

Commitment to Candidate

Joan M. Lakoski, PhD • Robert J. Milner, PhD

Fellowship applications will be reviewed using three criteria



Candidate's Preparedness and Potential



Research Training Plan



Commitment to Candidate

Criteria for applications submitted after May 25, 2025

Reviewers are asked to evaluate the Commitment to Candidate

- Assess whether the sponsor(s) presents a **strong mentoring plan** appropriate to the needs and goals of the candidate.
- Evaluate the extent to which the sponsor(s) and organizational commitment is **appropriate, sufficient, and in alignment** with the candidate's research training plan.
- Consider whether the **level of commitment** provided will contribute to the successful completion of the proposed plan and allow the candidate to advance to a productive career in the biomedical research workforce.

Your development is supported by mentors and the research environment



As the applicant you have three tasks

Complete the Front Pages



Work with your Grants Office

Write the Proposal



Draft with input from mentors & colleagues

Manage Colleagues



Contact References Collaborators

Meeting these criteria requires input from your mentors and others (references, collaborators)



Candidate

	You	Mentors	Others
Candidate	✓	✓	✓



Research Training Plan

	You	Mentors
Research Training Plan	✓	✓
Commitment to Candidate	✓	✓



Commitment to Candidate

You have 12 pages total for statements of commitment and support

Sponsor(s) Commitment

— statements by your mentors

6 pages

Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors, and Consultants

6 pages

Statements by all Sponsors (mentors) must fit within the 6-page limit for this section

If you have more than one Sponsor, discuss with your mentoring team how to divide up this section, for example . . .

- primary Sponsor: 3–4 pages
- co-Sponsors: up to 1 page each, focused on their specific roles

Each Sponsor *MUST* address all 5 required components

Make sure that your Sponsors know your plans

Reviewers will be looking for consistency between the sections you write and statements by your Sponsors

Provide your Sponsors with

- Candidate's Preparedness and Potential
- Training Activities and Timeline
- Research Training Plan

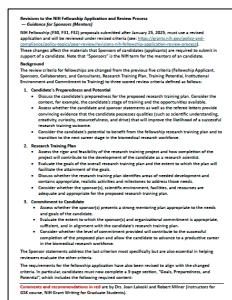
You are expected to draft these sections, but your Sponsors may (and should!) provide feedback.

Be aware that some of the requirements for the Sponsor statements are new

Even experienced mentors may need help!

We have prepared a guide for your Sponsors

Because these sections new, give your mentors time to complete!



The Sponsor(s) Commitment must address five components

- 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

The Mentoring Approach and Candidate Mentoring Plan (part A) are new requirements for Sponsors

Sponsors and co-sponsors must describe:

- their Mentoring Approach
- a Mentoring Plan tailored to your needs
— i.e., addressing your areas for development

Primary Sponsors should devote at least ½–1 page

Co-sponsors should describe how they will mentor you in their area of expertise

The Mentoring Plan may include

- enhancing the candidate's understanding of scientific research
- promoting the candidate's professional development
- maintaining effective communication
- aligning expectations
- fostering independence

The Prior Commitment to Training and Mentoring section (part B) is expanded from previous versions

Sponsors should describe examples of 2–5 previous trainees:

- impacts of the individualized training and mentoring on each former trainee's scientific, educational, or career development
- devote about 200 words for each trainee

Note that implying listing former trainees and their career outcomes does not provide evidence of effective mentoring

Commitment to the Candidate's Research Training Plan (part C) confirms your sponsors' engagement

The sponsor(s) should provide (~200 words):

- A description of the frequency, duration, and nature of meetings with the candidate throughout the training plan timeline
- A listing of how many other scientists in the research team will be supervised during the proposed fellowship award period and how the candidate will receive consistent, individualized attention

The description of meetings should be consistent with the Training Activities and Timeline section

In the Research Training Environment (part D), the Sponsor must describe how it will meet your needs

- how the environment will support your development and attainment of your defined career goals
- available centralized research facilities or equipment needed to complete the research training project (not listed elsewhere in the application)
- organizational research training program(s)
- opportunities for professional development and intellectual interactions: scientific meetings, journal clubs, seminars, and opportunities for presentations

Should be consistent with your Training Activities and Timeline section
Sponsor: ~2 pages; co-sponsors: ~1/2 page

The Candidate's Potential section (part E) is your sponsors' "letter of reference" for you

Sponsors should describe:

- examples of personal characteristics (for example, skills, abilities, traits, attitudes) that are likely to significantly contribute to further advancement
- areas for development to improve the candidate's prospects of transitioning into a productive career
- an overall assessment of the candidate's preparedness and likelihood for success in the proposed research training plan

Primary sponsors: at least 1 page;
co-sponsors might highlight a particular attribute

Although your Sponsors write this section, you should coordinate and review

- educate your sponsors on the new requirements (use our guide!)
- provide your sponsors with your sections to enable consistency
- review your sponsors' statements and give feedback

Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors, and Consultants

- from individuals providing support for your proposal, e.g., reagents, access to equipment, specific advice or training
- NOT mentors or letters of reference
- 6-page limit: collate and upload as a single pdf

Plan ahead for submission . . .

Receipt	Review	Council	Start
April 8	June-July	Sept-Oct	December
Aug 8	Oct-Nov	Jan-Feb	April
Dec 8	Jan-Feb	May-June	July

- Applications must be received electronically on or before the receipt date
- Submit to the Grants Office **at least a week** before the deadline
- Inform your grants manager **2 months** before the deadline

Notify mentors, references, collaborators, etc, well ahead of the deadline

If you are planning to submit for the **December 8** deadline

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Discuss with mentors

Contact references, etc

Inform grants manager

Submit to Grants Office

New NOFOs for the predoctoral fellowships (parent F30 & F31) have been released

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA)
Individual Fellowship for Students at Institutions with NIH-Funded
Institutional Predoctoral Dual-Degree Training Programs (Parent F30)

PA-25-426

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-25-426.html>

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA)
Individual Predoctoral Fellowship (Parent F31)

PA-25-422

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-25-422.html>

New NIH website for Research Training and Career Development Information

Research Training and Career Development

NIH Research Training and Career Development Programs help prepare individuals for careers in biomedical, behavioral, social, and clinical research.

• [New Home for Research Training and Career Development Information on the NIH Grants and Funding Website](#)
• [If you currently bookmarked you may have to visit the new page! Redirected links are in place to help you find what you need in the meantime, or access the \[archive\]\(#\).](#)

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Browse by Career Stage

 Undergraduate	Institutional Training
 Predoctoral	Individual Fellowships Institutional Training
 Postdoctoral/Residency	Individual Fellowships Individual Career Development Institutional Training Institutional Career Development and Other Training

<https://grants.nih.gov/funding/funding-categories/research-training-and-career-development>

Please contact us if you need advice, guidance, feedback or have unanswered questions

Joan Lakoski

West Virginia University

joan.lakoski@hsc.wvu.edu

Rob Milner

Umass Chan Medical School

robert.milner@umassmed.edu