

F30 and F31 Application Checklist

Note: This is only a summary of the F Series General Instructions. Please be sure to review the full program announcement guidelines as well as the SF424 Fellowship Instructions.

Parent F31- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-20-246.html>

Parent F31 Diversity- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-20-251.html>

Parent F30- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-20-248.html>

General Formatting Guidelines

Please be sure to review the SF424 guide to ensure that you follow the formatting guidelines set by the NIH. If you do not follow the formatting guidelines then you run the risk of your application being withdrawn by the Committee for Scientific Review (CSR). Formatting information can be found

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

Reference Letters:

- Reference letters must be submitted by 5pm on the due date of the application.
- A minimum of three (3) and a maximum of (5) must be submitted. Your sponsor/co-sponsor may not be one of those submitting a reference letter. The sponsor/co-sponsor of your application cannot be counted as a reference as their recommendation is included as a part of the application.
- Reference letters are submitted on behalf of the applicant on the following link:
<https://public.era.nih.gov/commons/public/reference/submitReferenceLetter.do?mode=new>
- Be sure your cover letter includes the list of your referees.
- Please be sure to review the reference letter guide here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/submission-process/reference-letters.htm> and also share this information with your referees.

PHS Assignment Request Form

This form is optional, but may be used to communicate specific application assignment and review requests to the Division of Receipt and Referral. This use to be capture in the Cover Letter Attachment, but should now be included here. Below is the optional information you can include in the form:

- **Awarding Component Assignment Request** (i.e. NCI for National Cancer Institute).
*Note: please be sure to check the institute(s) you list are participating in the funding opportunity announcement.
- **Study Section Assignment Request**
- **List of individuals who should not review your application and why**
- **Identify Scientific areas of expertise needed to review your application**

1) Cover Letter Attachment

All fellowship applications must include a list of Referees in the Cover Letter. The cover letter must contain the list of referees (including name, department affiliation, and institution). **At least three references are required.** The SF424 Guide has additional information on what can be included in the cover letter (Page F26-27). Requests for specific application assignment (i.e. NIH institute) should no longer be included in the cover letter as this information should now be included on the PHS Assignment Request Form.

2) Research & Related Other Project Information:

- ✓ **Attachment 7 Project Summary/Abstract** – State application's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims, making reference to health relatedness of the project. Describe research design and methods for achieving the

stated goals. Be sure it reflects the key focus of the proposed project so that the application can be appropriately categorized. Also describe the fellowship training plan and the environment in which research training will take place. **No more than 30 lines of text.** See page F-35 for further guidance.

- ✓ **Attachment 8 Project Narrative** – Also known as the Public Health Relevance Statement. A **two to three sentence** description of how this project is relevant to public health. See page F-35 for further guidance.
- ✓ **Attachment 9 Bibliography & References Cited** – Provide a bibliography of any references cited in the Research Training Plan. See page F-36 for further guidance.
- ✓ **Attachment 10 Facilities & Other Resources** – Identify the facilities to be used (Laboratory, Animal, Computer, Office, Clinical and Other). If appropriate, indicate their capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity and extent of availability to the project. Provide a detailed description of the institutional facilities and resources available to the Fellowship applicant. Also include a description of how the scientific environment will contribute to the probability of success of the project and unique features of the environment. The information provided is of major importance in establishing the feasibility of the goals of the fellowship training plan. See page F36 for further guidance.
- ✓ **Attachment 11 Equipment** – List major items of equipment already available for this project and if appropriate identify location and pertinent capabilities.
- ✓ **Attachment 12 Other Attachments Include:**
 - If you have checked “Yes” to 6-Activities with International Collaborators, attach here a description of the special resources or characteristics of the research project (e.g., human subjects, animals, disease, equipment, and techniques), whether similar research is being done in the United States and including the reasons why the facilities, the mentor, or other aspects of the proposed experience are more appropriate than in a domestic setting. The justification is evaluated in terms of the scientific advantages of the foreign training experience as compared to the training available domestically.
 - ***Additional Information for F31 Diversity Applications***

Diversity Eligibility Letter:

Applications submitted for Individual Predoctoral Fellowships (F31) to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research are required to attach a Certification Letter (**titled Diversity_Eligibility_Ltr**) from the institution certifying eligibility of the Fellowship applicant for the program. The letter should avoid revealing sensitive personal information, such as the candidate’s specific racial/ethnic background or type of disability. The Certification Letter must be on institutional letterhead and scanned so that an institutional official signature is visible.

This letter should be received by OSRA as a word document and will be placed on Institutional Letter and signed by the Authorized Official Representative Aleta Gunsul, MPA, Director, Office of Sponsored Research Administration.

3) Budget

Additional Information for Budget F30, F31 & F31 Diversity Applications

- ✓ Select Funds Requested under Tuition & Fees– obtain tuition & fees information from Graduate School or MD/PhD Program.

Estimated Project Funding (Box 15a & 15c of SF 424 Cover Page)

This field pre-populates with the total based on the information entered into the Budget tab within WRG. The budget tab is solely for internal purposes and will not be included in the package that goes to the sponsor. However, it does need to be filled in in order to populate this field that will be a part of your submitted package.

You'll enter the total stipend, tuition/fees, and institutional allowance for each year on the budget and then mark it completed. Once that is done, you'll see the total amount on the SF424 cover page.

4) Project/Performance Site Location (s)

Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University should be listed as the primary location performance site. If you are doing work in a lab at another institution (i.e. Rockefeller, MSKCC) then that site should be listed as another performance site after WCM.

5) Senior Key/Person Profile (Personnel)

Applicant Profile: Starting with the PD/PI (Fellowship applicant), provide a profile for each senior/key person proposed. Note that agency policies concerning "Multiple PD/PIs" are not applicable to F applications. Therefore, do not use the PD/PI role for any other senior/key personnel.

Important Notes:

- The applicant's role is PD/PI
- Credential, e.g. agency log-in: your eRA Commons USER ID is required here. You must be assigned the PD/PI role in the Commons. If you are not certain if you have been assigned the PD/PI role in the Commons, please contact OSRA.
- Sponsors and co- sponsors should be assigned the Project Role of "Other" and then enter "Sponsor" or "Co-Sponsor" in the Other Project Role Category field. If your sponsor is at WCM please first select the 'Personnel Type' of 'Consultant – Key' in WRG and then pull up their name from the list. If your sponsor is External then you'll select the 'Personnel Type' of 'External Consultant – Key' then identify their site followed by their name. From there you will then be able to select the Project Role of "Other" and type in "Sponsor" or "Co-Sponsor."
- ✓ **Applicant NIH Biographical Sketch** –The biosketch should contain: A) Personal Statement; B) Position & Honors; C) Contributions to Science; and D) Scholastic Performance. A link to the template and a sample biographical sketch are available in the SF424 Fellowship Application Guide.

Additional Information for NIH Biographical Sketch

For F30, F31 & F31 Diversity Applications

List by Institution and year all undergraduate courses and graduate scientific and/or professional courses, with grades. In the space following the chart, explain the marking system if other than 1-100, A-F or 0-4.0 if applicable. Show levels required for a passing grade.

Do not include transcripts with the application.

- ✓ **Sponsor's NIH Biographical Sketch** - Attached to the Personnel Section. Please obtain a copy of your mentor's NIH Biographical Sketch and ensure it includes the following sections: A) Personal Statement; B) Position & Honors; C) Contributions to Science; and D) Research Support.

Fellowship Sponsors must provide an eRA Commons ID. You should also verify with them that they have the role of sponsor in the eRA commons. If your sponsor is a WCMC employee then OSRA can assign them the role of sponsor if they do not already have it. However, if your Sponsor is at another institution then they will need to reach out to their sponsored programs office to have the role added to their eRA commons profile.

- ✓ **Other Key Personnel Biographical Sketches (if applicable)**

In addition to sponsors and co-sponsors, fellowship applications may also involve collaborators, consultants, advisory committee members, and contributors, all of whom should also be identified as senior/key personnel if they contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the project, regardless of effort. Please keep in mind that

those listed as senior/key personnel on the application should not be asked to provide reference letters, as such letters are expected to be from individuals not directly involved in the application.

6) PHS Fellowship Supplemental Form

- ✓ **Attachment 1 Introduction (*Only for Resubmissions or Revisions*)** – Discusses changes made to the application. **Limited to 1 page.**
- ✓ **Attachment 2 Applicant's Background and Goals for Fellowship Training**

One PDF for all three sections. Limited to 6 pages.
 - A. Doctoral Dissertation and Research Experience
 - B. Training Goals & Objectives
 - C. Activities Planned Under this Award
- ✓ **Attachment 3 Specific Aims** – State precisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the research field(s) involved. **Limited to 1 page.**
- ✓ **Attachment 4 Research Strategy** - Organize this section using the instructions provide in SF424 guidelines. It should include **A. Significance and C. Approach**. Section B Innovation should not be included for fellowship applications unless specified in the FOA. **Limited to 6 pages.**
- ✓ **Attachment 5 Respective Contributions** - 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. **Limited to 1 page.**
- ✓ **Attachment 6 Selection of Sponsor and Institution** – Explain why the sponsor, co-sponsor (if any), 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 an explanation here. **Limited to 1 page.**
- ✓ **Attachment 8 Training in Responsible Conduct of Research** - Please include WCM's plan to provide and your plan for obtaining Instruction in the responsible conduct of research. Please include when you last completed the training and when you plan to take it again if more than four years have lapsed since you last took the course. The plan must address the five, required instructional components outlined in the NIH policy. Please review full guidelines for this. **Limited to 1 page.**
- ✓ **Attachment 9 Sponsor & Co-Sponsor Statements**

NOTE: Create a heading at the top of the first page stating "Section II--Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements." The following items should be completed as comprehensively as possible:

- Research Support Available
- Sponsor's/Co-Sponsors Previous Fellows/Trainees
- Training Plan, Environment, Research Facilities
- Number of Fellows/Trainees to be Supervised During the Fellowship
- Applicant's Qualifications and Potential for a Research Career

This attachment is limited to 6 pages.

- ✓ **Attachment 10 Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors, & Consultants**-Attachments may be provided (if applicable) by collaborators, consultants, advisors, etc. Relevant information applicable to the fellow's planned research training and future goals may be provided by any contributor or advisor via an attachment. **Limited to 6 pages.**
- ✓ **Attachment 11 Institutional Environment and Commitment to Training**
 - **Description of Institutional Environment:** The sponsoring institution must document a strong, well-established research program related to the candidate's area of interest, including the names of key faculty members relevant to the candidate's proposed developmental plan. Referring to the resources description (Section F.220 - R&R Other Project Information Form, Facilities and Other Resources), indicate how the necessary facilities and other resources will be made available for career enhancement as well as the research proposed in this application. Describe opportunities for intellectual interactions with other investigators, including courses offered, journal clubs, seminars, and presentations. This information should be coordinated with information provided under Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements, Training Plan, Environment, Research Facilities.
 - **Additional Educational Information** (REQUIRED FOR F30 and F31 applications): Describe the institution's dual-degree (F30) or graduate (F31) program in which the applicant is enrolled, e.g. the structure of the program, required milestones and their usual timing (number of courses, any teaching commitments, qualifying exams, etc.) 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.
 - **NOTE: The above information is typically provided by the director of the graduate program or the department chair. Include the name of the individual providing this information at the end of the description.**
 - **NOTE: a listing of the applicant's courses and grades must be included in the Fellowship Applicant Biographical Sketch, and NOT in this attachment.**

Limited to 2 pages.

- ✓ **Attachment 13 Vertebrate Animals**- Should your research involve Vertebrate Animals you must complete the necessary section in the application. *Please consult SF424 instructions (Pages F-68 for full guidance).*
This attachment includes the following:
 - **Description of Procedures**
 - **Justifications**
 - **Minimization of Pain and Distress**
- ✓ **Attachment 14 Select Agent Research** - If any of the activities proposed in the application involve the use of Select Agents at any time during the proposed project period, either at the applicant organization or at any other Project/Performance Site, refer to application instructions for addressing this item. The investigator and the sponsoring institution are responsible for protecting the environment and research personnel from hazardous conditions. If materials or procedures are proposed that are potentially hazardous to research personnel and/or the environment, the procedures to be taken in order to ensure adequate protection must be described.
- ✓ **Attachment 15 Resource Sharing Plan** - NIH considers the sharing of unique research resources developed through NIH- sponsored research an important means to enhance the value and further the advancement of the research. When resources have been developed with NIH funds and the associated research findings published or provided to NIH, it is important that they be made readily available for research purposes to qualified individuals within the scientific community. Refer to application instructions for addressing this attachment.

- ✓ **Attachment 16 Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources** – Do not include an attachment in this field as this is not yet required.
- ✓ **Attachment 22 Applications of Concurrent Support** – If you answer yes then you must provide a description of the concurrent support. Include the type, dates, sources(s), and amount in the attachment.

7) Human Subjects/CT

Should your research involve Human Subjects you will answer yes to the Human Subjects question on the Setup Questions tab. This will populate the HS question on the Other Project Information tab and on that tab you'll then mark whether it's exempt or not. The information entered on these two tabs will then populate the first part of the Human Subjects/CT tab and you will proceed from there.

***Note:** If you feel your research may fall under an exempt category please discuss with your sponsor and the IRB in advance.

If you mark No to human subjects, you are still required to answer the follow-up question *“Does the proposed research involve human specimens and/or data?”* If yes, a justification must be uploaded with an explanation of why the application does not involve human subjects research.

Fellowship applicants are permitted to conduct research involving human subjects; however, they are NOT permitted to lead an independent clinical trial.

Fellowship applicants who are not proposing a clinical trial: Follow the standard instructions to complete the PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form.

Fellowship applicants who are proposing to gain clinical trial research experience under a sponsor's supervision (i.e., you will not be leading an independent clinical trial): You will generally follow the standard instructions to complete the PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form, but follow relevant Fellowship instructions where they are given. Make sure you are applying to a FOA that does NOT allow independent clinical trials, but that does encourage a clinical trial research experience led by a sponsor/co-sponsor (or another member of the mentoring team). Additionally, the sponsor or co-sponsor is required to include a statement to document leadership of the clinical trial. The statement must include the following:

- Source of funding;
- ClinicalTrials.gov identifier (e.g., NCT87654321), if applicable; and
- A description of how the sponsor or co-sponsor's expertise is appropriate to guide the applicant in any proposed clinical trials research experience.

This statement must be included in the “Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements”

Be sure to consult the SF424 Guidelines for full guidance on Human Subject/CT Form.