

Applicant Guidance for [NOT-NS-20-107](#):

Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research from the NIH HEAL Initiative

Purpose

Administrative supplements to currently active NIH research grants to support the training of underrepresented individuals and enhance the diversity of the research workforce.

Program Announcement

[PA-21-071](#)

Candidate Eligibility

PD(s)/PI(s) are encouraged to consider administrative supplements under this program for candidates at the following career levels:

- high school students
- undergraduate students
- Baccalaureate and Master's degree holders
- Graduate (Predoctoral) and Health Professional students
- Individuals in Postdoctoral training and Clinical residency
- Investigators developing independent research careers (further described below)

Open to citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States or permanent residents.

Institution Eligibility

U.S. domestic institutions

Additional Information

Diversity supplements are funds added to an existing grant to increase the participation of scientists from underrepresented groups in biomedical research.

This guidance applies to applications requesting diversity research supplements to active HEAL Initiative grants or cooperative agreements, or to parent grants with an administrative supplement funded by HEAL. The purpose of this guidance is to clarify the application process for HEAL grantees and **is not intended to replace the detailed information in the program announcement.**

Prior to submission of an application, the Principal Investigator (Applicant) should contact one of the following to discuss the proposed supplement:

- Eric M. Hudak, PhD – Program Director (NINDS) eric.hudak@nih.gov
- Michele L. Rankin, PhD – OSPC Senior Advisor (NIDA) rankinm@mail.nih.gov

Supplement Format

To support a valuable career development experience for a candidate, the parent grant must have a reasonable period of time remaining when a supplemental application is awarded, congruent with the suggested minimum period of support at the candidate's career stage as specified in the table of **Allowable Costs and Other Provisions** below (e.g. at least a year for a Baccalaureate's/Master's Degree Holder). Diversity supplements will not be awarded to grants in a no-cost extension.

HEAL may support more than one supplement per parent grant. Detailed information regarding this policy can be found under the heading "3. Additional Information on Eligibility; Number of Applications" at this [link to PA-21-071](#).

Eligibility for the PA

PD(s)/PI(s) are encouraged to consider administrative supplements under this program at the following career levels: high school students, undergraduate students, baccalaureate and master's degree holders, graduate (predoctoral) and health professional students, individuals in postdoctoral training, and investigators developing independent research careers. A signed statement from an institutional official establishing the eligibility of the candidate for support under this program is required. The statement must clearly include information specifying the citizenship status of the candidate, as well as a description of how the appointment of this candidate would further the goals of the funding opportunity, consistent with the Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity ([NOT-OD-20-031](#)).

For the Investigator level, appropriate use and eligibility for the program are described below:

- **Short-term Investigator Research Supplement:** An example of this is a diverse researcher at a teaching-intensive school who wishes to enhance their research skills during summer or another portion of the academic year in order to develop their own research potential and establish an independent research career. Candidates with a history of previously funded R awards are not eligible for this supplement.
- **Long-term Investigator Research Supplement:** Eligible candidates include newly appointed junior faculty (within 24 months of appointment) who require additional time to enhance their skills and collect preliminary data to successfully compete for independent grant support. The applicant should provide clear justification for the need of the supplement and the barriers or feasibility issues that prevent the submission of individual awards (e.g., a K or R). Candidates with previously funded R awards are not eligible for this supplement.



Application Content, Submission, Review, and Award of Applications

PIs should read the Notice of Special Interest ([NOT-NS-20-107](#)) (under Application and Submission Information) for additional supplement guidance. See below for further guidance:

The Research and Career Plan (limit 6 pages) includes:

- **Summary of the Funded Grant or Project**
 - A *brief* description of the Parent Grant specific aims must be provided. This can be a condensed version of the aims as short as a paragraph.
- **Description of the Research Project for the Candidate**
 - The PA requires that the PI describe how the mentored research experiences will expand and foster the research capabilities of the candidate and how the described experiences relate to stated research goals and objectives of the parent grant. Diversity Supplement awards must be within the scope of the parent grant. The research plan should present evidence that the proposed experience is appropriate for the current stage of the individual's research training and that it will significantly enhance the individual's research potential and ability to pursue a research career.
- **Career Development Plan**
 - An appropriate career development/mentorship plan for the candidate must be included in the application. The expectation is that the PI will prepare a detailed career development/mentorship plan that will include objectives and associated timelines for helping the candidate make the transition to the next stage of his/her research career. Required components of the career development plan include:
 - Details of mentor-candidate interactions . The plan should go well beyond simple laboratory assignments and supervision plans or stating that the candidate will attend seminars or lab meetings. The career development plan should be structured, specific, and stage-appropriate for the candidate and include parameters such as the frequency of meetings, topics to be discussed, and how progress will be monitored.
 - A projected timeline delineating specific research milestones and other activities that will help the candidate advance along an independent research career trajectory, tailored to their current stage of professional development. For example, for postdoctoral/junior faculty, the timeline should describe how the research and career development experiences supported by the Diversity Supplement will help the candidate secure independent research funding (i.e., anticipated publications, grantsmanship workshops, timeframe for grant submissions, type of independent research support the candidate seeks, etc.). A timeline for the research and career development activities is required for all candidates regardless of their stage of development (investigators, postdoctoral researchers, graduate students, post baccalaureate students and undergraduates).
 - The PI must describe how he/she will assist the candidate in achieving the objectives and goals they have described in their candidate statement (see below).
 - The plan should take into account the typical barriers and impediments encountered by all trainees, as well as the unique challenges that individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups,



individuals with disabilities, or individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds may encounter in gaining entry and progressing in the biomedical workforce.

Important Note: The following components of the application **do not count against the 6-page limit:** Mentoring Experience of the PI, Candidate Statement, Eligibility Letter, Biosketches and Letters of Recommendation.

Mentoring Experience of the PI

- All applicants should describe their experience and track record as a mentor.
- The PI should provide evidence of mentoring experience and success, e.g. a list of past trainees and their current positions. If the PI is a junior faculty member, it may be appropriate to include an experienced co-mentor in the development plan.
- In addition, if the PI has previously been awarded a research supplement(s), he/she must describe: a) the outcome of the previous supplement(s) including the current status of the candidate(s) (i.e., title of current position and name of institution); b) the outcomes of the prior development/mentorship plan; c) any unexpected positive or negative occurrences that affected specific aspects of the development/mentorship plan or success of the candidate(s); and d) how these prior experiences influenced the development/mentorship plan proposed for the current candidate(s).
- The role of other investigators who will contribute to the research mentoring must be described in the application and their biosketches must be included with the application.

Candidate's Personal Statement

As required by the PA, the personal statement in the candidate's biosketch must address 1) evidence of scientific achievement or interest, 2) any source(s) of current funding, and 3) a description of short- and long-term research objectives and career goals. The candidate must describe how the planned activities are related to or will facilitate achievement of their career goals. Candidates at the Postdoctoral level or above may be expected to submit stage-appropriate grant applications (e.g. National Research Service Award (NRSA) or an equivalent form of fellowship support) during or at the end of the period of support. If this is the case, the candidate's statement should include plans for the development and submission of such an application.

Grade Reporting/References/Letters of Support

- References/letters of support are optional but may be included in the supplement application
- For high school, undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, post-master's, medical students or graduate students *only*:
 - List by institution and year **all** undergraduate and graduate courses with grades in the Biosketch (for more details, see instructions in the [SF424 \(R&R\) Application Guide](#)).



Allowable Costs and Other Provisions

| | High School | Undergraduate Students | Baccalaureate/Master's Degree Holders | Graduate (Predoctoral) and Health Professional Students | Individuals in Postdoctoral Training | Investigators Developing Independent Research Careers |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Salary & Fringe Benefits | Consistent with applicant Institutional salary policies, rates that exceed minimum wage must be justified | Consistent with applicant Institutional salary policies, rates that exceed \$12.00/hour must be justified | Consistent with applicant Institutional salary policies, cannot exceed \$35,000 of salary plus fringe benefits | Consistent with applicant institutional salary policies, total compensation (salary, fringe benefits, and tuition remission) cannot exceed zero level NSRA postdoc stipend | Must be in accordance with the salary structure of the grantee institution, consistent with the level of effort, and may not exceed the maximum allowable NRSA stipend level for postdoctoral fellows in effect at the time of appointment. | Up to \$75,000 salary plus fringe benefits per year up to \$85,000 total direct costs |
| Supplies & Travel | N/A | \$200 per month | \$3,000 per year | \$4,000 per year | \$6,000 per year | \$10,000 per year |
| Tuition | N/A | N/A | N/A | Allowable (see PA-21-071) | N/A | N/A |
| Equipment | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Period of Support | Equivalent of at least 3 months effort | Equivalent of at least 3 months of full-time effort | Normally one year but can be extended to two years if candidate is actively pursuing entry into graduate health professional school | Coincident with research doctoral and health professional degree program, typically up to three years | Typically two years | Typically two years |



Submission and Receipt of Applications

Prior to submission, the Principal Investigator (applicant) should contact one of the people listed in the Additional Information section above. Funding decisions will be made three times per year.

Application Due Dates:

| 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| February 15 | February 15 | February 15 | February 15 |
| May 15 | May 15 | May 15 | May 15 |
| November 15 | November 15 | November 15 | ----- |

Applications received after **the cycle cut-off date** will be processed and considered for funding in the next funding cycle, i.e., receipt after February 15th would mean review of the application will occur during the May 15 application cycle.

For more guidance, please see the eRA Commons user guide: https://era.nih.gov/commons/user_guide.cfm

Review and Award of Applications

Funding decisions are generally dependent on:

1. The merit of the application and the proposed project activities (i.e., the career development/mentorship plan)
2. The potential for continued research progress of the candidate
3. The availability of funds.

