

The purpose of this document is to provide a guide for the applicant and the sponsor to craft and write an NIH National Research Service Award Grant (NRSA). NIH NRSA F-series training grants are intended for pre-doctoral (F31 and F31 Diversity), post-doctoral (F32), and MD/PhD (F30) applicants. The checklist items selected below represent the elements of the application that require applicant and/or sponsor writing.

This checklist and information are meant to guide the applicant. However, each applicant should carefully read the PHS SF424 Guide for complete and in-depth information!

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-h/fellowship-forms-h.pdf>


LOGISTICS AND TIME MANAGEMENT

- Start at least 3-4 months out from the deadline
- Talk to your mentor EARLY about a plan
 - Career/Training
 - Science/Research
- Talk to your department administrator and your internal grants officer
 - NIH grants are typically due to ORPA 5 business days prior to the actual NIH deadline
- Register with eRA Commons (NIH website) to secure principle investigator status

FORMATTING AND GUIDELINES

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm>

Document Format	PDF
Font type	Arial or Helvetica is best
Font size	11 or larger (figure legends as small as 9)
Page size	8.5 x 11 inches
Margins	0.5 inches on all sides

 This symbol indicates significant changes that differ from the previous SF424 version.

F.100 – How to Use the Application Instructions (page F-3)**F.110 – Application Process (page F-6)****F.120 Significant Changes  (page F-10)****F.130 – Program Overview (page F13)**

- Referees (Including name, departmental affiliation and institution)
 - [Reference Letters](#)
 - [Difference between Reference Letters and Letters of Support](#)
- Payback Service Requirement
- Before applying information
 - Activity codes
 - [Refer to specific FOA](#)
 - Contact awarding component

F.200 – SF 424 (R&R) Form (page F-16)

Pages F17-F28 contains instructions that your administrator will provide assistance.
Please meet with your administrator to review these pages

- Cover Letter (page F-29)**
 - Application Title
 - Title of FOA
 - Statement addressing large scale human or non-human genomic data (if applicable)

F.220 – R&R Other Project Information Proposal Cover Page (page F-31)

- General informational boxes that might require more details answers**
 - **Are human subjects involved (page F-31)**
 - **Are vertebrate animals involved (page F-34)**
 - **Proprietary/Privileged information involved (page F-35)**
 - **Environmental questions (page F-35)**
 - **Designated historical site (page F-36)**
 - **Partnerships outside the USA (page F-37)**

- Proposal Summary – Abstract (page F-37)** **No more than 30 lines**
- Project Narrative (page F-38)** **3 sentences**
- Bibliography and References Cited (page F-38)**
- Facilities and Other Resources (page F-39)** **2 pages**
- Equipment (page F-40)**
- Other Attachments (page F-40)**

F.230 – Project/Performance Site Location(s) From (page F-41)

- Project/Performance Site Primary location (page F-41)**
 - IF there is more than one training site these must be listed in the appropriate fields as necessary.
 - See F.220 – R&R Other Project Information Form, Facilities and Resources

**F.240 – R&R Senior/Key Person Profile From:
Fellowship Application Section (page F-45)**

- Project Director/Principle Investigator (page F-45)**
 - Must have an eRA Commons account as a PI
 - ORCID ID link and information
 - Check with your program administrator for assistance in completing this form
- Biographical Sketch (page F-48)** **5 pages**
 - Note: There is a specific format for fellowship (page F-49)**
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
 - Personal Statement (page F-50)**
 - Positions and Honors (page F-50)**
 - Contributions to Science (page F-51)**
 - Scholastic Performance (page F-52)**

F.430 – PHS Fellowship Supplemental Form (page F-56)

- Introduction – only applicable for re-submissions (page F-58)** **1 page**
- Background and Goals for Fellowship Training (page F-58)** **6 pages**
 - A. Doctoral Dissertation (F32) and Research Experience (F31)
 - B. Training Goals and Objectives
 - C. Activities Planned Under this Award

Research Training Plan Section (page F-60)

- Specific Aims (page F-60)** **1 page**
- Research Strategy (page F-61)** **6 pages**
 - 1. Significance
 - 2. Approach
 - Preliminary Studies – can be woven into the Significance or Approach
- Respective Contributions (page F-63)** **1 page**
- Selection of Sponsor and Institution (page F-63)** **1 page**
- Progress Report Publication List (page F-64; for Renewal only - not typical for an F)** **1 page**
- Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (page F-65)** **1 page**

The plan must address the five required instructional components outlined in the NIH Policy on Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), as more fully described in the [11.2.3.4 RCR Guidelines](#)

1. **Format:** Describe the required format of instruction (i.e., face-to-face lectures, coursework, and/or real-time discussion groups). A plan with only on-line instruction is not acceptable.
2. **Subject Matter:** Describe the breadth of subject matter (e.g., conflict of interest, authorship, data management, human subjects and animal use, laboratory safety, research misconduct, and research ethics).
3. **Faculty Participation:** Describe the role of the sponsor/mentor(s) and other faculty involvement in the instruction.
4. **Duration of Instruction:** Describe the total number of contact hours of instruction, taking into consideration the duration of the program.
5. **Frequency of Instruction:** Instruction must occur during each career stage and at least once every four years. Document any prior instruction during the applicant's current career stage, including the inclusive dates instruction was last completed.

Sponsor(s), Collaborator(s), and Consultant Section (page F-66)

- Sponsor and Co-Sponsor(s) Biosketch(es)**
- Sponsor and Co-Sponsor(s) Statement(s) (page F-66)** **6 pages**
 - A. Research Support Available
 - B. Sponsor's/Co-Sponsor's Previous Fellows/Trainees
 - C. Training Plan, Environment, Research Facilities
 - **F30 Applications** – The research training plan should provide opportunities to integrate clinical experiences during the research training component; a plan for a smooth transition to the clinical training component; and should have the potential to facilitate the applicant's transition to a residence or other program appropriate for his/her career goals/ Sponsors and Co-Sponsors should discussed these clinical aspects of the applicant's training as well.
 - **F31, F32, F33 Applications:** The Research Training Plan should facilitate the applicant's transition to the next stage of his/her career. Sponsors and Co-Sponsors should discuss this aspect of the Research Training Plan as well.
 - D. Number of Fellows/Trainees to be Supervised During the Fellowship
 - E. Applicant's Qualification and Potential for a Research Career



Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors and Consultants (page F-68)
6 pages
Description of Institutional Environment and Commitment to Training Section (page F-69)

- Check with your department administrator**
myHub in GEPA has a template but this should be tailored to you and your program
 - Describe the institution's dual- degree (F30) or graduate (F31) program in which the applicant is enrolled. This description should include the structure of the program, the required milestones and their usual timing, the number of courses, any teaching commitments or qualifying exams, and the average time to degree over the past 10 years. Describe the progress/status of the applicant in relation to the program's timeline, and the frequency and method by which the program formally monitors and evaluates a student's progress.
 - For F30 applications specifically, describe any clinical tutorials during the graduate research years and any activities to ease transition from the graduate to the clinical years of the dual-degree program. Describe any research- associated activities during the clinical years of the dual- degree program.
 - Include the name of the individual providing this information at the end of the description. This information is typically provided by the director of the graduate program or the department chair.

If applying for F31 D: Diversity
Description of Candidate's Contribution to Program Goals (page F-69)

- Required for applicants to diversity-related FOAs (F31 diversity)**
 - **All other fellowship applicants skip this section**

Other Research Training Plan Section (page F-70)

- Vertebrate Animals (page F-70)**
 - Description of Procedures**
 - Justifications**
 - Minimization of Pain and Distress**
- Select Agent Research (page F-71)**
- Resource Sharing Plan (page F-72)** 
- Other Plans (page F-73)** 
- Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources (page F-73)**

Additional Information Section (page F-73)

- Human Embryonic Stem Cells**
- Note from page F-73-77 down there are a number of other categories that your administrator should be able to assist you with**

Budget (page F-77)

Appendix (page F-79)

F.500 PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information (page F-81 to the end)