

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
INTRAMURAL AIDS RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS for
GRADUATE STUDENTS and POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS
2021**

A major mission of the NIH Intramural Research Program (IRP) and the Office of AIDS Research (OAR), in the Office of the Director (OD), is to train the next generation of researchers to continue the battle to halt the AIDS pandemic. To expand our efforts to build this workforce, the Office of AIDS Research, the Office of Intramural Research (OIR), and the Office of Intramural Training & Education (OITE) will provide competitive fellowships to encourage the recruitment of new researchers from other scientific disciplines to the broad field of AIDS research.

Please visit the NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and HIV-Related Research, accessible at <https://www.oar.nih.gov/hiv-policy-and-research/strategic-plan> to learn more about the breadth and scope of NIH AIDS research, a unique and comprehensive multi-institute, multi-disciplinary, global research program. Perhaps no other disease so thoroughly transcends every area of clinical medicine and basic scientific investigation, crossing the boundaries of all the NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs).

The NIH comprehensive portfolio of basic and clinical AIDS research includes (but not limited to): epidemiology; etiology and pathogenesis; therapeutics research; vaccines; microbicides; health disparities; implementation sciences, and behavioral and social science research to address HIV infection and its associated coinfections, opportunistic infections, malignancies, and other complications. This research focuses on the critical elements of the epidemic in the U.S., as well as on the global pandemic. Fellowship proposals addressing one or more of these scientific areas will be considered for support under this initiative.

Intramural AIDS Research Fellowship (IARF) awards will include full stipend support and health insurance. Initial funding of IARF awards will be for one year. Awards may be renewed for a second year pending availability of funds and evaluation of scientific and career development progress.

Eligibility

Postdoctoral trainees (only IRTAs, CRTAs, and Visiting Fellows may apply) and graduate students in the NIH Intramural Research Program whose work is directly applicable to HIV/AIDS research, will be eligible for support. Applications will be accepted from current or new graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. There are no citizenship restrictions. Individuals from underrepresented populations are particularly encouraged to apply.

Note: Research and Clinical Fellows and others appointed as FTEs are not eligible.

Application Materials

Successful candidates will demonstrate outstanding scientific potential through both a well thought out career development plan and a creative and thoughtful research plan. In evaluating the former, the mentoring history of the proposed mentor and the mentor's description of the ways in which he/she will contribute to the career and professional development of the applicant will be considered as will the applicant's discussion of the proposed career development activities. During the application review, *equal* emphasis is placed on all the following five criteria: the candidate (based on CV), the career development plan, the research proposal, the mentor (based on letter of support), and the relationship to the NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and HIV-Related Research.

The research and career development plans must be prepared by the graduate student or postdoctoral fellow, but it is expected that the mentor will provide guidance and input. Applicants should submit a single electronic package with all required documents to Dr. Natasha Lugo Escobar at IARF@mail.nih.gov. **Please refer to the *Application Materials Guidance* document at the end of the call for specific details.**

Evaluation Criteria

When reviewing applications, reviewers place equal emphasis on all materials submitted. Applications who are successful are those where applicants have a well-thought, innovative, and feasible research plan that shows outstanding scientific potential. The applicant must show through the materials submitted their commitment to science and have thought carefully about the steps needed to advance their career. Equal emphasis is placed on mentor's history of mentorship and how he/she will contribute to the career and professional development of the applicant.

Application Deadline

The application deadline to submit application materials for the 2021 Intramural AIDS Research Fellowships is **Monday April 5th, 2021 at 5:00 pm (EDT)**. Awards will be announced early May.

Renewal Applications

Renewal applications from 2020 fellows will be considered. A complete application, as outlined above, is required for renewal applications. We understand the challenges faced during COVID-19 that impacted fellows' s research progression/productivity and will take that into consideration. The research plan can summarize any accomplishments or progress (even if small) made during 2020 and describe the research that will be conducted during the second year of IARF support.

Please address inquiries to Dr. Natasha Lugo Escobar at IARF@mail.nih.gov.

APPLICATION MATERIALS GUIDANCE

Application Materials:

Equal emphasis is placed on all the materials submitted: the candidate (based on CV), the career development plan, the research proposal, the mentor (based on letter of support), and the relationship to the NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and HIV-Related Research. Please read the information below for additional guidance on addressing each component. Applicants should submit a single electronic package containing the following documents to Dr. Natasha Lugo Escobar at IARF@mail.nih.gov.

Please use “IARF 2021_Last Name, First Name, IC” as the SUBJECT line. All materials should be submitted by 5:00 pm (EDT) on Monday April 5th, 2021.

The application package should include:

1. Cover Page:
In the cover page, provides the following information:
 - Project title
 - Applicant's full name and title
 - Mentor's name and title
 - Sponsoring IC
 - Proposed start date
 - The signatures of the proposed mentor and the IC Scientific Director (or designee), indicating their approval of the submission and that the proposal was indeed written by the applicant.
2. The Applicant's *Curriculum Vitae* (CV):
 - Limited to three-page
 - Demonstrates productivity (e.g. posters, publications, travel awards, oral presentations, patents, etc.)
 - Shows a proactive approach in developing skills towards advancing their career goals
 - Demonstrates a commitment to promoting science through mentoring and outreach
 - Follows appropriate format. Below some resources for guidance on crafting a CV:
 - https://www.training.nih.gov/assets/Guide_to_Resumes_and_Curricula_Vitae.pdf
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvEqu8HBpS8>
 - Do not submit an NIH biosketch format*
3. Research Plan:
 - Limited to four pages, single-spaced, including references.
 - Demonstrates relevance and significant impact to advance HIV and HIV-related research
 - Can be accomplished during the one-year fellowship period (feasibility)
 - Includes clear and realistic aims
 - Proposes an innovative or novel scientific approach
4. Relationship to the [NIH Strategic Plan for HIV and HIV-Related Research](#):
 - Might be included as part of the research plan or as a separate document

- Explicitly states its relevance to the research project.
- Directly addresses one or more of the [NIH HIV Research Priorities](#)

5. Career Development Plan:

- Limited to two-pages, double-spaced
- Clearly states the applicant's career goals or the stage of exploration the applicant is in. It should discuss in detail the applicant's training needs and what, specifically, will be done during the year of support to move towards those goals. Be specific on the types of activities/workshops/training that will be taken. The relationship of these activities to the long-range career plans of the applicant and the skills that the trainee will learn, both at and away from the bench, must be described.
- May address gaps in knowledge or scientific/technical skills
- Describes how applicant will use resources offered by OITE, IC, or other groups
- Feasible to complete during the one-year fellowship period
- Demonstrates applicant taking necessary steps to develop a productive scientific career

6. A letter of support from the proposed mentor:

- Describes strong mentorship history of postdocs and/or graduate students
- Demonstrates support to a variety of career paths as evidenced by former mentees career outcomes
- Discusses the applicant's career goals and supports/encourages participation in appropriate IC and OITE-sponsored training activities
- Shows a strong scientific research history to provide expertise on the proposed research project. Describes research environment, facilities, and resources available to the applicant to successfully complete the project
- Expresses a commitment to helping the applicant meet their career goals