RAS Checklist: NIH Director's New Innovator Award Program (DP2)

- ☐ Read the solicitation: **RFA-RM-27-002**
- ☐ Proposal must be submitted by grants.gov by 5 p.m. local time on **August 17, 2026**
- ☐ In all cases the SF 424 and instructions in the RFA takes precedence over these guidelines.
- ☐ Applicants must meet the definition of Early Stage Investigator. *An ESI is a PD/PI who has completed their terminal research degree or end of post-graduate clinical training, whichever date is later, within the past 10 years and who has not previously competed successfully as PD/PI for a substantial NIH independent research award.*
- ☐ Applicants must hold an independent research position at a domestic (U.S.) institution by September 1, 2027. For this NOFO, an "independent research position" is a position that automatically confers eligibility to the investigator (based on institutional policy) to apply for R01 grants with appropriate institutional commitment of facilities for the conduct of the proposed research. Investigators still in training or mentored status (such as postdoctoral fellows) are not eligible to apply unless they have a written commitment from the institution stating they will be in an independent faculty position by September 1, 2027. The commitment is certified by the institution's submission of the application.
- ☐ PI must commit at least 3 person months (25%) of their research effort to activities supported by this award.
- ☐ NIH will only accept six new, renewal, resubmission, or revision applications from an individual Principal Investigator/Program Director or Multiple Principal Investigator for all council rounds in a calendar year. This policy applies to all activity codes except T activity codes and R13 Conference Grant Applications. It also does not apply to non-competing continuations, administrative supplements or change in institution applications. Please see NOT-OD-25-132 for details.

Required Components

SF424 (R&R)

- ☐ Field 4b Federal Identifier – [*in KC = Agency Routing Identifier]*: Designate two scientific areas, a primary and secondary, from the list in the Program Announcement. For each of the two science area designations enter the one-digit code followed by one space and then the corresponding abbreviation. Enter the primary area first and secondary area second. Separate the two entries by a semicolon. (note, these codes are also used included at the beginning of the Essay.) (Example: 1 CB; 7 NS)
- ☐ Field 8 Type of Application - Must be "new"
- ☐ Field 12 Proposed Project – The start date should be September 1, 2027 and the end date should be August 31, 2032.
- ☐ **Field 15a.** Total Federal Funds Requested: Enter $2,375,000
  Field 15b. Total Non-Federal Funds: Enter $0.
  Field 15c. Total Federal & Non-Federal Funds: Enter $2,375,000
  Field 15d. Estimated Program Income: Enter $0.
  Note: *The Budget Request is entered only on Lines 15a and c, as described above.*
  Applicable Facilities and Administrative costs (F&A) will be determined at the time of award and should not be included in the budget request.

Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Complete and submit.

SF 424(R&R) Other Project Information Component

- ☐ Field 7: Project Summary/Abstract: summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. This section must be no longer than 30 lines of text
- ☐ Field 8: Project Narrative: Using no more than two or three sentences, describe the relevance of this research to public health.
- ☐ Field 9: Bibliography & References Cited: **DO NOT USE.** Not required, but may be included in the essay and are included in the ten-page limit
- ☐ Field 10. Facilities & Other Resources: Upload a brief statement (1 page maximum) of the facilities to be used for the conduct of the research.
- ☐ Field 11: Equipment: DO NOT USE.
- ☐ Field 12: Other Attachments: DO NOT USE.

SF 424(R&R) Senior/Key Person Profile Expanded Component

All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed, with the following modifications.

- ☐ **Profile – PD/PI – Attach Biographical Sketch**: Attach PD/PI's biographical sketch, follow instructions on the SF424 (R&R) application guide.
- ☐ **Profile – PD/PI – Attach Current and Pending Support**: Attach a list of Current and Pending Support from all sources, including current year direct costs and effort devoted to each project.

No biographical sketches of potential collaborators or other key personnel are to be submitted and will not be accepted. Information on potential collaborators is not required but may be included in the Essay.

R&R Budget

Do not submit a budget with this FOA

PHS 398 Research Plan

All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed, with the following additional instructions:

Research Plan Attachments

- ☐ Introduction to Application: DO NOT USE.
- ☐ Specific Aims: DO NOT USE.
- ☐ Research Strategy -- Submit an essay of **no more than 10 pages** organized as follows:
    1. *Project science areas*: Provide 1-digit code and abbreviation for primary and secondary science areas at beginning of essay – same as "Agency Routing Identifier" information.
    2. *Project Description*
    3. *Innovativeness*
    4. *Investigator qualifications*
    5. *Suitability for the New Innovator Project*
    6. *Statement of Commitment* (will commit a minimum of three persons months (25%) research effort to the project)

Note: Any bibliographic citations provided must fit within the ten-page limit. Letters of collaboration will not be accepted. Information on collaborators may be included in the Essay and their names and affiliations should be listed in the PHS Assignment Request Form in the section for individuals who should not review the application.

- ☐ Progress Report Publication List -- DO NOT USE
- ☐ Select Agent. Complete if necessary, see Application Guide.
- ☐ Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan – DO NOT USE.
- ☐ Consortium/Contractual Arrangements – DO NOT USE
- ☐ Letters of Support – DO NOT USE
- ☐ Resource Sharing – DO NOT USE: The Resource Sharing Plan will be expected as Just in Time information if an award is being considered.
- ☐ All applicants planning research (funded or conducted in whole or in part by NIH) that results in the generation of scientific data are required to comply with the instructions for the Data Management and Sharing Plan. **All applications, regardless of the amount of direct costs requested for any one year, must address a Data Management and Sharing Plan.**
- ☐ Appendix – Do not use

PHS Assignment Request Form

All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide must be followed with the following modification. Since all applications are received as "Office of the Director" applications and are reviewed by a single Special Emphasis Panel, applicants should not request assignment to a particular review panel or awarding component. Since letters of collaboration and biosketches of collaborators are not allowed, provide the names of collaborators here to identify them for exclusion during reviewer assignment.

HS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information

When involving NIH-defined human subjects research, clinical research, and/or clinical trials (and when applicable, clinical trials research experience) follow all instructions for the PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide.

If you answered “Yes” to the question “Are Human Subjects Involved?” on the R&R Other Project Information form, you must include at least one human subjects study record using the Study Record: PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information form or Delayed Onset Study record

Helpful Links

- Page Limits
- How to Apply – Application Guide
- NIH Director's New Innovator Award FAQ
- NIH Director's New Innovator Award
- Webinar: NIH Director's New Innovator Award