

Responses to Submitted Questions

T15 Training Program

1. Q. The FOA indicates to follow instructions in the SF424 with the additional modification indicated in the FOA. Background is included in the Program Plan as a section in SF424 instructions, can you address.

A. Background is Part A of the Program Plan as indicated in SF424 instructions. It is expected applicants will have a Background section. The other components of the Training Program Section include Program Plan (Part B) and Recruitment Plan to Enhance Diversity (Part C). For more information, see [Section T.420 - PHS 398 Research Training Program Plan Form](#).
2. Q. For tables 5A/5B asking for trainee publications for a renewal, should this only reflect trainees who have been mentored under the named key faculty who have been previously appointed to the T15? Or any trainee who has worked with the mentor?

A. For each participating faculty member in a renewal, please list the publications of trainees under them who have been appointed to the T15 training grant, including all current trainees and those appointed to the grant under a participating faculty member for up to the past 10 years, with the exception of those appointed to short-term training positions.
3. Q. Does the training record reflect only those in this T15 grant, or can it include our work in general?

A. It depends. The data tables are used to document training record. For renewal applicants, specific data tables request information about T15 participating faculty and trainees for the past 10 years. For new applicants, information about the past 10 years of training is requested. Each data table is unique, and applicants should pay particular attention to the instructions for each table.
4. Q. For areas of focus, is it expected that core curriculum covers these areas?

A. NLM has not endorsed a single approach or curriculum for research training in biomedical informatics. Your application must specify a core curriculum addressing informatics concepts and methods that supports the entire program, spanning all application domains that are addressed. Topics addressed by the informatics and data science core curriculum should be well integrated, and the core curriculum should be relevant to all application domains the training program is intended to cover.

5. Q. Many existing programs have historically used STTP slots for summer internship programs for college students, especially from URM backgrounds. Will that no longer be allowed?

A. Unfortunately, no. The NIH has passed guidelines that classify training grants by trainee education status/level. This mechanism will only support trainees who are pursuing a doctoral degree or who are postdoctoral.
6. Q. Are the 3 pages for "responsible conduct of research" in addition to the 25 pages for the grant? And the same question for the three pages for methods to enhance reproducibility"? Are they "extra" also?

A. The plan for Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research and the plan for Instruction in Methods for Enhancing Reproducibility can each be 3 pages in length and do not count toward the 25-page limit of the program plan. For page limits, see <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/page-limits.htm>
7. Q. Please tell us more about the 5 pages for a "program overview" for renewal grants. And also, more about the 1 page for each appointee to the grant.

A. For a renewal application, you are provided with up to 5 pages to document accomplishments and progress achieved. Renewal applicants may also include a 1-page summary per appointee as outlined in the SF424 instructions. For more information, see [Section T.420 - PHS 398 Research Training Program Plan Form](#).
8. Q. Would it be appropriate to include committee members on the senior/key personnel form?

A. No. Committee members are not considered senior/key personnel unless they contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the training of trainees.
9. Q. Should executive committee members be included in the data tables as "Participating Faculty" if they will not serve as mentors to trainees?

A. No. Executive committee members are not considered participating faculty unless they contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the direct training of trainees.
10. Q. Please clarify whether NLM considers women as underrepresented in biomedical informatics and data science, for this RFA-LM-21-001.

A. Yes, NLM considers women as underrepresented in biomedical informatics and data science.
11. Q. Are recruitment of disabled individuals also a priority?

A. Yes, NIH encourages institutions to diversify their student and faculty populations to enhance the participation of individuals from groups identified as

underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral and social sciences, including individuals with disabilities

12. Q. Do we need to distinguish pre- and post-doctoral short-term training positions (STTPs), that is, 2/2 per year?
A. Yes, for STTPs, you will need to specify you want to recruit predoc or postdoc. It could be any combination (all pre, all post, or a mix).
13. Q. Do the short-term trainees count toward the 60% pre-doc/post-doc ratio?
No. Individuals who participate in the short-term training program do not count toward the pre-doc/post-doc ratio.
14. Q. Are there any restrictions on letters of support, either for the total number, or who they are from?
A. There are no restrictions on the number of letters of support or who they are from. However, applicants should not use letters that could be construed as supplementing the application.
15. Q. Does NIAID count in the 25 pages?
A. Yes. If you chose to develop an HIV/AIDS training focus, it must be detailed in the Training Program Plan. The page limit for the Training Program Plan is 25 pages. For page limits, see <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/page-limits.htm>
16. Q. For a new program that will start with a small number of slots and ramp up enrollment over later years, should we ask for all the slots in the first year?
A. Ask for only the slots you will be using in a particular year. For example, a new program may ask for 8 slots in Year 1, 10 slots in Year 2 and 15 slots in Year 3 with a mix of predoctoral and postdoc positions.
17. Q. Do faculty who are not primary faculty but provide domain expertise (i.e., clinical and haven't trained PhD students), do they need to fill out all the table or can they just submit biosketch?
A. If faculty are going to contribute to the development of trainees, they should be counted in corresponding data tables. As per SF424 instructions, biosketches should only be submitted for senior/key personnel and other significant contributors.
18. Q. Is the training grant requirement of having an institutional support letter, maximum of 10 pages, apply to this T15?
A. An institutional letter of support is required and must address the factors outlined in SF424 instructions; see instructions for Section 8 ([Section T.420 - PHS 398 Research Training Program Plan Form](#)). There are no page limits for a

letter of support, but length should be reasonable and should not contain information that may be construed as supplementing the application.

19. Q. Do we need a letter for access to courses offered from other departments that are electives (i.e., not part of the core curriculum)? .
A. For all courses listed as part of the program that are not under the direct control of the PD/PI's home academic unit (e.g. his/her home department), applicants must document through appropriate letters that their trainees will have routine access to these courses.
20. Q. Is the TRE \$11,850 for postdoctoral trainees?
A. Yes.
21. Q. The RFA says "NLM will provide TRE at a rate of \$6,500 per year for each full-time predoctoral trainee." Has it been raised to \$8,500?
A. TRE for pre-doctoral trainees will be \$8,500 per year. A notice of correction was published. See <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-LM-21-007.html>.
22. Q. Is the salary meant to be for academic year + summer?
A. The stipend is not a salary and is not provided as a condition of employment with either the Federal government or the recipient organization. Trainees are expected to have 12-month full-time training appointments for which they receive a stipend as a subsistence allowance to help defray living expenses during the research training experience.
23. Q. Can you elaborate on common allowable and not allowable training expenses for pre-doctoral students?
A. Please refer to the NIH Grants Policy Statement 11.3.8.4 (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.8_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm#Training) for information on typical training-related expenses. Funds are provided to defray costs such as staff salaries, consultant costs, equipment, research supplies, staff travel, trainee health insurance (self-only or family as applicable), and other expenses directly related to the training program.
24. Q. Is there a budget cap of \$500K in direct costs each year, and if so, how do we request more than this?
A. The NIH \$500k prior approval policy does not apply to applications submitted in response to RFAs (only investigator-initiated/unsolicited applications). For this RFA, there is no specific budget cap, but the budget must reflect the actual needs of the project and requested number of trainees.

25. Q. Can trainees engage in clinical activities, that is - paid clinical activities?
A. Paid clinical employment may be allowable on a limited part-time basis. Please refer to the NIH Grants Policy Statement 11.3.10 for information on stipend supplementation, compensation, and other income for trainees (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.10_stipend_supplementation_compensation_and_other_income.htm).
26. Q. Could you please clarify if the 15 maximum trainees are per year or entire budget period?
A. The 15 maximum is per year. To request the full number (15) of full-time trainees, a program must request a combination of predoctoral and postdoctoral positions.
27. Q. For the curriculum development funds, does it need to be developed with an HBCU or TCU only, or could you work with a NANTI?
A. Yes, to request the additional \$2,500 in funds to support curriculum development, it needs to be developed in partnership with a designated minority-serving institution (e.g., HBCU, HSI, TCU, NANTI).