is going to be focused on non-NIH career development awards. so...

Stacy: But the other, I think at least in talking to colleagues there are some nuances about doing research with industry that are important educate people on as well.

Miriam: That's a great idea.

53:30

Camille: I think that made me think of you know how funding is changing but also group science helping people find other people. I don't know how you do that. Helping foster pulling people together in a way that group science is being um created um and then I think back to what you guys were saying originally... how we present things matters. Because you can have the best of ideas but the science does also matter and I think thinking through um I don't know helping people develop their ideas and to how to accomplish that in a way that feasible and can be done with the resources available with the patient population. Because that stuff does matter too and could kill something you know statisticians or those kinds of people that's something I haven't really gotten that would benefit most people.

Nikki: So are there other experts that you think we could bring in that would be useful? So maybe like experts on collaboration or creating those kinds of proposals?

54:45

Kehmia: I like the idea of private funders cause a lot of the time you don't even know can I go to the NSF for example? Can I go to some cancer foundation or something. You have no idea. So if it's just possible to...

Nikki: People who know those kind of answers...

Kehmia: yeah that would be really helpful

Ale: I guess. everything goes to how you sell what you do and sometimes you are doing something and it happen in some way to all of us that we are doing a basic study. But when I'm writing the grant I start first thing so what? How you sell it and connect it to something that somebody cares. I think that that exercise I don't know what type of person doing that maybe a scientist that teaches strategy of how you sell and connect your idea that doesn't look like it's connected. Something applicable over a...

Stacy: So I don't know if this interface exists, but we keep using the world salesmanship, and we have a business school down the road that does marketing sells stuff to people so I don't know if there's a way that that would interface to sort of you know have a spin or sell scientific research in a way that's appealing to the masses.

56:11

Nikki: Return on investment.

Stacy: That's more the finance side than the marketing and you know getting the attractions and you're not you know making [unclear...] fall asleep. And thinking through a course in my health sector management training did anything like that exist... but that was also over a decade ago. So maybe there's some sort of interface...

Camille: We have somebody from the again this is the DOM ped conference coming for the postdoc office to talk about building your brand which is something some of us.. how you talk about yourself and what you do. And the other person we have in our division a technical writer who was brought on board a few years who has been really I mean she does a lot of different things but if some who helps people faculty write their personal statements for when you're trying to go for promotion so that you can say what you're doing in a way... wow I'm inspired! ha-ha. Um, she also writes letters of support for grants. These are some things that are really time consuming especially the first times you're doing them. And they are not really as useful time spent you know. She'll kind of interview you about the project who the people are you send your name tag, she writes letters of support.

[all talking over each other]

57:45

Will: At Marcus we kind of [unknown] created that system of bringing in certain people with certain strengths but it's not available to the entire... school. But that's been nice. Larry's technical writer. He was brought here and he's a faculty member who was brought into to mentor and write grants. He's like

a jack of all trades. He's done every grant that's got funded recently. He helps you get it through but he's a resource.

Miriam: Maybe this million dollars that you're going to get... you could hire a faculty person to do the hands on grant

[talking over each other]

Will: how would that person differ from what Janet does?

Camille: This person is not a grant specialist not a PhD specialist. it's more of a communications specialist who has scientific writing background. Like they have a master's degree in scientific writing.

58:51

Stacy: And this sounds like it even gets more to building your brand, it's not just grant writing it's publications it's um you know... presentations at meeting. It's all of that.

Will: What I was talking about is different from what you are talking about. Mine is actually a faculty member a friend has an article in the journal of pediatrics. Said you need to reduce this by 5 pages. And so I go Larry was not an author. I went to Larry and handed him the manuscript and I said show me how I'm getting 5 pages off this and he just cut lose and like... but I know that was a resource. The other thing I was thinking about that's been really nice about the current environment I'm in, I've got to see the lifespan of research. I don't know if that's been a topic, but I've gotten to see the end result of what started as an initial grant 15 years ago that's now moving to implementation and dissemination and I don't know if there's a way to capture that but to talk about your story along the way and how your story should change as you're moving from feasibility to actually showing you can do it to actually then getting it out the door...

1:00:01

Camille: It doesn't always go the linear pathway. We've got some stuff where there's funding for dissemination/implementation we do that first and then we go back and, now we want to study why that worked. But thinking about what those different stages are and where you are who wants to fund what stage and taking an idea that's strong..

Will: Cause sometimes the dissemination is the sexier thing for the funded and you have to say we've got this and maybe hush maybe that's really where I want to be but we'll go ahead and give it a shot.

Camille: Telehealth space work with something that's got some evidence but maybe it hasn't gone through complete comparative effectiveness study. But telehealth is something that someone wants to do so we've got a product, we'll do that.

Ravi: Along the development of people's careers and I think sometimes we have the person who got the K and R and then the second R but there's also the people who got the K and didn't make the transition or got the R and didn't get refunded. And what did they end up doing and what were the lessons they learned and I think because reality is that we've hoping that we'll get close to that and people are doing this but it doesn't happen but what are the lessons learned along the way and what are the considerations that you should think they wish they would of thought about 5 year or maybe 10 years ago. I know..

Camille: And career satisfaction, I've talked to folks who are at high levels of the administration and they found their passion because they didn't get the R and they were still a hard worker valuable person and great ideas and found a different path that's fulfilling and they're pleased with their career obviously and that's helping people look at the different pathways and that this is a process of professional development.

1:01:53

Ravi: I think it would be helpful for fellows or postdocs who are consider academic career and hearing it very early on not a the point where you're five years in to faculty but really early on to have this... broader perspective and they're still maybe happy

Will: And a non-NIH perspective as well. In fact most of my research is funded by private donors at this point so with one R03 and a lot more money coming from individual people

1:02:23

Miriam: Emanc Leslie Foundation and Industry NIH grant [huh??? Can't figure out what she's saying]. I mean that's the reality of clinical research these days

Camille: Diverse portfolio

Stacy: NIH

Miriam: Industry is really big in liver disease. We have a lot of industry funded research. Both industry studies and investigator initiated industry and a lot of in kind research support.

Stacy: And that's why I think it's helpful learning how to navigate that. Or learning new ways to seek out funding given that the traditional model may be changing. Um there are sort of Emory CHOA specific nuances that are helpful to learn before you get into an industry sponsor

Miriam: And they keep changing. I think more education around OSC, OSP and office of technology transfer, those 3 entities are challenging and then the CHOA OSP to add that into that. And so if we can have an expert who understood how that's supposed to work.

Nikki: Experts for the really broad stuff and the really specific stuff are both helpful.

Ale: I wanted to mention something and I don't know if it's related but it reminded when we were talking about writing and all that for me in my 1st year independent career was very difficult all the administrative tasks that came with that. I didn't train for that. I got good at getting my grants funded but it was really painful. And I think because I didn't know how to do it because I am not very organized Emory is also a complex institution to navigate through. So it was difficult from hiring people to writing animal protocols and doing all the buying stuff.

1:05:31

Nikki: Sounds like you guys answered a lot of my questions without me having to ask, but um let me just um ask one more framing of it. Are there any other... I'm getting more concrete and specific about topic areas titles of a session

Probe B: What would be the benefits of expanding focused workshops? (idea that those who receive personal help will be required to help others)
Probe C: Do you think mock grant reviews would be worthwhile?
Probe D: What kind of technology could be incorporated into sessions? Like audience response clickers/app?
Cellphones

7.) Are there any other topic areas that you would really like to see covered in a future session?

Stacy: You made me think of some potential regulatory or legal issues related to... not you got your funding and you need to the research but don't make a big mistake.

Beth: What your responsibility is not that you have the grant.

Stacy: Right. And again that may already

Kehmia: Like a description of what OSP does what the raf does OCR.

Nikki: Maybe some people from there come and talk to us.

Kehmia: Maybe some people from there what do you do post award, what do you do pre award. And so on. Cause I think um I also had issues navigating that the 1st time

Ale: I think that for basic researchers it's also harder cause you have more contact with failure and frustration. I feel like always MDs that do research that's really hard we are totally used to failure. We don't have any kind of exercise of administrative tasks never. I mean before you get your own lab, which make it very hard

Kehmia: And then I think you mentioned the PhD conference and interfacing with people who come there to lecture or something like that. I'm also done this faculty course and they have people coming from the business school to talk about selling yourself and so on so if you can get people from conferences like that to kind of go away a bit from the k award focus.

Nikki: Something a bit broader?

Kehmia: yeah. And I think also would fall in line with the alternate career path if this linear model doesn't work for you. Maybe you can go into consulting or something like some of these people do.

Ravi: I went to one of the SOM workshops on social media and then the case for why you should engage and I thought it was personally useful. A lot of senior researchers in that workshop. Building your brand. Especially because they're moving toward a different metric for showing impact. What is that. They'll show the article and the article will have a little symbol and it will show you how many shares it had on FB and how many forwards it had and emails it had I don't know. It exists and I'd like to do

Ale: Research gate?

Ravi: Is it research gate?

Will: Alt metric tracks the best the most impactful articles they have a list every year based on metrics like tweets and FB shares and viewers. and most journals now have it tied to you. How to write a press release. I've written 4-5 of them trying to get the most tweets and that was a good learning experience.

1:09:30

Ale: I think saying your brand has to be an emphasize also on quality and ethics. Because can't go down a line that can be dangerous that has a bunch of emphasis to build a career and sometimes you lose quality and you get I don't know. In science it's so important.

[unknown] Like doctor oz.!

1:10:11

Stacy Heilmen: I think that one thing that's really interesting to me you know K-Club question somebody asked before and I was thinking about it. K-Club is really more for the early career investigator. And you are more midcareer investigators. And it's great to have your perspective on thinking back 3-5 years, like what would of helped you the most. If we could focus on that. But the other thing it's impressive to me that you all feel like you have a need for something. Am I getting that message right? I'm like oh now we're successful.

1:10:42

[unknown] I just question you calling me a mid-career investigator.

[All] Ha-ha

Ale: For me the most was my mentor. And I was very consistent in my line of research since my PhD and I think that help you in the beginning now I feel that I can move and I moved and they allowed me to move a bit. but when you are in the early stage it's good to have a clear path. And my interaction with NIH. That were 3 things basic to me.

Stacy Heilman: Lisa I know you've been through quite a career. Do you have some areas and a lot of it wasn't here when you were early career. Do you have things that came from your prior institution that you think or something that we should incorporate here?

Lisa: Well I really do feel like that Kakazi group that I mentioned was really key in terms of having that horizontal mentoring and like you know gathering together around the work and thinking about what actually does this association mean? And really working groups and working communities. I think that was very helpful in addition to the mentorship and that 1:1 mentoring was the group mentoring were very dynamic in that so um

Beth: I think the horizontal mentoring peer group I've done one of those you know like it's like the BMT society has...

Stacy: The clinical research training

Beth: Clinical research training institute that I did a couple years ago. And like it was the content covered was broader than that but part of that is like you apply with a project and you develop it more through the course of those few days but it wouldn't have to be something as formal as that in a peer group. But that's one way that a peer group could be used with one or two senior people to help you know give a little more structure to it and to help people build projects and you know figure out what they you know what they need and who they need to pull in to get advice. Like is it a statistician they need or what and who the right people are for that. I mean that ultimately was what I submitted for my k award. And they really helped me fine tune that.

1:13:36

Stacy: I think to echo Beth's point I think early what you really need are the tools to even create a project. Or develop a proposal. And with that have the right mentorship to support it...

Beth: - and goals

Stacy: Um and I don't know about other disciplines but we have the benefit of having some great society programs that work on research training whether it's clinical or basic or even translational there's a translational one now. But those models could be used then the K-Club could sort of replicate that to get that project development or proposal development piece.

1:14:25

Then I guess even if there's not the resources to that for everyone you could have it so it's an application process even if you want to pilot it for a smaller group depending on how much money you have.

Ale: The other thing that I don't how work... but in basic research training it's really important to be aware of your timing and I feel sometimes and the postdoc have that very clear until what year they can apply for certain grants or when they get you know for us it's very like timing, if you past the line it's really hard to get back on track because you can't apply for the type of grant the first line of grants and then you can't get a faculty appointment because of that therefore can't apply to R. You get in a very difficult song. It's quite fast. I feel like some trainees are not aware of that time.

1:15:36

Miriam: I would say information early that's relevant to the specific groups, so postdocs when they start probably getting information about 6-10 years' timeline can look like if you choose these various options. I think fellows I think need information early. I think if you're starting to think about a k when you get your first faculty position I think you're too late to be a good candidate and am so our having sessions for 1st year or 2nd year fellows and I think also being clear I think sometimes I think sometimes the fellows think that anybody can do research and I kind of think of it more like the army there's a few good women or men out there who can do it, I don't think we have to do sessions for fellows saying everybody should do research. If you get passionate about these ideas and like following scientific questions here's the timeline you should.. think is what I tell the fellows now.. you should start writing papers now and someone told me that when I was a fellow or maybe a 3rd year resident. I started prepping for my k when I was a 3rd year resident. I already knew the criteria of the k laid out in my personal timeline for... so it's kind of...

Ale: I have seen that on the that people get in a situation where they can't go back. It's very difficult and not forgiving after some time.

Ravi: Maybe some help or early strategy budget at least for me it's the last thing you tend to do and you don't realize that this person's salary is this much. Woah. So like maybe some people who have experience with the salary thing the effort gets to be maybe more back and forth about how much effort is going towards a project

Miriam: Education for the early people. understanding the budgets.

1:17:58

Stacy Heilman: What about mentoring? When you were looking to your mentors was it hard to get their attention and time? And now that people are coming to you, what incentivized you to want to be a research mentor? And again think about unlimited funds.

Beth: I definitely struggle with getting time from my mentors when other than regularly scheduled time like when I need somethings outside of that I struggle with that a lot. I knew people are busy but that's something that I really struggle with and how to improve upon.

Stacy Heilman: If you had a big wad of cash...

Beth: Yeah I don't know how you make that better

Stacy: I don't think cash fixes that. I think that's... your question is about not selecting, but engaging mentors...

Stacy Heilman: Or selecting.....

Stacy: Well I think in terms of the engagement it's sort of part of practice built into the k we just fill in the lines, oh we'll meet weekly or monthly, you truly for it to be effective, you need the set meetings and times where you're having conversations to discuss. Otherwise it's very hard to intermittently fit it in. Um and then on the other side is the mentor, you're committed to those times you've cleared it and that's the sort of safe space for your mentee. In terms of selecting, again that goes back to saying no and it's also trial and error. Some people on paper sounded really great but weren't you know helpful mentors in terms of being able to communicate effectively or you know really seeing a passion in what you're doing. if those things don't match up it's okay to fire mentors.

1:19:54

Beth: Or to get sometimes I know what I need from certain people and know what I can get from them... not that I'm using mentors.

Stacy: Compartmentalizing your mentors.

Beth: I am maximizing their positives and minimizing their negatives.

Will: Multiple mentors.

Beth: That compliment...

Stacy: I've never just had one mentors ever... it's just been impossible doing what I do and I think realistically you need not like a room full like this but you need a combination

1:20:33

Will: I think you the business administrative part because really when you have a mentee you're basically HR for that person, not HR, but you're their manager to actually get them to produce a product that is either a paper or grant or other scientific thing that's going to move them next.. it's hard for me when someone's not driven highly focused and productive. and most people are not necessarily to that point. And part of my struggle is how do I get them to that point. I was always that person internally driven. When they're not necessarily that type of person whatever you want to call it type A, how do you move them in a productive way.. so that they're making progress and achieving? Uh that's what I struggled with...

Stacy: Or move them to something that inspires them to be driven.

1:21:30

Will: Yeah or you know be realistic with them, maybe this isn't for you, maybe you're not a researcher. Uh not everyone's meant to be a researcher

Miriam: I think with a lot of money maybe it would help to have professional mentors in the dept. Remember we talked about having a grant writer? We have grant writing and we have scientific writing but maybe you can have somebody who looks out for those things that the science mentor doesn't have time to deal with.

Stacy: I was going to say I think one of my best mentors is probably Cynthia Wetmore. She doesn't even... she tries to learn more she's kind of that person for me that I think has the big picture and is trying to help me get things from other people when I need them.

Camille: I was thinking an institutional k24. We have kl2 for institutional mentor awardees but like an institutional mentor award is an interesting idea. I mean maybe that's what our associate deans for faculty affairs are.. but they have their own bandwidth too.

1:22:42

Stacy: There's a lot to being a professional mentor not just the research it's the community/academic participation, it's the you know it's sort of learning how to negotiate, it's looking for jobs, I don't know if that's in the scope of the K-Club but I agree I think it's helpful to have a professional research mentor, career mentors.

Will: Science communication mentor. going back to the idea of salesmanship. Uh I think what experience I kind of hobbled them together. But I would sit down at Jackson Spaulding which is the media training firm, someone paid for me to go, cause I refused to go on TV this one time.. true story. they wanted me to go on TV to talk about vaccines and autism I said not going and they said we want you to go. So they sent me to Jackson Spaulding and that was the most completely different experience

I've ever had. like someone going over my PPT slides and that was meaningful. and you know those all things I kind of hobbled together as a faculty member but I would of loved someone... that's lead to funding. when I do one talk that's when I met some folks at GTRI and so we've got funding for that that's a good idea. I didn't want to go. but not I love that kind of thing.

1:24:17

Camille: That's good advice. Always take a seminar invite even if you're like I don't know how this is going to help me at all. it almost always gives you really insightful feedback. meet a new collaborator. absolutely accept any invite.

Will: And since then, now for my mentorship for my faculty members. I give them the same amount of time for every talk they give. and so they give feedback. that was something that I was able to generalize. now some of the other skills I'm not too good at. but that one I nailed.

1:24:57

8.) What type of feedback survey do you think would help inform the organizers of the value of each session and what other topics to address? (Electronic, paper, etc.)
Probe A: Any suggestions for improving the response rate?

Stacy: I think when appropriate those are fun. I know in the last conference had a lot of that. As long as it works then it's a big buzz kill.

Miriam: Sometimes it's a big pain. You can do it on cellphones so you don't need it. I think it's more important if you sit for 8 hours.

[unknown]: Personally I don't think this venue need it.

Miriam: I agree.

Any suggestions for improving the response rate? Evaluation.

1:26:19

Miriam: you have a low response rate online?

Beth: you maybe have people who prefer the paper.

All: Both.

Miriam: If people aren't responding then they liked it.

Ravi: Take the cookie out of the lunchbox.

All: Ha-ha

Nikki: Is the mug not good enough?
All: No

Stacy: I agree with that. I am a person I'm missing a lot because I didn't go back and do the online evaluation. and so I'd love to save trees and check everything off while it's fresh.

Ale: Can you do it online while the meeting is in progress.

Nikki: Right to do it while you're still sitting there.

Miriam: Text everyone... 1 if you like it 2 if you didn't

1:27:34

Nikki: The point is the tradeoff between getting more you know quantitative quick stuff between getting something more quantitative quick stuff.

Ravi: What do you think about at the end just open questions to the group. That everyone can have a shared understanding. Future topic question. Simple for the group attending to get an idea of what people are interested in.

Like get immediate feedback from the audience.

Nikki: You like the WebEx. Any way of improving these functions?

Stacy: The WebEx for K-Club isn't real time? I can't remember if it was for K-Club or not but if you try and ask questions.... via WebEx sometimes you don't always get heard. Um I don't think that was for K-Club.

Miriam: This is kind of related. You can watch a whole bunch of WebEx at the same time. There could be an annual kick off where you have more than one hour especially for new fellows and postdocs just to kind of have... symposium for all... you can target the new people who've just arrived. That might increase later attendance because they would be familiar from the get go.

Lisa: Somehow figuring out a way for people to meet people. in a lot of ways it's like community building. Right? And so other people outside of their discipline or division. Cause it's easy to go to these meetings.. you look around don't know anybody so you don't say anything and then people don't actually build relationships that way.

1:29:24

9.) That was wonderful, okay last I just have a couple of big picture questions before we wrap up. So, outside of the K-club what do you think was the best professional development program or event that you've ever attended, and why?
Probe A: What did you learn?

Probe B: What did you like and NOT like about it?

10.) What do you think mentees need the most in order to increase their chances of successfully obtaining research support and funding?

Ravi: Meet with Stacy and Janet.

All: Ha-ha

Ravi: I mean I would say Janet partly because my mentors aren't very... they're the kind that give general feedback.. but they're not very detail oriented and when reading grants she was for all the grants that she's helped us with and we've paid her for recent grants and she's been very helpful

Nikki: So meet with the expert 1:1.

Ravi: I remember meeting with Stacy early on to get a lay of the land and thoughts and that just helps to get your mind.. because in our division there wasn't a lot that kind of expertise.

Nikki: and doing that early?

Ravi: Early. like right when... if you're coming into a faculty position or a fellow joining a faculty position that's going to be focused on a research career or a plan for that. I think that would be the time very early on maybe even when you join Emory.

1:30:49

Kehmia: Um I think Janet makes us do that also... but definitely read successful applications. That really helped. Um. But now maybe I'm thinking maybe you want to read 4 in a row but... you should read. And preferably in your area that you're planning to apply for.

Lisa: I would say um just write a lot just keep writing and keep working on it and having other people read your writing and give you feedback on things.

Beth: Yeah and I think related to talking to Janet and Stacy that helps you connect things through what all the steps are and plan out how much time you need and what order to do things. I think followed from meeting with Janet and Stacy too I think I wrote it out on a calendar and these were my deadlines.

Nikki: So having a good plan that goes far out.

Beth: Well I mean this is when I knew I was going to submit on a certain date. thinking through these are all pieces that I need and what was the best order to do those in and like I wrote myself deadlines for having each piece. Like knowing what needed to go to other people to review and how many different sets of people that things had to go through to build buffer time.

1:32:20

Will: Oh sorry I was traumatized from listening... when you're first going through and learning all those things... that's awful. Ha-ha. So glad I don't have to think about that anymore. Bad experience. Um the most important thing... I think that not only reading successful grants, but also reading grants that have

not been successfully funded and then looking at grants that have been rejected maybe the 1st time and seeing how they modified them to be successfully funded would be helpful to have that as a resource so you can see the process of moving from maybe a 25 percentile to maybe a higher percentile and the iterations along the way that got you there.

1:33:01

Nikki: What do you think about that if you're doing it at the first early stage you're looking at the failure and revise and resubmit? Would that get confusing? Or is it better to like wait till you get to that stage to look at how people have revised things?

Kehmia: I think that would be helpful to look at that early

Will: Yeah, cause you get to watch... yeah... if someone would of shown me that it would of been beautiful cause if you just see the final product I don't know how you got there

Well it seems like everything went perfectly... right? If you only hear what worked for people.

All: Yeah.

Kehmia: I think it gets you prepared to know that you may not get funded right away and that's okay. Cause some people... it's hard to convey that to somebody cause they go in and think their ideas are great and there's no way you're not funding this...

Will: And that would set them up for track changes. Right? Cause you know the color is about to come to the application. Everybody gets that.

1:34:01

Stacy: It helps with your planning too. So I thought about built the calendar for when I would apply and then if when I got rejected the calendar for when I would apply again.

yeah I thought about that too

Camille: I'm also a product of Janet. I think you're hearing that pretty a lot of us have been helped by having that professional grant writer. Also having your aims page read by a lot of people outside of your field because among my mentors we all work in this area so we didn't pick up on things the 1st time through, but a reviewer outside the field didn't seem to get. So it was really important to get other people not in your area to give feedback and say if it makes sense. And they ask a question and you're like... you didn't get that? Oh? I need to say that more.

1:35:00

Ale: I would say be bold, novelty, the idea is so important when you're starting. They give you a lot of brownie points. the reviewer in general is very willing to forgive a lot in a newer investigator if the idea is cool and sexy it's attractive and I think the grants that are successful... I mean you have to try to aim for perfection... they're not as perfect but they have something that's cool. I think give a lot of time to the idea generating process cause that's what you're going to build on. I think that makes also very much easier to um do a revised application because when you can have very similar score but you can see the

reviewer liked the idea you know? You can have a lot of suggestion and critiques you see through that the guy really liked what you were thinking and that makes super easy when you review on these things that the grants get funded. I think it's very important to have a cool important idea that you are passionate.

1:36:16

Miriam: I'd like to add to that. I think you're exactly right. So I don't... I think they're all well written so my study section gets the majority of the K's, if not all of them. So I see a huge slew of k's 3x/year and they're all well written at this point so you have to have strong mentor, the idea has exciting, the idea has to be something that sets them up for a R, so it has to be worthy of a R01 idea and you have to have publication record these days. People get criticized if they have only 8 papers. It's pretty.. so you can't fix that with grant writing. Janet cannot fix that. Right? So you guys don't all realize it but you had all these things you had to have, and Janet helped you package it but all those things are more important than the packaging. The packaging is making it nice. So I think it's the cool idea all the critical things you have to have to get a K so that's why I think getting... the one thing I would say is a strong mentor cause the mentor will look at all the publications you have, help you talk about your idea, help you see if you're career development plan is something that's exciting and going to add to your skills. I think the mentor really is the one that pulls it together.

1:37:56

Ale: And to give you an idea where you are. Cause my mentor, we were clear. if you have the CV and do this and this you can do that. It's non-emotional very practical metric and what is needed to be in shape to be...

Stacy: Most of my ideas were taken... um start early and talk to the NIH. I am thankful that through one of these research institute came to know one of the program officers and asked her... am I ready for my k? or even at the institute, she said you need more publications and then followed up am I ready? Okay I'm doing this can I do this? So I think that's the other piece is you know.. they will tell you where they can help you and where they cannot... but I think having communication with the NIH is important.

Ale: This is something the senior people normally didn't... I don't know if the NIH is different many times you get the advice don't both the program office don't give them a call, they're going to get mad.

I got the opposite advice. Talk to them!

Ale: Really? No I had many times people tell me be careful you don't want to be pushy. And I had the same experience that they were super open and helpful.

Stacy: I will say I've had variable experience with the other program officers. I mean this one person is great and invested, another was middle of the road, and one was completely not helpful. And I don't know if I wasn't asking the right questions or they just were like you're application sucked.

1:39:51

Will: But that's telling if they're going to spend some time with you. Cause my current one spent 2.5 hours on the phone helping me shape the application or give me advice of how to craft it and that was telling.

11.) What advice would you give to someone starting the application process?

12.) And, is there anything else anyone would like to share with us?

Closing Remarks:
Thank you all so much for sharing your perspectives and experiences with us! Your comments will help inform the K-club development. We appreciate the time that you have spent with us! We will send you an executive summary that describes the outcomes of this project and please do let us know if you go home and think about it some more and come up with anything else you'd like to add to the conversation we had today- Thank you!

Focus Group:	Focus group C, Senior Mentors funded transcript
Date:	4/27/2017
Attendees:	Igho, Charles, Pete, Saul, Subra, Claudia, Neale, Craig, Mandy

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this K-Club focus group. My name is Nikki Llewellyn and I'm the manager of evaluation research for the ACTSI, which is one of the co-sponsors of the K-Club. I will be the moderator of this discussion today and this is Jamie Adachi, soon-to-be public health graduate at Rollins, she will be assisting with the focus group and taking notes.

We are really excited to have you all here today. We have been planning this focus group for a long time and we can't wait to get your valuable input on the future of the K-Club program. This is really all about you, supporting you, helping you to reach goals, so your opinion is what we really need. Stacy and Barbara are going to be writing a grant to get some funding to expand the program, so we're hoping that this interview will help the directors of K-Club gain some valuable insight and ideas for areas of expansion and improvement to really take the program to the next level. We really want to hear your stories, your ideas, your frustrations, your wish list!

We've split the respondents into several different focus groups based on where people are in their careers. This way we thought we could get some really tailored ideas to fit the needs of different types of people who use the K-club. From your group, we're specifically interested in learning about the value that the K-club has brought and strategic ways to grow the mentoring support aspect of the program.

I wanted to tell you a little more about the format of this focus group. We want everyone to get a chance to have their say, so please jump in or raise your hand to let me know if you have something to add to any question or comment. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions and we want to get diverse responses, so don't feel that you have to agree with others in the room- just speak your mind. We just want to know about your experiences with the club and how it has impacted people's career. We want you to think about your whole career, both your experiences as a junior investigator and later as a mentor to junior investigators.

We'll be calling you by name a lot, that's to help with coding, and it would be helpful for you to identify yourself when you chime in as well- like, 'this is Nikki, and I think…'. If you ever feel uncomfortable answering a question, you can always pass. We also want to be strategic about the limited time we have

to go over a lot of topics so in the interest of time I may have to cut off a particular topic so please don't be offended if I have to stop you to go on to the next question if Jamie signals that the clock is ticking.

And we want to let you know that we'll be recording the session today so that the results can be very carefully analyzed after this. We don't want anything you've said to go to waste. The only people who will see the recording or the transcript will be the K-Club leadership and you'll only be identified by first name. Recording the session on video helps us to know who is speaking when and to get the full meaning of what people are saying, things like gestures and so forth, so does anyone mind if we use video rather than audio recording today?

Okay, are there any questions before we begin? Okay, we'll start the recording now.

Introductions*: First I want to start with some introductions so that we all get to know a little bit about each other before we get into it. We're going to go around the circle, introduce yourself:*
say your first name,
where you're from originally,
your department and general research area,
and tell us what is the best career advice you've ever received or given to a mentee?

I'll start: Again I'm Nikki, I'm originally from here in Georgia, I did my undergrad here at Emory. Now, I'm with the ACTSI which is part of the Emory School of Medicine, my PhD is in developmental psychology, where I studied mental health in young people, but since graduate school I've moved into health evaluation research, most recently I've been focusing on evaluating the bibliometric output of ACTSI, the publications that have come out of the program. The best advice I remember is just to expect failure, roll with it, learn from it, and be pleasantly surprised when you actually succeed- especially true for grant applications

Igor: Where is room for expansion

Jamie, why don't you go next…say your name, where you're from, department and area of interest, and the best career advice you've received…

12:30:

1.) Thank you! Okay, for my next question that I'd like to ask the whole group- , We don't have to go around the table, anyone can jump in as they think of something they want to say, and please speak up if you think of something you want to add to what someone else says…

I want to turn to some feedback about the current K-Club sessions as they are, to begin with, what do you think of the timing, frequency, and format of the sessions? Are these working for you? Anyone…
Probe A: Would one-on-one or smaller group sessions provide any advantages?
Probe B: With what frequency should topics be repeated?
Probe C: As a panelist or speaker, what have been the best or most satisfying formats?

17:48

Charles: it's been my experience within my division uh which is fairly large research division that I'm not sure the participation is all that high I think it's a matter of logistics is the biggest hindrance. 1 is

location. And 2 would be the Mondays. Um that's like our very heavy conference day for example. So that's just one issue that um could be improved.

Nikki: So by having it at that one time at the same time every month it might be excluding certain groups.

Charles: Yeah I mean. you change the. If you change it might be helpful.

Claudia: I think the problem if you have different days and time though is that there is some people who think I want to go to the K-Club and are going to have a hard time keeping track, so if you say it's Monday at 4 or whatever time it is.. um they can put it on their schedule. But if it keeps changing... we're not a very academic division but I do when certain things come up and I see it I send it to people of interest. but I don't feel like those folks are getting the information, if I didn't forward it to them to highlight it I know my folks would know about it. I know emails go out but so do 100s of emails you get bombarded.

Nikki: So the visibility could be an issue to various groups.

Igho: Um I have been to one of K-Club meetings in the past I think the logistics of coming to a club at 12 in the afternoon in the middle of clinic especially in a location that isn't central for everybody makes it challenging. I would love to come to more I would love my mentees to come especially those that are at a stage that are preparing for a k award. Location isn't central and timing is in the middle of everything. If you are doing the morning clinic you don't finish by 12 if you're doing an afternoon clinic you have be leaving by around 12 to make clinic at 1. So that creates a logistical challenge for attendance.

20:54

Nikki: I guess that can be an issue for the panelists as well and who we are able to get to come

Igho: A few times I've been invited to speak it's always been a challenge making it

Neale: I agree with everything that's been said, but that having been said... whatever time you pick is going to be a challenge for certain groups of people. There isn't a good time. Everyone is overworked. I think that people are pitching up and attending is probably the best sign that they're getting value of this and making an effort to attend. So it's so many different things going on. Some are poorly attended and some are better attended. And that's the best judge to know if you're providing a service that people want. I always tell my mentees if you're writing a grant this is where you need to go. usually they make an effort to try and pitch up when they can. You know it's impossible to find a good time that works for everyone. Unless you can record the sessions and put them on the web and people can access them. You can't ask questions but you can access the content.

Stacy Heilman: Which we actually do. Maybe we need to get the word out about that. Is it realistic, will people watch them. I don't know. I guess it's on YouTube.

Neale: people who are serious about getting that grant at an absolutely terrible time in the history of grant funding will make the effort to watch them.

22:36

Stacy Heilman: it's difficult to recapitulate the different sessions we have because they're different every time because the panelists are different and feed off of each other in different ways. It's the beauty of it and it makes it difficult to then maybe do a road show. so we record them. Would there be any value in having a viewing session to show the recorded session in different places, times, venues around campus? Or is that kind of boring just to watch something on a video

Nikki: Can they interact doing it that way?

Stacy Heilman: Yeah and I guess that'd be the idea to bring people together. it's not really necessary. But bring them together and have a facilitator.

Neale: if you have a facilitator or the original panelist could phone in and answer question again it would add value.

23:32

Claudia: But otherwise I think having access on your laptop wherever you are, if they can't make it they have access to look at it

Charles: Live streaming

Stacy Heilman: We do that too

Saul: You asked for things different... I think you need to keep it at the exact same time. it's working people come. it's a full room. People vote with their feet but they're doing it. But I do think the idea of having it available at other times makes a lot of sense. The amount of time/effort that many people in the room during a session are paying attention isn't as high as you think. It could be that sometimes people pay better attention the current way that people learn is to have is to have 3 screens on at once, Netflix, lecture, and homework. Right? So I think that's really what would be great. I didn't know either. I didn't know that's it's available. So the reality check isn't making it available it's getting to the right people.

Sibra: there's alternating approaches, alternating meeting/time and days so that other people can't make Monday at lunchtime could be another time.

Igho: one of the challenging of that is like sometimes if you have meeting that is every month you just want to block that time for every month. Becomes confusing for busy people. You show up and it's not meeting today.

25:43

2.) Next question about the current K-club- What kinds of sessions have been most effective in your opinion and Why?

26:11

Charles: So um the ones I've been involved with Stacy has been facilitating those and I thought that that was really good. So the opportunity for having multiple input but a structured by a facilitator I think is

very helpful. You know the standard lecture kind of could be some issues with retention and you know paying attention so I really like the facilitated panel approach.

Neale: I've done similar things with Saul um it seemed to go well when we did it. but seemed to be good for the audience was the time to ask questions. You know you can give 30 minute lecture and miss all the questions really panging people in the room. So allocating sufficient time for them ask to ask you what you think about something else is important.

Nikki: And that's where having the WebEx be interactive

Claudia: or having a combination of both some of the piece of information that we have to give junior faculty there's no other way than to have a slide set and this is what you need to do to apply for a grant and here are the websites. Stacy's been given beautiful summaries of that. You can do that in 15 minutes and then open it up to questions. Combination of both.

27:54

Igho: I really want to second that and I know most of the junior faculty that this is being targeted to the early career investigators a lot of them are already working on their grant and want to submit. They come in with specific questions about their grant and writing and development giving them the opportunity to ask those questions. Value of the meetings, kind of like a workshop where you come and your questions answer. All the things you're thinking about someone can provide you the service I think that's the format that works. I think if we expanded more giving the opportunity to ask questions

28:59

Nikki: Speaking of what you're saying about the workshop idea what do you think about having different sizes or breakout sessions. Now it's a full room. Value to having small groups or 1:1?

Claudia: You know I went to workshop that was put on by Emerging Medical Systems for children and so lot of pediatric emergency medicine critical care folks have access to it. I went sort of as a late/mid-career person and I sat through this with my grant it was breakout sessions where you had experts who would do 2 people, with one you had your specific aims they'd give you critiques it was fantastic we had a mock this is how you score an NIH grant. And I was sitting there thinking gosh I wish someone had done this for me when I was starting out. Because it was getting spoon fed to them and I kind of figured it all out on my own very difficultly over the course of years. And that sort of program if you're thinking about a grant to offer that to our folks within Emory cause there's no reason you have to go to Chicago for that. We've got everyone here who could put on a fantastic workshop like that.

30:10

Igho: To add to that if after the session we have an opportunity for a 1:1 studio, people coming, this is expanded 100 not everyone's going to have an opportunity to ask question not all questions are going to be asked or answer if there's a mechanism where you have an opportunity to have a 1:1 studio consultation with an expert. This could be an expansion of this program, if this was available it would be extremely helpful.

Neale: DOM has had that going for several years now been involved in 1:1 grant aims reviewing and I think it add tremendous value and the down side of it is you need to have people to have the time to

actually meet with people. Um I think it's probably still exists you can apply to have your grants reviewed by someone but it's not very taken advantage of at this time. But there's huge value who have people writing grants and realize the problems involved or have a specific aims page ready sit down with someone. it takes a certain amount of time 20-30 minutes/person and to give advice you would of had to read the specific aims pages beforehand. So the format would require people to submit their aims ahead of time have someone review them and meet with them for a short period afterwards.

32:03

3.) Who do you think can benefit from K-Club? People who have not yet been funded or those who already have funding or both?
Probe A: Can one size really fit all?
Probe B: what would make you more likely to promote the K-Club or advocate it to others?

4) What incentivizes you to participate in K-Club? (As a panelist or audience member)

Saul: I actually think that the issue is that we wait too long in people's career to provide this level of advice. giving advice as far as how to write and craft your specific aims page is about 4 years too late. And so I actually like to spend time with people and craft their niche and Claudia said it well what's really your niche what sort of good/bad advice have people been giving you not like I'd be the one on the good side always but I really care about what that person's going to look like in 5-10 years we've all probably done that and had these discussions with high quality people who you can see are going to give up research because they never got that kind of advice and I find that gives them the incentive outside of that 45 minutes experience that they're having they're now going to have a path that you don't have to spoon-feed them or wait for the next month for the next version but that's just a thought I think we wait too long.

Nikki: So you think it's a good early investment you feel like it'll be less work later on if we

Saul: It'd be nice to know Stacy do we have individual um faculty who are waffling about whether they want to do research they came to the club and they're a convert. it'd be nice to have individual success when you've already preaching to the converted this helps these are fabulous

34:09

Igho: I can answer that. Those of us who do clinical who are clinicians we always waffle we always feel like the playing field for the grant application is not even for those of us who we're not trained to write grants we don't write grant for a living and um a lot of the time clinicians have clinical work to fall back to. We do have a lot of clinical translational researcher who waffle do I have the ability to do this? A lot of people who do k23 that's where they are a lot of the time

Mindy: I agree with what's been said and I feel like for those breakout sessions what I think would be more helpful than going through the nitty gritty of peoples grants kind of earlier than the stage when your actually in the details of their grant but thinking about what area should they be going into asking them questions about what are their competitors how well are they know in this field just getting a general feel for their area that they're in and their general research trajectory um because I know that peds has been really involved with Janet gross and that program which I think has been really successful and allows the person the time to really work with her and get in the you know 8 weeks of going through the grant which I which being honest it's unlikely that you're going to get that much faculty participation

for people to go through you know the grant of people who aren't their own mentees because we're doing that with our own mentees. Um so I think that kind of more general career advice would be an easier way to use those breakout sessions in terms of the time that faculty are able to invest and what the mentees are going to get out of it.

36:18

Nikki: so you're meaning complimentary thing where it's going to be someone different than the faculty, in addition to their own mentors.

Mindy: Yeah I guess. Yeah. I mean presumably their own mentors already doing that. it's just another perspective

Neale: I'd just like to echo what Mandy said, having Janet gross and the service she offers is probably one of the best aspects of the K-Club it's incredible that you can provide a service like that for people. don't take that away. Don't fix what's not broke.

Igho: So Janet gross is just one person so and she does this for a number of groups on campus so if we are going to expand this club maybe one of the things that could be done is to create an opportunity to have more Janet gross. People like her that could be available and provide these services as part of the activities of the K-Club.

37:34

Claudia: she's expensive otherwise.

Igho: She's expensive. She cannot handle everyone so an opportunity to expand. the service she offer is great but we need to expand. Individuals like her that can offer these services and being able to provide an opportunity to protect the time and pay for these service to be available for our early career investigator this would be extremely valuable.

Nikki: And what's the right kind of compensation? Do we want people who are already faculty involved or do we want to dedicate people/persons or can we bring on board people who are already here to dedicate time? What would be the appropriate compensation?

Stacy Heilman: and the appropriate phenotype I think because Janet gross is 1 in a million she's a PhD bonfire scientist and a really good writer and has been had all this experience. And so is it somebody who's already Emory faculty who has an interest in this or is someone brand new outside person who wrote foundation grants for a living. I think it's a fabulous idea to operationalize it and not that we need to operationalize things I just wonder... people trust and respect her and that grows over time.

39:13

Igho: Just clone her.

All: ha-ha

Charles: if I send a grant to you Neale you'd read it right?

Neale: I've did it for many people

Charles: It's a matter of time. You could be swamped you won't be able to look at the grant. so I think there'd be a lot of people who would be interested in reviewing trainee grant uh applications. One idea that I was thinking about is having a pod and these break out things where you have people at different levels of grant writing experience so really it's not reliant on one person to provide all the feedback or the coaching or advice and that's probably helpful anyway right? So you've got people who have applied and failed and got reviewer comments and you've got someone who hasn't tried and I'm not sure if that model exists right now but it seems like something to take some of the pressure of a Janet gross being responsible for everything. you have more of a team where everyone would look at each other's grants.

Nikki: So people would come together like puzzle pieces people have different perspectives to share

Charles: so you get some of your postdocs or graduate students that have already written grants or had you know maybe success applications.

Nikki: seems like that would be more an efficient situation versus the 1:1 and so it's a question of how much value of having extra resource of having 1:1 kind of situation versus smaller pods versus the larger sessions. Yeah.

Mandy: I really advocate for someone like Janet gross who is really not only is she providing so she's not really providing a scientific expertise for sure right? so she also doesn't have a bias so it's the science of the person writing it but I guess the more important point a big thing she helps with is all of the new requirements or the formatting issues or do you have this or that component that's just her job. She's a professional grant writer so that's a component that really helps our junior people who aren't as experienced that they really have somebody that is attentive of how things sound and how the application is coming off and I think that's something that's hard to replace with less experienced grant writer people. you know and I will say it's hard to get those people. We tried to hire one for the transplant center and it was a failure same training just a different person and it was a complete disaster.

42:48

Saul: so Nikki when you think about things that are helpful to the junior people, are you looking to have funding available for people. one of the things I struggle with the k awardees or people they've never really written something and been successful. We don't have a lot of opportunities within the systems here for pre-k. Uh small grants.

Nikki: like pilots?

Saul: there's not a lot though. a little success for a little grant. it gets people over the hump of writing. anyway I was just wondering if that was a consideration.

Nikki: mini grants.

Saul: little things mean a lot. and that we value those. so I find that that's something some of the like uh p30 and the likes some have dollars for things like that. They're smaller wonder if that's something to consider if you look for funding

43:49

Igho: I just wanted to add to what Mandy and Charles just said. I think there's real value in having somebody like Janet gross and I think that should be a compliment in whatever proposal/expansion to the K-Club. I also see a lot of value in what Charles just described. I was involved in one of those to the cfar where an investigator was reviewed and got a pink sheet back. the cfar faculty put together a group of investigators. we had a conference call of 3-4 of us we reviewed a pink sheet, critiques and they had also responded how they wanted to respond saying that response to us we spent about an hour on a phone conversation. We were able to have them walk through how to respond to this critique. It's not quite a k application but the same people can apply if the K-Club can create this forum where you're writing a grant in addition to getting the 1:1 help you pull together a team of individuals who spend an hour to discuss some struggles of how to position your grant would be helpful and after we were done with the discussion we followed up with email conversation. We were able to advise them. An extra pair of eyes working with them to look for the proposal.

Nikki: We need people. Could be mentors different levels

Igho: this groups K-Club can facilitate.

45:57

Nikki: speaking of how to motivate people to be involved at different levels, what would motivate you as a group to promote the K-Club? what would make you an advocate? what could we do?

Subra: So I have reviewed F grants and k grants. F grants are beautiful compared to k grants. so then now I have a graduate student now he's going through the 2nd year of grant writing. Beautiful. 3 months they dissect the 1st page, then the 2nd page, the 6th page is done and it takes 3 months. He has a beautiful grant. I don't know how much resource you need to have something like that. It struck me every time I reviewed the F grants, its beautiful compared to the k grants. K grants are particularly coming from clinicians really badly put together.

47:11

Are you saying we're bad?

All: Ha-ha

Stacy Heilman: You're saying in grad school they're getting individual attention?

Subra: 8 weeks of program. I can get information about how they do it. I thought that was wonderful.

Nikki: and they're starting early again

47:37

Subra: for them it's mandatory. here it's not. I don't know how committed these people are

Igho: We're not trained to write grants. It's the reality. it's not our trade.

Claudia: So when I was doing my fellowship it was mandatory that as part of our first year we attend clinician science program that USFS put on and it really was brilliant it was one Tuesday afternoon the fellowship cleared our schedule and we were expected to go. And it basically did take you through... you had to walk in with a study question and they showed you how to write proposal. and that was the first step for how do you write a grant. And I know when I came here you mean we don't have anything like that for our fellows? Cause they're coming in without any experience and as one person I can't teach them everything. and I don't think we have that type of program here and that would be brilliant for a lot of our fellows cause the program wasn't specific to peds and emergency medicine it was we had every single possible fellowship in there

Nikki: so if hypothetically it were to be something of a mandatory program that was going to be instituted, what would get on board saying that it's a good idea? and that the junior faculty and postdocs should be involved in this? Grant writing skills have the value that makes it worth it.

Stacy Heilman: Can I ask Pete to respond to that I know that you have a lot of fellows that come to you for guidance and advice how would you pose to them that this is important for your career? What about a program would make you say that this is the magic bullet you have to do this?

49:27

Pete: Uh with respect to the k12 grant specifically?

Stacy Heilman: or just any person forget about the K-Club, just think about a 4th year fellow who says to you what.. I see this course here should I take it. What about a course to you would be worthwhile? what components would it have? would it be... walks you through the steps of the grant over a 3 month process? or lead by faculty? I mean sort of ...

Pete: Um it's kind of difficult to answer. certainly I have one k12 trainee and she comes to the K-Club meetings and I think that um the k12 from the mentee standpoint the meetings really good. Um. In our division we're fortunate in that we have 7 PIs so our trainees are around senior people a lot and there's a lot of informal feedback that they get. they can circulate their paper and their grant application. But I would say one thing we really don't do is we don't have many formal way of having mentees submit or train them how to write grants. so essentially if they're going to write a grant application they circulate it and get the feedback from the red line on the notes and say things like there's too much experimental detail or there's not enough experimental detail. Um and you know it's difficult cause we've reviewed a lot of grants you have a feeling of what a good grant looks like but you don't have the opportunity to circulate really good grants um among people. I actually when I was on study section uh it was probably illegal... but I took some well written grants I still have them... they're like 10-15 years old now. I would...

Subra: the NSA is listening in...

All: ha-ha

Pete: Read the style of how this persons writing

Stacy Heilman: we could have a library like that at Emory of Emory faculty who agree to that. would you be willing to do that?

Pete: sure

Neale: the NIH already has a number of outstanding grants that they put on their website. one of the institutes I don't recall which there's links to it from the DOM website

52:27

Stacy Heilman: I think that the NIAID is the best for sure. but then they're all in the same vein. I think it'd be great if the Emory community would come together and share your what you consider to be well written proposals that were funded. and would you be willing to do that?

Neale: a lot of proposals that were funded 10 years ago I thought were fantastic, I read them now and I'm embarrassed, it's always a work in progress.

Nikki: that's where Janet gross comes in too with updated information

52:57

I know we took Saul's T32 grant and you said we plagiarize that and we took that and a lot of the style of the whole thing having that kind of structure

Claudia: successful buzz words

Nikki: some of what I'm hearing is that this is a long term process to be a good writer. it's not something to just pick up from a session. it needs those iterations and time like a course where you can develop it as a writer. Are there any other resources... what other things could be added resources can helpful them be more successful in achieving you know good career success

Saul: I would think along the line of the IDP mentality of individual development plan for trainees that you have a hard knocks approach that you may have a great idea but if it sounds awful... it's how you phrase and if it takes a while to figure out from a trainee that they actually have a good idea in there they would of been lost. I wonder when you say for resources I like the idea of more of small group um straight advice from people who are still playing the game. Not people who used to play. but and get them really young, I think it's absolutely too late to get junior faculty. I think that's an issue.

54:36

Claudia: if you're starting as junior faculty your fellowship is the time to get your pilot data. and that's why it's so important to pick a topic as a fellow that you're really interested in not just picking something because that's what my mentors doing. Because if you're trying to get your pilot data as junior faculty you just don't have enough protected time in the day to be a happy person and sleep at night and have time for family if you're also trying to get your pilot data started. fellowships protected time. you have a year of research.

Saul: 2.

Nikki: people have to get started early. that have to get going. what would help people to focus in early accelerate that process of landing on the right thing if this is something they can't waste time with. Um any ideas for what

55:33

Igho: I'm thinking about this I’m thinking what can the K-Club add to what we already have. how the K-Club add value to you know. yes this is a research enterprise there’s a lot going on fellowship training mentors have people that I work with one of them the department the division investing in faculty development. what can this K-Club add to that? I looks like listening to everybody speak we don’t start early enough. we already have a thing that we're doing that's working. people see value from it. what are the other additional.... a lot of the suggestion... maybe one of the thing is to have a more condensed form of what we do on a monthly basis and take them on the road to a different fellowship program. like a condensed program

Nikki: highlights

Igho: And take them to DOM take them to infectious disease fellow cardiology create that opportunity

Nikki: spread more

Igho: and then people can come to the monthly thing for the more extended program.

57:20

5.) Thank you! Next I’d like to talk about really improving and expanding the k-club. So I want you to imagine there were unlimited funds available for this- Within reason!- What investments would you recommend that would be most valuable in helping to take the K-Club to the next level?
Probe A: What kinds of experts would you like us to bring in to lead discussions in various topics? Science writers? NIH?

Mindy: One of the things that I think has actually made a difference in my career and one of the things I see sometimes stratifies those that have an easy time versus hard time is that they mature in their career is actually speaking, like public speaking at a meeting or you know presenting their work. I have a guy who's really talented MD PHD smart guy gets his grants funded but he's not a great speaker and I struggled with how to mentor him. I keep telling him make eye contact he's just not doing it so you know is there a course what can I make you do to understand that to really progress as he moves forward that it's going to be easier for him if he can because those are the people in the audience the reviewers of your grants and papers and if that comes off as a really polished thing I think it helps going forward.

58:35

Claudia: Stepping on that.. having worked with fellows that have never made posters before even some of the basics of how do you do a PPT everyone knows but what colors, you don't put red on a black background. those are things that you hoped your mentor tells you but sometimes no one tells you and you spend all this time making a present ion that isn't going to show well and how to make a poster. and what should go into a poster. and those are basics for junior faculty and I’m surprised at how many junior faculty that have never done it before that are starting from scratch. it would be nice to have some place to send them.

Nikki: cause it's all part of conveying the idea that you want funding for

59:16

Saul: So I think it's also in the same vein of really trying to demystify the next worry for people if you were thinking about seeing whether we the senior people, the end of our career, the peak, so basically one of the things that I wonder is when we sit up there behind this table and then have a whole room of junior people do they get a sense that there's a positive spin from this there's usually more negative discussions. Um I would almost argue not all the time I wonder from our audience do they get value from senior people talking behind a table? Um what can we do to maybe be more positive. I know that a lot of times I'm not as positive as I probably am and it doesn't come out. it's not unique to me. I wonder what feedback you've heard Stacy.

1:00:26

Stacy Heilman: we get really good feedback from the K-Club and I think people actually I think it's positive message but there are also realists and I think that's good. in fact I remember one time...well what you have to do is be in the lab 24/7 and I don't have a life/kids/girlfriend and another lady is like oh well I have a great balance and I got the same grant. it was good to see those perspectives. I think as long as we maintain the balance and carefully select the panel as to try and make sure we have both perspectives. I applaud you all for providing the balance.

1:01:10

Claudia: I think another thing be helpful too when you have junior faculty and fellows looking for mentors I mean so I end up being a default mentor and I'm not the expert of all things it's just to have a list because even to know who to send them to because I think we don't have to have junior faculty with mentors within our division. I think we all have expertise and if someone's interested in hematology they can come to me cause that's what I do. But if we were able to share our areas of expertise so folks can have a list so that we can say you might want to talk to this person and they might not be able to have time to be your mentor but they might be able to send you in the right direction.

Nikki: so some networking opportunities for us to have a good network in place could be helpful as well

1:01:58

Probe B: What would be the benefits of expanding focused workshops? (idea that those who receive personal help will be required to help others)
Probe C: Do you think mock grant reviews would be worthwhile?
Probe D: What kind of education-based technology have you used that could be incorporated into sessions? Like audience response clickers/app?
Probe E: Are there any other topic areas that you would really like to see covered in a future session?

6.) Expanded programs might require more senior level faculty involvement. What would incentivize you to dedicate measurable effort?
Probe A: Would you be willing to be paid discretionary money to review a few K applications and then participate in a mock review to be recorded and watched?

7.) What would be the most helpful addition to support you as a mentor in providing the best mentoring?
Probe A: Are there innovative mentoring techniques you'd like to learn more about?
Probe B: How can the k-club fund mentoring efforts?
Probe C: What do you need to help mentees become mentors?

1:02:08

Claudia: protected time

Nikki: be honest ha-ha

Saul: I have to say that what I personally struggle with is trying to get people to be more curious. As junior faculty and fellows for some reason this sounds very generational but I think that when you're a clinical fellow you're not encouraged to be curious about things and I struggle with this to try and impart that there's so many great unknowns that we have to fix in our field and they want to sign out and get out. what I'm getting at when you ask for help I think 1:1 time and really helping push junior people in ways that need to be pushed and that's part of developing your niche and figuring what's interesting reading all of the above. I don't know if I'm alone in this but any time I bring this up with anyone in the country it's the exact same head nod. We all agree with that.

Mandy: yeah cause I'm involved with a lot of non-clinician so PhD or postdoc thing that's their 100% that's all they're doing so it's not like they can say I'm too busy with my clinical stuff. and they have the same thing where they go through the motions of doing their experiment and asking you know the next question and if they get a result that's unpredicted it's like oh forget that you know. I'm like that's the most important one. like why. investigate it. read about it. figure out if anyone else knows that.

1:04:06

Igho: I think that K-Club has been focused on the mentees maybe you can I don't think it was be feasible to have a monthly meeting for mentors but maybe come up with a creative way to engage mentors. maybe a structured way of mentoring effectively. I think most of us mentor, we just do it because we have to do it. somebody's before us that mentors us. I've never received any mentorship training. so some forum of creating opportunity to get some structured training on how to be an effective mentor would be something that the K-Club can.

Neale: the DOM runs one 2x/year. maybe you guys can come by and maybe you guys can advertise together to recruit people and getting people notified of what's going on. there's so much stuff going all the time that no one can manage to get to but

Stacy Heilman: they have a mentor specific session the DOM?

Neale: they have a teaching workshop 2x/years

Igho: it's not something really specific to the mentor I mean there might be one topic that might address the mentor but there's not a real... now it's focused on training the mentors. how do we engage the mentee in the right way? we want them to be successful.

Stacy Heilman: developing more of a tool kit and embellishing that. What about so Claudia said protected time. would you know a % effort purchased does that make a difference or do it not matter?

Igho: yeah I think for most mentors.. I don't think

Stacy: KL2 used to have protected time for the mentor. It went away I heard such a back lash how could they take that away? how are they going to guarantee our time. the reality is that you're going to do it anyway?

Igho: Yeah, I was involved with the KL2 and a lot of the mentors don't need it. successful mentors are well funded it's not the issue of 2% or 5% that you will get. people will do it because they want to do it they want people coming in behind them to be successful just as they are.

Stacy: do you have any other reason that incentivize you to mentor, other than it's in your blood

Craig: It has to be someone who has an interest.

Stacy: it's because you love the science, or interest in mentoring

Craig: I mean even the mentee it has to be someone who is really interested and wants help but yeah I don't know. it's something I struggle with. how can someone else be successful if I'm struggling for funding um you know so

1:07:19

Stacy: cause you believe in yourself? wasn't that your advice?

All: ha-ha

Stacy: but that brings up a good point. they need to be motivated. so if we help mentors to be more accountable and excited about their interactions with mentees is that something you see as a win?

Craig: I guess one thing that I've heard that was mentioned before I don't know if this happens anywhere else... but if someone's interested in brain tumors they like go to toby McDonald, but there are a ton of us who do brain tumor work. so I think a part of it is that people don't know what people are doing. so maybe... I don't know. we do have this 1 day per year have a research commercial day but for some rotating thing where people just come and talk about their experiences so you get to know what's out there.

Stacy: You do that for the fellows right?

Craig: yeah

Stacy: like a show and tell of all the research that's available.

1:08:29

Claudia: So I think it's really fun to mentor someone that's driven and excited and you just encourage them but I have to admit I'm getting burnt out too on being the mentor because I have to for someone who wants nothing to do with research where you're making phone calls every week and sending them

emails saying I need you know X and you're supposed to do this... and that's draining and I think if you are mentoring a large number of people you end up with a % of folks that are like that and it sucks out the life from that mentorship where we are doing it on our nights and weekend.

Saul: I mean there is a K24 mentality that you might want to add support to mentors. and that support could be little bits, go to another meeting or something like that. I think something maybe helpful. and those are great grants going to fabulous people and there's a reason for that 50% of your time is supposed to be going towards mentoring. that's it. you know? anyway not that we need 50% but 2-5% you might as well not, but it's a nice token but that's something

Claudia: Or money for instance we have no funds to send our fellows to meetings. so if I'm working with them and they have a presentation they shouldn't have to pay out of pocket. so something like that for the mentors that their mentees if they're successful would actually have one that would be a real boost for the junior faculty that they got whatever award that we call it, but it's also a bonus to the mentors because now you're trainee can actually go to a meeting and be proud that they got this travel award

Igho: I think Saul mentioned something before he leave that I think the K-Club should.. why don't you include K24 in your curriculum that'd be very helpful for mentor for mentor the K24 is meant for mentors. that'd be a good benefit for mentor and helps mentor to offer K24.

Stacy: that's a good idea. you would like that wouldn't you Claudia

Claudia: I would

Igho: if we have several K24 at Emory you'd have a lot of happy mentors

1:11:04

All: ha-ha

8.) That was wonderful, okay last I just have a couple of big picture questions before we wrap up. So, outside of the K-club what do you think was the best professional development program or event that you've ever attended, and why?
Probe A: What did you learn?
Probe B: What did you like and NOT like about it?

Nikki: it's a lot of ways to make your life easier their lives easier. Are there any other techniques mentoring techniques innovations that you'd be interested in adding to any kind of training you mentioned a mentoring workshop. is there anything in particular you'd want to learn about?

Igho: yeah san Francisco has a mentoring workshop and its 2-3 days' workshop. I think through the san Fran CTSA I have participated in one of those and it was extremely very well organized and I took a lot from it. that would be something. they bring in a seasoned coach of how to manage your role as a mentor and how to effectively engage the mentor mentee relationship. I mean that's something that I would benefit the people here.

Nikki: people management as part of it

1:12:29

Mandy: I went to what sounds like a similar thing. There is the Atlanta best mentor program there's something and they have a serious of workshops for mentors and one of them was a people management course and I think that was useful for me... realizing that not everybody is motivated by the same things as you are and you're trying to mentor someone in the way you would think and trying to learn how other people might be motivated or might think... the other thing I can think of is time management skills which I think comes up quite frequently particular for some of my trainees that have clinical responsibilities that it's like I just don't have time and they don't have much time so how to better manage the little time that they do have or pockets of time where they can be more productive.

1:13:34

Claudia: Where's this Atlanta best? it's not through Emory?

Mandy: so I think it's like Emory and GA state and GA tech together. it was a grant that the Laney graduate school got.. and Nile McCarty was the PI but I think the grant was over but they're trying to continue the program.

Stacy: it was designed to help PHD students and fellows find their best career choice. it didn't have to be science. it's great to know they have this mentor component

Mandy: they had it was like 4 sessions a semester and they were managing a research staff mentoring conflict management and I found it really useful.

1:14:26

Craig: ACR has a variety of programs which are helpful that you have to apply but they have like a workshop in aspen and another one somewhere else so you have to submit an application... there's a separate on if you're interested in translational, if you're interested in clinical research, so there are those opportunities. those through ACR.... I don't how well they are advertised... but they are pretty good ones.

Stacy: you've done or participated or your colleagues?

Craig: both, yeah

Neale: So cafe grinlen does a tremendous amount of that kind of stuff as everyone knows. every month is one or two uh major seminars they're not well attended that's the sad part about it. I've been to a lot of them and they are pretty good but I'm also out of time and I don't attend anymore. there's stuff right at our door step and we don't take advantage.

1:16:01

Igho: There's the center for excellence in faculty development that's run out of the office of provost I've never participated in any of their things and I've gone to their website and what they do is really directed at faculty development.

9.) What have you seen to be the most frequent pitfalls of junior faculty not succeeding in research?

1:16:56

Craig: it's the one that Mandy mentioned. they say they're too busy and you know too busy to write that paper or put that smaller grant together so yeah

Nikki: time management?

Craig: yeah

Neale: they don't take the advice that you give them

All: ha-ha

Neale: they don't submit grant it's not ready but I need to send it I need the grant they send it prematurely and they get depressed. I can't compete in science it's terrible. you have to trust your mentors. people want fast success

1:17:42

Pete: I think MDs tend to be incompletely trained at the time they take their first faculty position. they're competing against if you're doing laboratory based research you're competing against PHDs who have had a lot more experience in the laboratory and I think institutions don't help that out because they have this pressure to have faculty members that can attend in clinic so you see people appointed as Assistant professor who are not nearly as well trained as a PHD or an MD/PHD that has frequently 7-8 more years of experience and the other thing I've seen that's caused failure among MD trainees and professors is too much clinical responsibility um during their assistant professorship where they don't have enough time to develop their laboratory and then having insufficient startup resources. not having an environment. I think MDs need a protected environment as opposed to a PHD can land in a basic science department and not having anyone doing anything in their immediate research area. but I think for MDs I think it helps if they're part of larger groups so they can kind of emerge more slowly. I think the average age for the first R01 is 42.

All: I think it's older than that

Mandy: I was going to say the same thing... I think the biggest pitfall I picking an area or question that's not closely related enough to the environment you're in or to the mentor. um you know I'll have MD trainees or junior faculty come up to me on can I mentor them on this question that they have that tangentially maybe not very closely associated to my own research. There are 2 problems with them. 1 is the scientific I think they need to be in a more um complete environment and so having other people in the area in the area that are working on the same thing that can provide them with reagents and some of the resources the potential for success is a lot greater. 2nd reason is the resource feasibility I know you were mentioning money to go to conferences. if they're working on something that's more closely related to what I'm doing I have a lot more leeway in kind of funneling money towards them and so to me something that goes well is when a trainee talks with me and says this is my general area of research but I'm flexible with my specific question versus somebody that says I want to work on this pathway and no one else is doing it and this is all I care about. it's like you're going to do it in a vacuum and probably it's less likely that you'll be successful.

Neale: it's again listening to you mentor

1:21:49

Claudia: This is something else that I did this year with a fellow who was working on a HIV project. it's the concept of co-mentors. so we have an infectious disease person and myself which was a beautiful combination because she got the best of both worlds how to get this through the emergency department but how do you tap into the expertise of the infectious disease specialist. so I think usually our fellows have one mentor and sometimes having a group cheerleading group to help you get through it who have varied expertise could help.

1:22:26

Igho: in fact you can't get as a clinician you can't get a K22 application if all you have just one mentor. you need different mentors with complementary expertise.

Pete: I think that clinical scientists have the opportunity to get a master of science in clinical research

Igho: I work on that now. I have a spot of leadership in that program

Pete: so if you're an MD laboratory researcher there is not an equivalent program and um what I see is that the ability to analyze data specific statistical analysis which is becoming more and more important in laboratory research. in the literature there are there's a lot written about it recently about the inability to reproduce laboratory research. I think the clinical investigators have a leg up on the laboratory investigators if they go through the MSCR program cause we see kids go in and they come out 1.5 years later they are speaking in a different language. they're speaking about experimental design. and then you have an MD investigator frequently trained by a senior MD person and you know they're doing randomizing 3 mice in 3 different groups and the statistical design is terrible cause they're not trained in it. so I really think the MSCR and I'm looking afar from it, it's a really uh tremendous advantage that clinical scientists have that we don't have the equivalent of for our research scientists that are MDs.

1:25:40

10.) What do you think mentees need the most in order to increase their chances of successfully obtaining research support and funding?
Probe A: What are objective measures of success?
Probe B: What would be a positive model

Igho: In the MSCR program I'm in the lead actually, almost 80% of our KL2 scholars ending up NIH funding so the training itself has a significant impact on where they become successful. 80% is pretty damn good you get into the program and usually between 1-2 years most of the time you'll go ahead and I think one of the things that we can learn from this groups is what is it I mean this is a great success rate I think we can begin to look at what's driving that it is a way to reproduce that.

Pete: I think funding for attending technical workshops so that um young people and even senior people can keep abreast of emerging technologies. there are all kinds of workshops around the country in whatever you want to think about

Nikki: building skills

Pete: yeah, it's like a week. going to a week-long workshop where you're just immersed in some area - photometry - things where you have the ability to get expertise in an area that may not be available locally just the opportunity to go away for a week and think about some method or technology cause I think a lot of research is technology driven in the sense that a new technology comes along and allows you do things you couldn't do before staying at the cutting edge is important especially for young people. so I think what we're doing now is recommending that our young people go to at least one of these a year. I wish I would of done this throughout my career and go to maybe one that you're not even interested in like electronmicrosopy or something and cause you'd be surprised... and you also meet other people and I'm going to one in a couple weeks and you meet other people after conference hours and it's a different perspective than the local perspective and it gets it out of your own little box and it's pretty expensive probably 2,000 dollars plus travel and fees and things like that.

Nikki: so you think that's something people don't do enough of early on in their career partly cause they don't have the resources to do so?

1:29:06

Pete: partly cause they may feel like they're too busy to do that so if you encourage them to go to this conference

Neale: I'd certainly agree with that. I stopped going to my society every year and every other year I go to a difference conference that's peripherally related to what I do. and suddenly I learn something new and meet new people and find new techniques and think new ways. Go to the same old meetings over and over and you get stuck in a rut. diversification is really important

1:29:46

11.) What one piece of advice would you give to someone just starting out in the application process?

1:30:06

Mandy: I think start early. almost every person is starting too late it seems like. even a year early to really hone ideas.

Claudia: don't get discouraged I think most people don't appreciate the fact that people who've been doing this forever their first grants going to get rejected cause there's only so many that they can fund and you know that the system is such that maybe you'll get funded on the 2nd submission and so for them to know that you're going to spend all this time to submit a grant that's not going to get funded. but you're looking to get funded for the second year. but I think that they need to know that up front so that they grow thick skin so they are not absolutely devastated and walk away from it

Neale: I'll end with the way I started. perseverance. um. you can't give up.

Claudia: it is depressing.

Neale: it's depressing every grant that hasn't been funded. we've all been there. but if we gave up we wouldn't of made it to the one that did get funded.

1:31:22

Igho: Yeah I mean what immediately came to mind is what Mandy said is start early. Some people have met people who say oh I'll write a grant in 2 weeks. that doesn't work that way for me. almost every grant almost takes a year of thinking through writing again and rewriting sometimes writing the specific aim 30x making sure it's just right and just running through it carefully reading through it and pacing yourself in such a way that there's a time line for everything you're doing and giving yourself enough room where your giving enough time so that people can provide feedback um it's really um I review some of the Ks and you can almost tell when you take a K somebody is putting in time to do it well and somebody who hurriedly put it together. it's not difficult to tell. putting it together carefully. it's competitive.

Pete: someone to focus on an important problem like Saul said. one that you can compete in and then make the observations that will drive the science because if you good science good applications will follow. they may not get funded because it's so competitive so the idea of.. I've heard people say this, let's submit an application and maybe we'll get some good feedback. when you submit an application you should be absolutely 100% convinced that this should be funded and you should be outraged and shocked that it doesn't get funded. the idea that I'm going to submit this to a study section and get some good comments back is... I don't know if you've ever heard that?

Neale: all the time

Pete: um yeah

1:34:19

Pete: some people feel like the advice from the pink sheets is something you should pay attention to but I don't necessarily agree with because the second time you send it in there's a good chance that one of the reviewers will have seen the grant before. there's also a great chance that it'll be reviewed by another set of reviewers and um applicants are shocked when they submit a grant and address all of the concerns and they get it back and they have a whole new set of concerns well that's because you had another set of reviewers and the 2nd set of reviewers may have done a better job than the first set. so it's a real crap shoot. just doing good science and trying to submit a good application is what you have to try to do

Craig: Yeah actually, to follow up, I think... I used to write grants one way but I've kind of moved away now. what I like to concentrate on is spending a ton of time on the data making sure that the data looks perfect then I write the grant around that. you know and that's the way I read applications, I look at the data. Um cause in the end the science should drive what you want to study so I think that would be mine. the other thing was um I mean apply for all these foundation grants, start that. 3 page grant write that see if you can get that. all these little things and gradually build up. doesn't mean that you don't have to write your K immediately but write all these small grants and get some funding so you can start doing something.

Stacy Heilman: that's the perfect segment into may's K-Club, non-NIH grants. so thanks for that that.

1:36:35

12.) And, is there anything else anyone would like to share with us?

Closing Remarks:
Thank you all so much for sharing your perspectives and experiences with us! Your comments will help inform the K-club development. We appreciate the time that you have spent with us! We will send you an executive summary that describes the outcomes of this project and please do let us know if you go home and think about it some more and come up with anything else you'd like to add to the conversation we had today- Thank you!

Appendix C. Thematic Codebook

Themes	Definition	Exemplar Quote
Theme 1. Format of Sessions		
1.0 Operations	Suggestions from participants that refer primarily to K-Club logistics, such as meeting times, locations, length and frequency.	"I have been to one of K-Club meetings in the past. I think the logistics of coming to a club at 12:00 in the afternoon in the middle of clinic, especially in a location that isn't central for everybody, makes it challenging. I would love to come to more. I would love my mentees to come, especially those that are at a stage that are preparing for a K award. Location isn't central and timing is in the middle of everything. If you are doing the morning clinic, you don't finish by 12:00. If you're doing an afternoon clinic you have to be leaving by around 12:00 to make clinic at 1:00. So, that creates a logistical challenge for attendance." – Senior focus group, page 4
1.1 Small groups	Any reference to small groups including: (1) People interested in applying for the same grant; (2) People from different disciplines meeting because of a shared interest; (3) People at different stages in their career; Peer-to-peer horizontal mentoring peers to build community/networking/collaborate on writing or reviewing grants.	Grant-based: "It would helpful then you could group people applying for a K99 versus K23 versus K08 I think you could have people that are in at least more thematically aligned areas as opposed to the large group." – Early career-funded focus group, page 8 Early career-funded/Senior Mix: "...A set of small groups that would plan, you know, kind of the peer mentoring with a senior person that would plan to meet after the monthly session to do some intensive follow up with each other and maybe, if it's around specific aims and the next month's topic isn't something as interesting, that group might stick with the specific aims topic for a couple of months of meetings. So ,you would have your own little accountability group…" – Early career-funded focus group, page 7 Mixed disciplines: "...I think in trying to make it interdisciplinary you know so you have an epidemiologist, an immunologist, you know, some people from different realms, I think. You know the best learning I had during my postdoc was, there's a group called Kazazi and we all kind of did maternal and child health work but we were all interdisciplinary so the biostatisticians and

		epidemiologists, you know, lab people. And, that was a real strength and people were at different stages of the career." - Early career-funded focus group, page 8
1.2 Individualized feedback	Gaining individualized 1:1 feedback from a grant writing expert who has reviewed your written product or is familiar with your proposal(i.e. Janet gross or someone else)	"...having Janet Gross and the service she offers is probably one of the best aspects of the K-Club. It's incredible that you can provide a service like that for people. Don't take that away. Don't fix what's not broken." - Senior focus group
1.3 Networking	Peer/colleague networking, building connections and community in the Emory health science community	"I think one big thing, like an annual happy hour. Not one big thing on a more routine basis. I think that people would be more willing to do networking if they also perceived that it was an investment in their own professional development." – Early career-award seeking focus group, page 12
1.4 Guest speakers	Any reference to helpful speakers/panelists that could participate in the sessions (i.e. NIH people or grant reviewers...)	"Foundation. Grant people. Review officers. Um. Division heads." – Early career- award seeking focus group, page 16
Theme 2. Mentorship		
2.0 Mentorship	Any reference to mentorship/menteeship	"...Maybe come up with a creative way to engage mentors. Maybe a structured way of mentoring effectively. I think most of us mentor, that we just do it because we have to do it. There was somebody before us that mentored us. I've never received any mentorship training. So, some forum of creating an opportunity to get some structured training on how to be an effective mentor would be something that the K-Club can do." – Senior focus group, page 17
2.1 Resources for mentors	Any reference to the support/resources that mentors need that would improve mentorship.	"I think having a toolkit for mentors to use and know about. At least something to point to would beneficial. Because a lot of the stuff I found out on my own. My mentor didn't necessarily know." – Early career- award seeking focus group, page 2
2.2 Incentivizing mentoring	Any reference to incentivizing mentors to take time to mentor mentees	"Protected time" – Senior focus group, page 16

2.3 Being a good mentor	Any reference to the qualities/actions that make up a good mentor	"I also think that…You know, this is tacky, but one of the things that NIH is looking for is that you have someone on your mentorship team that has an R01, an active R01 right now. So, I think some targeted matchmaking on this. Like, so maybe this isn't your primary scientific mentor. So, maybe your scientific mentor doesn't have active R01 funding right now. But this is someone here at the institution that does and is similar in this area and that would be a good relationship to foster. " – Early career- award seeking focus group, page 26 - 27
2.4 Being a good mentee	Any reference to the qualities/actions that make up a good mentee	"I have to say that what I personally struggle with is trying to get people to be more curious. As junior faculty and fellows—for some reason this sounds very generational—I think that when you're a clinical fellow you're not encouraged to be curious about things. I struggle with this to try and impart that there's so many great unknowns that we have to fix in our field and they want to sign out and get out. What I'm getting at is when you ask for help, I think one-on-one time and really helping push junior people in ways that need to be pushed. That's part of developing your niche and figuring what's interesting, reading, all of the above. I don't know if I'm alone in this but any time I bring this up with anyone in the country, it's the exact same head nod. We all agree with that." – Senior focus group, page 16
Theme 3. Grant Application Resources		
3.0 Grant Funding 101	Any general reference to grant writing	"And [bringing in] a non-NIH perspective as well. In fact, most of my research is funded by private donors at this point. So, with one R03 and a lot more money coming from individual people" – Early career-funded focus group, page 20
3.1 Finding appropriate grants	Conversation surrounding finding a grant that matches your career development and interests, including non-NIH funding resources for early career investigators to pursue.	"...maybe fund pilot grants so that people can get data to then get more funding. Especially given the current landscape. If I couldn't do that and we were sort of solely focusing on creating better scientists and, ideally with that, doing work that will help their patient population. Then, that goes to some of the other ideas we were talking about in terms of ways to enhance the curriculum." Early career-funded focus group, page 16

3.2 Nuts and bolts of grant writing	Demystifying the grant process by breaking a complex grant into more manageable components. Discussing what should and should not be included in that section and how to best present that information.	"Clinical research boot camp [was a useful professional development event because] it's very practical advice and there was a session that talked about the nuts and bolts about how to write a grant...this is what each section of the grant is. This what you should never put." – Early career- award seeking focus group, page 7
3.3 Compelling storytelling	A concept that consists of at least one of the following components. Teaching K-Club attendees: (1) To craft arguments in their grants that persuade reviewers of their worthiness for funding. (2) To sell themselves as researchers.	"Really teaching somebody how to write and tell a story and to put together an argument is so foundational. It's almost like an 'aha moment' that goes off and now I understand how to make this argument and get the funding." – Earl-funded focus group, page 19; "We have somebody from the DOM pediatric conference coming to the postdoc office to talk about building your brand. How you talk about yourself and what you do." – Early career-funded focus group, page 21
3.4 Simulate review process	Any reference to a simulated grant review process to help research investigators better understand the review process	"But, I also at this stage [would] appreciate if you guys would organize some small sessions that, as [participant name] suggested, simulate how the reviewer reviews your proposal, things like that. Because I think that if we know how to think from that angle, we can definitely improve how we write the proposals. Something like that." – Early career- award seeking focus group, page 5
3.5 Navigating NIH	Conversation surrounding finding and using NIH's grant writing and submission resources (i.e. website, example grant submissions, people)	"Being there and understand how you reply to the A1, how you do it, how to navigate the NIH website and be able to get the information that I need, what are different institution's success rates, what can be different from one study section to the other. All of that for me was huge." – Early career-funded focus group, page 13
3.6 Revising for resubmission	Conversation surrounding best practices in re-submitting grants after receiving feedback	"Has there been a K-Club on how to respond and revise an application based on reviewer comments? I couldn't remember if I had been to one but I think that's a really important skillset. I think someone had mentioned rejection... but I'd take more feedback for improvement so learning how to do that." – Early career-funded focus group, page 15
3.7 Navigating Emory bureaucracy	Conversation about how Emory's bureaucracy for grants meshes with outside organizations and how applicants can successfully work with the Emory bureaucracy.	"And that's why I think it's helpful learning how to navigate. Or learning new ways to seek out funding, given that the traditional model may be changing. There are sort of Emory and CHOA-specific nuances that are helpful to

		learn before you get into an industry sponsor" – Early career-funded focus group, page 21; "And they keep changing. I think more education around OSC, OSP and Office of Technology Transfer. Those three entities are challenging and then the CHOA OSP to add that into that. And, so, if we can have an expert who understands how that's supposed to work." – Early career-funded focus group, page 21
Theme 4. Ambiguity of Branding		
4.0 Unclear target audience	Confusion regarding the target audience that the club is trying to reach with their sessions and outreach.	Program Director: Is the k-club a misnomer? All: Yeah Program Director: It's kind of our brand, right? But is it a detraction? Participnant: Yeah, actually. I thought it was more directed towards post-docs because and I see them for most of you it's more for a junior faculty. So for me K ends with your postdoc. - Early career-funded focus group, page 9
4.1 Unclear vision/purpose/ goal	References to confusion about the K-Club's mission/vision/purpose, especially regarding whether its purpose is career development, or to help members get K grants, or just any grant.	"But, K-Club, what is your main objective? What is your mission? I guess to help people advance their career. But what is the tool that, for you guys, is more important? Is it grant funding? Is it—I don't know." Early career-funded focus group, page 11
Theme 5. Technology		
5.0 Functions wanted from technology	Any reference to the things that people want from various types of technology (i.e. WebEx)	Participant: The thing I found a little frustrating was the WebEx seminars. You can't submit a question afterwards, right? So, it would be nice if you could submit a question, but after the fact. Moderator: During? Participant: Not necessarily…well, during would be nice too. But, after the fact. So, say I didn't make it to the K-Club meeting and I watched it the Thursday but I still have a question. There should be a link to say, 'submit questions via email or something. - Early career- award seeking focus group, page 9-10
5.1 Type of technology	Conversation surrounding various types of technology that can be incorporated into the K-Club program (i.e. response clickers)	"So, we have a lot of private foundations that use um… Proposal Central. So, if we had something like that in-house that Emory would sponsor. Then we would be able to submit our grants online and go through the process of submitting the grants" - Early career- award seeking focus group, page 8
Theme 6. Marketing & Communication		

6.0 Methods & content to promote K-Club	The means through which information about the club spreads, whether intentionally, such as via promotion efforts, or via word-of-mouth.	Word-of-mouth: "I first heard about it through one of my lab mates. At the time, she'd gone before because she was applying for a K." - Early career- award seeking focus group, page 4
Theme 7. Evaluation		
7.0 Evaluating the K-Club	Conversation surrounding best practices in K-Club post-session evaluation methods.	"If you want quantitative data get it while people are there. If you want qualitative data, free response, new ideas, that's going to probably have to happen after the fact" – Early career- award seeking focus group, page 22.