Applicant Guidance for NOT-NS-24-085:

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

Purpose
Administrative supplements to currently active NIH HEAL Initiative research grants to provide support for research experiences for individuals from diverse backgrounds to enhance the diversity of the research workforce.

Program Announcement
PA-23-189 (or any reissued equivalent)

Notice of Special Interest
NOT-NS-24-085

Appointee Eligibility

Citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States or to individuals who have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States (i.e., in possession of a Permanent Resident Card, Form I-551).

High school students, undergraduate students, baccalaureate and master's degree holders (i.e., post-baccalaureates), graduate (predoctoral) and health professional students, individuals in postdoctoral training, investigators developing independent research careers.

Institution Eligibility
U.S. domestic institutions

Additional Information
The additional information in this document is to clarify the application process for HEAL Initiative grantees and is **not intended to replace the detailed information in the Program Announcement and Notice of Special Interest listed above.**

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Guidance Topics

Before You Apply

Check that the following are true:

- At the time of a supplement application, the parent grant has a reasonable period of time remaining (typically one to two years) at the time of possible award to support an optimal career development experience for the candidate. The diversity supplement funding period cannot go beyond the active period of the parent grant (i.e., during no-cost extension).

- Candidate has not been previously supported by the parent grant or has only been supported for short periods.

- Candidate has not been previously supported by a diversity supplement at the same career stage.

- Candidate has a clear interest in HEAL-relevant research fields. For high school and undergraduate students, interest in HEAL-specific fields may be still developing, but interest in biomedical research is critical.

- Applications for baccalaureate and master's degree holders will facilitate their transition to a graduate or health professional program.

- Applications for graduate (predoctoral) and health professional students and individuals in postdoctoral training will serve as a foundation for preparing a fellowship or career development award.

- Applications for investigators developing independent research careers looking for a long-term investigator supplement will be to support recently appointed junior faculty (within 24 months) and the project will enhance their ability to compete for independent grant support.

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Application Content

PIs should read the Notice of Special Interest (NOT-NS-24-085) instructions for applying through the HEAL Initiative program as well as the instructions in PA-23-189 (or its reissued equivalent). See below for further guidance:

Research Strategy (limit 6 pages) includes the following content:

- **Summary of the Funded Grant or Project**

  o 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 Candidate's Proposed Research Activities**

  o Describe how the research project relates to one or more aims of the parent project. Note: The research project cannot be identical to the aims proposed in the parent grant.

  o Describe how the mentored research experiences will expand and foster the research capabilities of the candidate and how they relate to the research goals and objectives of the parent grant.

  o The research plan should present evidence that the proposed experience is appropriate for the stage of the individual's research development, and that it will significantly enhance the individual's research potential, while furthering the individual's ability to pursue a research career.

  o Provide a timeline for the research proposal that is appropriate for career stage of the candidate.

- **Career Development and Mentorship Plan**

  o A detailed description of proposed research and professional development activities specific to the candidate to expand and foster their research capabilities and skills to successfully move towards their short- and long-term career goals.

  o 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 and mentorship 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.

  o A projected timeline delineating specific research milestones and professional development activities that will be made in an attempt to secure independent research funding (i.e., anticipated publications, grantsmanship workshops, timeframe for grant submissions and type of independent research support the candidate seeks).

  o A description of how the PI will assist the candidate in achieving the objectives and goals they have described in their candidate personal statement (see below).

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- The plan should consider the typical barriers and impediments encountered by all trainees, as well as the unique challenges that individuals from diverse background, including those 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.
- The role of other investigators who will contribute to the research mentoring should be appropriately described in the application and their Biosketches must be included with the application.

Important Note: The 6-page limit only applies to the Research Strategy content described above. The following elements of the application **do not count against the 6-page limit**: Mentoring Experience of the PI, Candidate's Biosketch and Personal Statement, other Biosketches, and Candidate Eligibility Statement.

Mentoring Experience of the PI

- Biosketches of mentors and other senior and key persons should provide evidence of past mentoring and training experience. Mentors should describe commitment to promoting inclusive and supportive scientific environments.

- This description can include 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.

- **If the PI has previously received support from a research supplement award(s)**, they 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 Biosketch and Personal Statement

- As required by the PA, the personal statement in the candidate's biosketch must address:
  - Evidence of scientific achievement or interest.
  - Any source(s) of current funding.
  - A statement from the candidate outlining their short- and long-term research objectives and career goals. The candidate must describe how the planned activities in the diversity supplement proposal are related to or will facilitate achievement of their career goals.

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- The candidate should include a specific statement(s) expressing their interests in pursuing a career in pain and/or opioid use disorder (OUD)/substance use disorder (SUD) research.

- Predoctoral, postdoctoral, and junior faculty-level candidates are expected to include specific plans to submit individual grant applications during the period of supplement support.

- Grades must be reported in the Biosketch (for more details, see instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide) for high school, undergraduate, baccalaureate and master's degree holders, graduate (predoctoral) and health professional students only.

  - List courses and grades by institution and year

  - A formal transcript is not necessary

Candidate Eligibility Statement

- A signed statement from an institutional grants official (i.e. Signing Official) establishing the eligibility of the candidate for support under this program.

- The statement must include clearly presented information on citizenship of the candidate and a description of how the appointment of this specific candidate would further the goals of this funding opportunity, consistent with the Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity (NOT-OD-20-031).

- Name the document Candidate Eligibility Statement.pdf .

- The strength of this statement will be considered by the NIH administrative review committee, as applicable, along with all other material provided.

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Allowable Costs and Other Provisions

	High School Students	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 total for both salary and fringe benefits.	Consistent with applicant institutional salary policies; total compensation (salary, fringe benefits, and tuition remission) cannot exceed zero-level NRSA postdoc stipend.	Consistent with applicant institutional salary policies; total compensation (salary and fringe benefits) cannot exceed the maximum allowable NRSA stipend level for postdoctoral fellows.	Consistent with applicant institutional salary policies; cannot exceed $85,000 total for both salary and fringe benefits.
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 Program Announcement)	N/A	N/A
Equipment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Duration of Support	Equivalent of at least 3 months effort	Equivalent of at least 3 months of full-time effort	No more than two years. **Note:** Prior to the end of the first year of support it is recommended that the candidate apply to a graduate program.	No more than three years	No more than two years	No more than two years

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Submission and Receipt of Applications

Prior to submission, the Principal Investigator (applicant) should contact one of the people listed in the Contacting Program Staff section below.

Application Due Dates:

2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
-----	February 15	February 15	February 15	February 15
-----	April 15	April 15	April 15	April 15
November 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 April 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

Final funding decisions are made approximately two months after the application due date. 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

4. Alignment with HEAL Initiative training priorities

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Contacting Program Staff

When preparing an application, please consult with the Program Official for the qualifying HEAL award in addition to one of the following HEAL Diversity Supplement program leads:

For Pain research topics:
Eric M. Hudak, PhD
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)
Email: eric.hudak@nih.gov

For OUD/SUD research topics:
Angela Holmes, PhD
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
Email: angela.holmes2@nih.gov

Contact program staff if you have questions/concerns about the following :

- The scope of the supplement research proposal

- Career development and mentoring plan activities

- Time remaining on the active portion of the parent grant

- Duration of support for a candidate who is currently funded by the parent grant

- Reapplying for a supplement that was not funded

Note: Questions about the research plan and scope should be discussed with the Program Official of the parent grant through which you are applying.

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