

**NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for  
Individual Predoctoral Fellows (Parent F31)**

**General Information:**

**Link to Parent F32 Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA):**

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-113.html>

**Participating Institutes and Centers (ICs) for PA-11-111 (F31):**

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI); National Cancer Institute (NCI); National Eye Institute (NEI); National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI); National Institute on Aging (NIA); National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA); National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID); National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS); National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB); Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD); National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD); National Institute on Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR); National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK); National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA); National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS); National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS); National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH); National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS); National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR); National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

**IC Specific Information, including contact information:** Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate individuals at the IC to which they are applying to discuss their application. More information can be found here:

[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/contacts/parent\\_F32.html](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/contacts/parent_F32.html)

**Purpose:** The purpose of this individual postdoctoral research training fellowship is to provide support to promising Fellowship Applicants with the potential to become productive, independent investigators in scientific health-related research fields relevant to the missions of participating NIH Institutes and Centers.

**Application Due Dates:** *Cycle I:* April 8; *Cycle II:* August 8; *Cycle III:* December 8.

*Note: AIDS and AIDS-related Applications have their own due dates: Cycle 1: May 7; Cycle 2: September 7; Cycle 3: January 7*

**Award Period:** Individuals may receive up to 3 years of aggregate Kirschstein-NRSA support at the postdoctoral level, ***including any combination of support from institutional training grants (e.g. T32) and an individual fellowship award.***

**Budget Information:** FY 2012 information on Stipends, Tuition/Fees and Other Budgetary Levels can be found here: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-12-033.html>. No indirect (F&A) Costs.

Post-doctoral stipend levels:

Years of experience	Stipend level
0	\$39,264
1	\$41,364
2	\$44,340
3	\$46,092
4	\$47,820
5	\$49,884
6	\$51,582
7 or More	\$54,180

Tuition and fees: An amount per postdoctoral trainee or fellow equal to 60% of the level requested by the applicant institution, up to \$4,500 per year, will be provided. If the trainee or fellow is enrolled in a program that supports postdoctoral individuals in formal degree-granting training, an amount per postdoctoral trainee or fellow equal to 60% of the level requested by the applicant institution, up to \$16,000 per year, will be provided.

Institutional Allowance for Individual Fellows (including health insurance): \$7,850

**Individual Eligibility Information:** Individual must be a citizen or a non-citizen national of the United States or have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence (i.e., possess a currently valid Permanent Resident Card USCIS Form I-551, or other legal verification of such status).

Individual must have received a PhD, MD, DO, DC, DDS, DVM, OD, DPM, ScD, EngD, Dr PH, DNSc, ND (Doctor of Naturopathy), PharmD, DSW, PsyD, or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited domestic or foreign institution. Certification by an authorized official of the degree-granting institution that all degree requirements have been met is also acceptable. A Kirschstein-NRSA fellowship may not be used to support the clinical years of residency training but may be used for research fellowship years of a residency program. Research clinicians must devote full-time to their proposed research training and confine clinical duties to those activities that are part of the research training program.

**Institutional Eligibility Information:** The fellowship is designed to support research training experiences in new settings in order to maximize the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. In most cases, therefore, the sponsoring institution should be a site other than where the applicant fellow has trained as a graduate student. However, if the applicant fellow is proposing postdoctoral training at his/her doctoral institution, the application must carefully document the opportunities for new research training experiences specifically designed to broaden his/her scientific background. In addition, the application should propose research experiences that will allow the fellow to acquire new knowledge and/or technical skills that will enhance his/her potential to become a productive, independent investigator.

**Individual Fellowship Application Guide SF424 (R&R) - Adobe Forms Version B Series:**

Word document:

[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424\\_RR\\_Guide\\_Fellowship\\_VerB.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424_RR_Guide_Fellowship_VerB.doc)

PDF document:

[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424\\_RR\\_Guide\\_Fellowship\\_VerB.pdf](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424_RR_Guide_Fellowship_VerB.pdf)

**Application Components:**

**Project Title:** *81 characters, including spaces and punctuation.*

**Cover Letter:** *Required for Fellowship Applications.*

Must contain the list of referees (including name, department affiliation, and institution). It should also contain any of the following information that applies to the application:

1. Application title.
2. Funding Opportunity (PA or RFA) title of the NIH initiative.
3. Request of an assignment (referral) to a particular awarding component (e.g. NIH IC) or Scientific Review Group (SRG). The PHS makes the final determination.
4. List of individuals (e.g., competitors) who should not review your application and why.
5. Disciplines involved, if multidisciplinary.
6. For late applications (see Late Application policy in Section 2.14) include specific information about the timing and nature of the cause of the delay.
7. When submitting a Changed/Corrected Application **after** the submission date, a cover letter is **required** explaining the reason for the Changed/Corrected Application. If you already submitted a cover letter with a previous submission and are now submitting a Changed/Corrected Application, you must include all previous cover letter text in the revised cover letter attachment.
8. Statement that you have attached any required agency approval documentation for the type of application submitted.
9. List of Referees (at least 3), including: names, degrees, and affiliations of the individuals from whom you have asked to submit reference letters.

**Project Summary/ Abstract:** *No longer than 30 lines of text.* A self-contained description of the project. Should contain a statement of objectives and methods to be employed. Should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields and understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader.

**Specific Aims:** *1 page.* State concisely the goals of the proposed research, summarize expected outcome(s), including impact on research field(s). List succinctly the specific objectives of the proposed research.

**Project Narrative:** *No more than two or three sentences.* Describe the *relevance of this research to public health.* Be succinct and use plain language that can be understood by a general, lay audience.

**Research Strategy:** *6 pages.*

**Significance:** Explain: the importance of the problem/barrier to progress that the proposed project addresses; how the project will improve scientific knowledge/technical capability/clinic practice in the field; how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, preventative interventions that drive the field will be changed if the aims are achieved.

**Innovation:** Fellowship applications should NOT include an “Innovation” section unless specified in the FOA.

**Approach:** Describe the overall strategy, methodology and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted and any resource sharing plans (unless you are including a Resource Sharing Plan as a separate attachment); discuss potential problems/alternative strategies/ benchmarks for success; if the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility and address the management of any high risk aspects of the proposed work. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised. Include any courses that you plan to take to support the research training experiences. If you have multiple Specific Aims, you may address Significance, Innovation and Approach for all the Specific Aims collectively. If applicable, include information on preliminary studies for new applications.

**Bibliography & References Cited:** *no specific page limit.* Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. Include only bibliographic citations. Applicants should be especially careful to follow scholarly practices in providing citations for source materials relied upon when preparing any section of the application. Citations that are not covered by the Public Access Policy, but are publicly available in a free, online format may include URLs or PMCID numbers.

**Facilities & Other Resources:** *no specific page limit.* Describe the facilities to be used (Laboratory, Animal, Computer, Office, Clinical and Other). Template/sample available from the Research Resources Office; this template should be updated to include any specific resources relevant to your proposed project.

**List of Referees:** *no specific page limit.* Include the names, degrees, and affiliations of the individuals from whom you have asked to submit reference letters. At least three references

are required. The applicant's sponsor/co-sponsors cannot be counted as a reference (the sponsor's/co-sponsor's recommendation is included as part of the application). For postdoctoral applications, references from graduate or medical school are preferred over those from undergraduate school.

**Reference Letters:** Reference letters are submitted directly by referees through the eRA Commons [Referee Information link](#). Note that the sponsor and any co-sponsors may not submit a letter of reference.

Referees must include the following information:

- Referee First Name (Required)
- Referee Last Name (Required)
- Referee MI Name (middle initial) (Not Required)
- Referee E-mail (Required)
- Referee Institution/Affiliation (Required)
- Referee Department (Required)
- PD/PI (Fellowship applicant) Commons User ID (Required)
- PD/PI's Last Name, as it appears on the PD/PI's Commons account (Required) (will be validated to ensure they match)
- Funding Opportunity Announcement Number (Required and **must** match the number of the FOA under which the application is being submitted)
- Reference Letter Confirmation Number (Required only if resubmitting a reference form; not required otherwise)
- Fellowship Reference Form – two pages maximum (may be submitted prior to application submission but NOT later than application due date).

**References must be submitted through era commons at:**

<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/reference/submitRefereeInformation.jsp>

**Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Information:** *6 pages total*. Provide information on Research Support Available (tabular form); Sponsor's/Co-Sponsor's Previous Fellows/Trainees; Training Plan, Environment, Research Facilities; Number of Fellows/Trainees to be Supervised During the Fellowship; and Applicant's Qualifications and Potential for a Research Career.

**Biographical Sketch for Sponsor and Co-Sponsor:** *4 pages*. Sponsor and co-sponsors must use this form: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424R-R\\_biosketch\\_VerB.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424R-R_biosketch_VerB.doc).

**Biographical Sketch for fellowship applicant:** *4 pages*. Applicants must use this form: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/applicant-fellowbiosketch.doc>.

Please note that post-doctoral applicants need to list by institution and year all undergraduate courses and graduate scientific and/or professional courses germane to the training sought under this award with grades. In the space following the chart, explain any marking system if other than 1-100, A, B, C, D, F, or 0-4.0 if applicable. Show levels required for a passing grade.

Sample fellowship applicant biosketch available here:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/applicant-fellowbiosketchsample.doc>).

**Protection of Human Subjects:** *no specific page limit.* Describe the proposed involvement of human subjects in the work outlined in the Research Strategy section, including: adequacy of protection against risks, Potential Benefits of the Proposed Research to Human Subjects and Others, and Importance of Knowledge to be gained.

**Inclusion of women and minorities:** *no specific page limit:* Include: The targeted/planned distribution of subjects by sex/gender and racial/ethnic groups using the format in the Targeted/Planned Enrollment Table; a description and rationale for subject selection; compelling rationale for the exclusion of any sex/gender or racial/ethnic group; description of proposed outreach programs for recruiting sex/gender and racial/ethnic group members as subjects. The NIH Policy on the Inclusion of Women and Minorities in Clinical Research can be found here: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women\\_min/women\\_min.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/women_min/women_min.htm).

**Targeted/ Planned Enrollment (Clinical Research Only):** If this application involves the Inclusion of Women and Minorities, complete the Targeted/Planned Enrollment Table for each protocol: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424R-R\\_enrollment.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424R-R_enrollment.doc).

**Inclusion of children;** *no specific page limit.* Describe the plans to include children or justify the exclusion of children. The NIH Policy on Inclusion of Children can be found here: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/children/children.htm>.

**Respective Contributions:** *1 page.* Describe the collaborative process between you and your sponsor/ co-sponsor in the development, review, and editing of this research training plan. Discuss the respective roles in accomplishing the proposed research.

**Selection of Sponsor and Institution:** *1 page.* Describe the rationale/ justification for the selection of the sponsor and institution. Explain why the sponsor, co-sponsor and institution were selected to accomplish the research training goals. If the proposed research training is to take place at a site other than the sponsoring organization, provide and explanation.

**Doctorate or Current Institution:** Since training is expected to broaden a fellow's perspective, postdoctoral fellowship applicants requesting training at either their doctorate institution or at the institution where they have been training for more than a year must explain why further training at that institution would be valuable. Individuals applying for Senior Fellowships who are requesting training at the institution at which they are employed should provide a similar explanation.

**Responsible Conduct of Research:** *1 page.* Every fellow must receive instruction in the responsible conduct of research (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-10-019.html>. Document prior participation/ instruction in responsible conduct of research during the applicant's current career stage (including the date instruction was last completed).

Propose a plan to receive instruction in responsible conduct of research or participate as a course lecturer, etc., depending on career stage. Describe the institution's plans to provide, and applicant's plans for obtaining, instruction in the responsible conduct of research. Describe the role of the sponsor in the instruction in responsible conduct of research. Information on Mailman School Resources for Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research is available at: <http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/research-resources-r2-office/grant-resources/preparing-grant-proposal> (please note that this is a list of available resources that should be shortened by applicant to include only relevant resources and to meet the 1 page limit for this section).

**Current or Prior Kirschstein-NRSA Support?** *1 page.* If "Yes", identify the current and/or prior Kirschstein-NRSA support using a drop down menu. Includes participation on training grants.

**Applications for Concurrent Support?** *1 page.* If so, include the type, dates, source(s) and amount. The fellowship applicant must promptly report to the NIH any support resulting from other applications.

**Goals for Fellowship Training and Career:** *1 page.* The fellowship applicant must describe his/her overall career goals, and explain how the proposed research training will enable the attainment of these goals. Identify the skills, theories, conceptual approaches, etc. to be learned or enhanced during the award.

**Activities Planned Under This Award:** *1 page.* The fellowship applicant must describe by year the activities (research, coursework, etc.) he/she will be involved in under the proposed award and estimate the percentage of time to be devoted to each activity, based on a normal working day for a full-time fellow as defined by the sponsoring institution. The percentage should total 100 for each year. Also, briefly explain activities other than research and relate them to the proposed research training.

**Doctoral Dissertation and Research Experience:** *2 pages.* Summarize research experience in chronological order. Advanced graduate students, who have (or will have) completed their comprehensive examinations by the time of award must include a narrative of their doctoral dissertation (may be preliminary). If you have no research experience, list other scientific experience. Do not list academic courses.

**Certification Letter for Predoctoral Fellowships (F31) to Promote Diversity:** *Required for F31- Diversity Applications.* Include a letter from the institution certifying eligibility of Fellowship applicant for the program. The Certification Letter must be on institutional letterhead and scanned so that an institutional official signature is visible.

**Detailed instructions can be found in the SF424 (R&R) Individual Fellowship Application Guide for NIH and AHRQ, which can be found here:**  
[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424\\_RR\\_Guide\\_Fellowship\\_VerB.pdf](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424_RR_Guide_Fellowship_VerB.pdf).

Mailman School Research Resources (R<sup>2</sup>) Office  
NIH F32 Cheat Sheet  
Updated September 2013

**Additional Information:** Information about Sponsor(s)' funding will be allowed as post-submission material to update the Sponsor(s)' funding information in the originally submitted application (if there are any changes in Sponsor's funding). Any additional material is due no later than 30 days prior to the meeting of the review committee (see: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-12-022.html>).

**Note:** The R<sup>2</sup> Office has instructions and template documents for each section of these proposals. Please contact Dr. Pam Factor-Litvak, Associate Dean for Research Resource (R<sup>2</sup>) at [prf1@columbia.edu](mailto:prf1@columbia.edu) for support while preparing an NIH F32 application.