**NIH Research Enhancement Award (R15)**

**Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA) for Undergraduate-Focused Institutions**

**Definition of an R15**

Supports small-scale research projects at educational institutions that provide baccalaureate or advanced degrees for a significant number of the Nation’s research scientists but that have not been major recipients of NIH support.

The goals of the R15 are to:

* support meritorious research,
* expose students to research, and
* strengthen the research environment of the institution.

**R15 Principal Investigator Eligibility**

* The PI must have a primary appointment at the R15-eligible institution.
* The PI may not be the PI of an active NIH research grant at the time of a R15 award, though he or she may be one of the Key Personnel for an active NIH grant held by another PD/PI.
* Instrumentation awards (S10), conference grants (R13), and institutional training grants (T32) are examples of grants that are not considered research grants.
* The PI may not be awarded more than one R15 grant at a time.
* Eligibility applies only to the PI and Multiple PIs, not to collaborators, consultants, or sub awardees.

**Application Characteristics**

* Project period is limited to 3 years.
* Direct costs are limited to $300,000 over the entire project period.
* R15 grants are multi-year funded awards. The entire budget, for all years of the award, must be requested in the first budget year.
* Do not complete budget periods 2 or 3. They are not required and will not be accepted with the application.
* NIH's [Modular Budget Policy](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_13/13.2_applicability.htm) apply
* Applicants submitting an application with direct costs of $250,000 or less (total for all years, excluding consortium Facilities and Administrative [F&A] costs) must use the Modular Budget.
* Applicants submitting an application with direct costs of $250,001 - $300,000 (total for all years, excluding consortium Facilities and Administrative [F&A] costs) must use the Research and Related (R&R) Budget form.
* Awards can be renewed by competing for an additional project period.
* The application should propose a research team, including undergraduate and/or graduate students, that is appropriate to accomplish the specific aims and to make an important scientific contribution.

**Due Dates**

Standard R15 receipt dates are **February 25, June 25**, and **October 25**. AIDS and AIDS-related grant application due dates are **May 7, September 7**, and **January 7.**

**NIH R15 Checklist**

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| **FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS** | |
| **Document format** | PDF only; no headers or footers (no page numbers) |
| **Font type/size** | Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype or Georgia Size 11 or larger  Black font color |
| **Line spacing** | * No more than 6 lines of type within a vertical space of 1 inch  * No more than 15 characters per linear inch (including characters and spaces)  * Only single column formatting  * Use section headings |
| **Page size** | 8.5 x 11 |
| **Margins** | .5” all sides |
| **General NIH Guidelines**  **Page Limits**  **Format Attachments** | <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-f/research-forms-f.pdf> **(Updated 3/2/2020)**  <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/page-limits.htm>  <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm> |
| **R15 Solicitation** | <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/par-18-714.html> |

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| **eRA Commons** | |
|  | Be sure that all PI’s, Co-I and registered in eRA Commons |
|  | Please provide commons IDs to your SRS Rep |

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| **Proposal Documents** | |
| 1 | **Human Subject Sections (if applicable)** |
|  | * PIs should use the [NIH Decision Tool](https://grants.nih.gov/policy/humansubjects/hs-decision.htm) to determine if their research involves human subjects, may be considered exempt from Federal regulations, or is not considered human subjects research. * Please note that applications involving the use of human specimens or data may or may not be considered to be research involving human subjects, depending on the details of the materials to be used. * If you check "No" to "Are Human Subjects Involved?" but your application proposes using human specimens or data, you will be required to provide a clear justification about why this use does not constitute human subjects research. * Once you determine the answer to the question "Are Human Subjects Involved?" please visit: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.500-phs-human-subjects-and-clinical-trials-information.htm#IfYes> for details on what you must include in your application to address this section.      * Of note, an IRB approval date is not required at the time of submission when IRB review is pending. This may be requested later in the pre-award cycle as a Just-In-Time requirement. |
| 2 | **Project Summary/Abstract- no more than 30 lines** |
|  | * The project summary is a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work and should be able to stand on its own (separate from the application). This section should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields and understandable to a scientifically literate. * Include broad, long-term objectives and specific aims, making reference to the health relatedness of the project (i.e. mission of NIH). * Describe the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals. Be sure that the project summary reflects the key focus of the proposed project so that the application can be appropriately categorized. Do not include proprietary, confidential information or trade secrets in the project summary. |
| 3 | **Project Narrative (2 to 3 Sentences)** |
|  | * The Project Narrative is the section of the grant application where the applicant should talk about the relevance of the proposed research project to public health. The information should be:   + succinct   + in plain language understandable by a general, lay audience |
| 4 | **Bibliography & References Cited (No Page Limit)** |
|  | * NIH does not require a specific citation format.   + The use of "et al." in place of listing all authors of a publication is acceptable practice.   + Most style guides include format guidance for citations and all formats are acceptable.   + [SciENcv](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/) , a tool to prepare biosketches for NIH and other agencies, uses a standard format used by the National Library of Medicine (see [Citing Medicine](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/)  ) * Remember to comply with NIH’s [public access policy](https://publicaccess.nih.gov/index.htm)  by [including](http://publicaccess.nih.gov/include-pmcid-citations.htm)  the PMC reference number (PMCID) when citing [applicable papers](http://publicaccess.nih.gov/determine-applicability.htm)  that you author or that arise from your NIH-funded research. |
| 5 | **Facilities and Other Resources (No Page Limit)** |
|  | * This is where the R15 FOA deviates from the SF424 Application Guide. This section requires the following information:   + A profile of the students of the applicant institution/academic component and any information or estimate of the number who have obtained a baccalaureate degree and gone on to obtain an academic or professional doctoral degree in the health-related sciences during the last five years.   + A description of the special characteristics of the institution/academic component that make it appropriate for an AREA grant, where the goals of the AREA program are to: (1) provide support for meritorious research; (2) strengthen the research environment of schools that have not been major recipients of NIH support; and (3) expose available undergraduate and/or graduate students in such environments to research.   + Description of the likely impact of an AREA grant on the PD(s)/PI(s).   + Description of the likely impact of an AREA grant on the research environment of the institution/academic component.   + Although it is expected that the majority of the research will be directed by the PD(s)/PI(s) and conducted at the grantee institution, limited use of special facilities or equipment at another institution is permitted.  For any proposed research sites other than the applicant institution, provide a brief description of the resources and access students will need and have to these resources.   + If relevant, a statement of institutional support for the proposed research project (e.g., equipment, supplies, laboratory space, release time, matching funds, etc.). |
| 6 | **Equipment (No Page Limit)** |
|  | * List major items of equipment already available for this project and, if appropriate, identify the equipment's location and pertinent capabilities. |
| 7 | **Biographical Sketch (5 Page Maximum Per Person)** |
|  | * All senior/key personnel must include Biographical Sketches (biosketch). * Use the sample format on the [Biographical Sketch Format Page](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm) to prepare this section for all grant applications. * When preparing the biosketch, the R15 FOA deviates from the SF424 Application guide in that it calls for the PD(s)/PI(s) to include a summary of his or her previous and/or current experience supervising undergraduate and/or graduate students in research in the Personal Statement. The PD(s)/PI(s) should indicate which peer-reviewed publications or other research products involved undergraduate and/or graduate students under his or her supervision. This could be done be bolding, underlining or placing asterisk by students names. * Figures, tables (other than those included in the provided format pages), or graphics are not allowed in the biosketch. Do not embed or attach files (e.g. video, graphics, sound, data). * The biosketch may not exceed five pages per person. This five-page limit includes the table at the top of the first page. * Additional information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.240-r&r-seniorkey-person-profile-(expanded)-form.htm#Instructions> |
| 8 | **Budget and Budget Justification** |
|  | * Please work with your SRS Rep to put together an NIH Compliant budget. * **Budget:** Modular for less than $250k direct costs (in $25k increments) R &R detailed budgets for more than $250k in direct costs. * The total budget for all years must be entered into Budget Period 1 (Modular and R&R) * **Budget Justification:** Prepare a budget justification to support the budget request. * Personnel Justification: Since a primary objective of the AREA program is to expose students to meritorious research, PD(s)/PI(s) must include undergraduate students (preferably, if available from any academic component) and/or graduate students from the applicant institution/applicant component in the proposed research. Indicate aspects of the proposed research in which students will participate. If participating students have not yet been individually identified, the number and academic level of those to be involved should be provided. If there are any Collaborators or Consultants for the project, provide their names, organizational affiliations, and the services they will perform. * If your application includes a subaward/consortium budget, a separate Budget and Budget Justification must be submitted. See [G.310 - R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) Form](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.310-r&r-subaward-budget-attachment(s)-form.htm). * Additional Information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.300-r&r-budget-form.htm> |
| 9 | **Introduction to the Application – 1 Page (if applicable)** |
|  | * An "Introduction to Application" attachment is required only if the type of application is a resubmission or revision. An introduction is not allowed for new or renewal applications. * The introduction should:   + Summarize substantial additions, deletions, and changes to the application     - individual changes do not need to be identified within other application attachments (e.g., do not highlight, color, bold or italicize changes in Research Strategy)   + Respond to the issues and criticism raised in the summary statement   + Be one page or less in length, unless specified otherwise in the FOA or is specified differently on our [table of page limits](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms_page_limits.htm). * In a resubmission of a revision application the same introduction must describe the nature and impact of the revision and summarize the changes made to the application since the last submission. * Additional information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/amendedapps.htm> |
| 10 | **Specific Aims (1 Page)** |
|  | * State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will have on the research field(s) involved. * List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed (e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology). |
| 11 | **Research Strategy (12 Page Limit)** |
|  | * Use the instructions provided [here](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.400-phs-398-research-plan-form.htm#3). Start each section with the appropriate heading - Significance, Innovation, Approach. * In addition, the R15 FOA deviates from the SF424 Application guide in that it requires a description of: * How undergraduate and/or graduate students will be exposed to and supervised conducting hands-on research. * Describe how students will participate in research activities such as planning, execution and/or analysis of research. Formal training plans (e.g., non-research activities, didactic training, seminars) should not be provided. * A sound rationale should be offered as to why the approach and the research team, including undergraduate and/or graduate students, are appropriate to accomplish the specific aims and to make an important scientific contribution. * Cite published experimental details in the Research Strategy attachment and provide the full reference in the bibliography. |
| 12 | **Vertebrate Animals (if applicable) – No Page Limit** |
|  | * If vertebrate animals are being used address the following criteria:   + **Description of Procedures:** Provide a concise description of the proposed procedures to be used that involve live vertebrate animals in the work outlined in the "Research Strategy" attachment. The description must include sufficient detail to allow evaluation of the procedures. Identify the species, strains, ages, sex, and total numbers of animals by species, to be used in the proposed work. If dogs or cats are proposed, provide the source of the animals.   + **Justifications:** Provide justification that the species are appropriate for the proposed research. Explain why the research goals cannot be accomplished using an alternative model (e.g. computational, human, invertebrate, in vitro).   + **Minimization of Pain and Distress:** Describe the interventions including analgesia, anesthesia, sedation, palliative care and humane endpoints that will be used to minimize discomfort, distress, pain, and injury. * Each of the criteria must be addressed. Failure to adequately address the criteria may negatively affect the application's impact score. In addition to the 3 criteria above, you should also:   + Identify all project performance (or collaborating) sites and describe the proposed research activities with vertebrate animals that will be conducted at those sites.   + Explain when and how animals are expected to be used if plans for the use of animals have not been finalized. * An IACUC approval date is not required at the time of submission. * Additional Information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.400-phs-398-research-plan-form.htm#5> |
| 13 | **Select Agent Research (if applicable)** |
|  | * Include a "Select Agent Research" attachment if your proposed activities involve the use of select agents at any time during the proposed project period, either at RIT or at any performance site. * Identify select agent(s) to be used; provide the registration status of all entities where select agent will be used; provide a description of facilities where select agent will be used. * Additional information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.400-phs-398-research-plan-form.htm#6> |
| 14 | **Consortium/Contractual Arrangements (if applicable)** |
|  | * If your application includes subawards, explain the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative arrangements to be made between the applicant organization and the consortium organization(s). If consortium/contractual activities represent a significant portion of the overall project, explain why the applicant organization, rather than the ultimate performer of the activities, should be the grantee. |
| 15 | **Letters of Support** |
|  | * Attach a file with all letters of support, including any letters necessary to demonstrate the support of consortium participants and collaborators such as Senior/Key Personnel and Other Significant Contributors included in the grant application. * Letters should stipulate expectations for co-authorship, and whether cell lines, samples, or other resources promised in the letter are freely available to other investigators in the scientific community or will be provided to the particular investigators only. * For consultants, letters should include rate/charge for consulting services and level of effort/number of hours per budget period anticipated. In addition, letters ensuring access to core facilities and resources should stipulate whether access will be provided as a fee-for-service. * Letters are not required for personnel (such as research assistants) not contributing in a substantive, measurable way to the scientific development or execution of the project. * An institution letter verifying eligibility with the criteria listed in the funding opportunity announcement will be required with each application. Your SRS Rep will make sure to obtain this letter. * Additional information can be found here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.400-phs-398-research-plan-form.htm#9> |
| 16 | **Resource Sharing Plans** |
|  | * [Data Sharing Plan](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/data_sharing/)-include a brief 1 paragraph description of how final research data will be shared or explain why data-sharing is not possible. * [Sharing Model Organisms](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_8/8.2.3_sharing_research_resources.htm#Sharing2)-If the development of model organisms is anticipated include a description of a specific plan for sharing and distributing unique model organisms or state why such sharing is restricted or not possible * [Genomic Data Sharing Plan](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-14-124.html) – If the research generates large-scale human or non-human genomic data, provide a plan for sharing of these data. |
| 17 | **Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources (if Applicable)** |
|  | * If applicable to the proposed science, briefly describe methods to ensure the identity and validity of key biological and/or chemical resources used in the proposed studies. A maximum of one page is suggested. * Key biological and/or chemical resources may or may not be generated with NIH funds and: 1) may differ from laboratory to laboratory or over time; 2) may have qualities and/or qualifications that could influence the research data; and 3) are integral to the proposed research. These include, but are not limited to, cell lines, specialty chemicals, antibodies, and other biologics. * Standard laboratory reagents that are not expected to vary do not need to be included in the plan. Examples are buffers and other common biologicals or chemicals. * See NIH's page on [Rigor and Reproducibility](http://grants.nih.gov/reproducibility/index.htm) for more information. |