



NIH NRSA F-series Grant Writing Guidelines and Checklist

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, F99), 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-i/fellowship-forms-i.pdf>

LOGISTICS AND TIME MANAGEMENT

- Start at least 3-4 months out from the deadline
- Talk to your mentor (sponsor) EARLY about a plan
 - Goals and Preparedness
 - Research Training
- Talk to your department administrator and your internal grants officer
 - NIH grants are typically due to ORPA 5 business days prio 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, Georgia, Helvetica or Palatino Linotype |
| 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 previous SF424 versions.

F.100 – How to Use the Application Instructions (page F-3)**F.110 – Application Process (page F-6)****F.120 Significant Changes  (page F-9)****F.130 – Program Overview (page F12)**

- 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 NOFO](#)
 - Contact awarding component

F.200 – SF 424 (R&R) Form (page F-15)

Pages F17-F28 contain instructions that your administrator will provide assistance.

Please meet with your administrator to review these pages

- Cover Letter Attachment (page F-28)**
 - 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-30)

- General informational boxes that might require more detailed answers**
 - **Are human subjects involved (page F-31)**
 - **Are vertebrate animals involved (page F-33)**
 - **Proprietary/Privileged information involved (page F-34)**
 - **Environmental questions (page F-35)**
 - **Designated historical site (page F-35)**
 - **Partnerships outside the USA (page F-36)**

- Proposal Summary – Abstract (page F-36)** **No more than 30 lines**
- Project Narrative (page F-37)** **3 sentences**
- Bibliography and References Cited (page F-37)**
- Facilities and Other Resources (page F-38)** **2 pages**
- Equipment (page F-39)**
- Other Attachments (page F-39)**

F.230 – Project/Performance Site Location(s) From (page F-40)

- Project/Performance Site Primary location (page F-40)**
 - 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-44)

- Project Director/Principle Investigator (page F-44)**
 - 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-47) 5 pages**
 - Note: There is a specific format for fellowship (page F-48)**
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
 - Personal Statement (page F-49)**
 - Positions and Honors (page F-49)**
 - Contributions to Science (page F-50)**

! F.430 – PHS Fellowship Supplemental Form (page F-55)

- Introduction – only applicable for re-submissions (page F-57) 1 page**
- Candidate Section (page F-57)**
 - Goals, Preparedness and Potential 3 pages**
 - A. Overall Training Goals
 - B. Candidate’s Preparedness
 - C. Candidate’s Self-Assessment
 - D. Scientific Perspective
- Research Training Plan (page F-59) 3 pages**
 - Training Activities and Timeline

! Research Training Project (page F-60)

- Research Training Project – Aims and Strategy (page F-60) 1 page**
- Research Training Project - Strategy (page F-61) 6 pages**
 - 1. Scientific Foundation and Rationale
 - 2. Approach
 - Preliminary Studies – can be woven into the Significance or Approach
- Progress Report Publication List (page F-64; for Renewal only - not typical) 1 page**
- Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (page F-64) 1 page**

! Commitment to Candidate, Mentoring And Training Environment (page F-65)

- Sponsor(s) Commitment (page F-65) 6 pages**
 - A. Mentoring Approach and Candidate Mentoring Plan
 - B. Prior Commitment to Training and Mentoring
 - C. Commitment to the Candidate’s Research Training Plan
 - D. Research Training Environment
 - E. Candidate’s Potential

Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors and Consultants (page F-67) 6 pages

PENDING - If applying for F31 D: Diversity Description of Candidate’s Contribution to Program Goals (page F-68)

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

Other Research Training Plan Section (page F-68)

- Vertebrate Animals (page F-68)**
 - Description of Procedures**
 - Justifications**
 - Minimization of Pain and Distress**
- Select Agent Research (page F-70)**
- Resource Sharing Plan (page F-71)**
- Other Plans (page F-71)**
- Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources (page F-72)**

Additional Information Section (page F-72)

- 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-76)

Check with your administrator if these apply to you

- Tuition and Fees**
- ! Childcare Costs – only for F99**
- Present Institutional Base Salary**
- Stipends/Salary During First Year of Proposed Fellowship.**
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Appendix (page F-77)**F.500 PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information (pages F-80 to the end)**