

Instructions for Fellowship Candidate Referees

Name of Fellow (*First & Last Name as shown in the eRA Commons*): _____

Fellow's eRA Commons Username: _____

Opportunity Number: _____

The fellowship candidate indicated above is applying for an individual fellowship award. The purpose of this award is to provide support to promising candidates with the potential to develop the skills necessary to conduct health-related research in NIH (and where relevant, AHRQ) mission critical research areas that prepare them for productive careers within the biomedical research workforce.

The purpose of this letter is to help the committee to understand the candidate's preparedness and likelihood for success in the proposed research training plan and defined career path. In two pages or less (PDF format), describe the qualities and potential of the fellowship candidate for the research training for which support is being requested (predoctoral, postdoctoral, or senior fellow). Referees should consider including the following information about the candidate:

- **Examples of personal characteristics** (for example, skills, abilities, traits, attitudes) that are likely to contribute most significantly to further advancement in the candidate's defined career path. Take into consideration relevant indicators for success, such as scientific curiosity, resourcefulness, and persistence.
- **Areas for development** to improve the candidate's prospects of transitioning into a productive career in the biomedical research workforce. Areas may include the following skills: technical (e.g., new techniques or technical methods, quantitative or computational approaches), operational (e.g., practices that promote rigorous, reproducible, and responsible research) or professional (e.g., management, leadership, communication, teamwork). Indicate whether the proposed training plan will address these areas and contribute to the candidate's development and attainment of the stated career goals.
- **An overall assessment** of the candidate's preparedness and likelihood for success in the proposed research training plan. Provide examples, such as scientific or intellectual contributions, that highlight the likelihood of achieving the stated goals.

Referees may provide any additional, related comments that they believe will help reviewers evaluate the merit of the fellow's application.

Submitting Reference Letters

Please insert the name of the fellowship candidate at the top of the letter. Also, be sure to include your name and title in the letter.

Letters must be submitted directly to the eRA Commons at:

<https://public.era.nih.gov/commonsplus/public/reference/submitReferenceLetter.era>.

Watch a demo on [Submitting Reference Letters through eRA Commons](#).

Reference Letters are due by the application receipt deadline date but may be submitted any time after the funding opportunity opens. Reference Letters can be submitted before the grant application

submission and will be held and later linked to the appropriate application once they are received at NIH.

You will be requested to enter the following information on-line at the time of submission:

Referee Information:

- Referee First Name (Required)
- Referee Last Name Required)
- Referee MI Name (Not Required)
- Referee e-mail (Required)
- Referee Institution/Affiliation (Required)
- Referee Department (Required)

Fellowship Candidate Information:

- PD/PI (Fellowship candidate) Commons User ID (Required)
- PD/PI's Last Name, as it appears on the PI's Commons account (Required) (will be validated to ensure they match)
- Opportunity Number (Required and must match the number of the funding opportunity under which the application is being submitted)
- Reference Letter Confirmation Number (Required only if resubmitting a letter; not required otherwise)
- Reference Letter must be no longer than two pages maximum. Letters must be in PDF format. Letter can be printed, signed, and scanned to create the PDF, but do not add a "digital signature" to the document. Additional tips for creating PDF files can be found at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm>.

After you have submitted your Letter of Reference, both the sponsor and the candidate will receive a confirmation of receipt by e-mail. The sponsor e-mail confirmation will include a Reference Letter Confirmation Number. The Confirmation Number will be required when resubmitting reference letters. It is strongly recommended that the sponsor print the confirmation e-mail and maintain for their records. Please keep in mind that the candidate will not have access to the content included within the reference letter submitted by the fellowship sponsor.