

COUNSEL EXTRAMURAL NIH LRP APPLICANTS

The purpose of this document is to provide information and resources to help you counsel prospective applicants on the Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) and the application process. When providing information to prospective LRP applicants, use your own experience as a model for a successful application. Your experience will provide a “real life” example of how to effectively navigate the application process.

Here are seven informational points to review when counseling an individual about the LRPs (expanded information on these seven points are also included in this toolkit):

- Five Extramural NIH Loan Repayment Programs
- Eligibility criteria for an extramural LRP application
- Application deadlines
- LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, Referee/Recommender, and Institutional Business Official Roles
- Evaluation criteria for LRP application
- NIH LRP Institute and Center Program Coordinator contact information
- LRP Information Center resources

Provide the following resource website links and tips (found at the end of this document) to help in describing the application process:

- Online Application System Instruction Booklet
- Tips for Writing a Successful Application
- Application Process Interactive Roadmap
- “NIH Loan Repayment Programs Application Technical Assistance” webinar, when available
- NIH career path funding options and when the LRPs and other funding options are available to a post-doc and early career research scientist

What are the Five Extramural NIH Loan Repayment Programs?

There are five extramural Loan Repayment Programs for researchers not employed by NIH. Applicants need to decide which of the five Extramural LRPs most appropriately matches to their general research area. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the summary descriptions of each of the LRPs.

For the Clinical Research and Pediatric Research LRPs, individuals are given the option to indicate a preferred NIH Institute or Center (IC) for peer review. For help determining IC match, applicants should contact the appropriate LRP IC Liaison(s). It is recommended that applicants read the Mission and LRP Research Priorities Statements for each of the NIH ICs in order to determine the best match. A list of LRP IC Liaisons, IC Mission Statements, and LRP Research Priorities Statements can be found on the [Contact & Engage](#) page.

The five extramural LRPs include:

- **Clinical Research** – for investigators conducting patient-oriented clinical research with human subjects or research on disease in human populations involving material of human origin. These applications are reviewed by all participating NIH ICs, except for the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD).
- **Pediatric Research** – for investigators conducting research directly related to diseases, disorders, and other conditions in children, including pediatric pharmacological research. These applications are reviewed by all participating NIH ICs, except NIMHD.
- **Health Disparities Research** – for investigators conducting research that focuses on one or more of the minority health disparity populations defined by NIMHD and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Applications for this LRP are reviewed solely by NIMHD.
- **Contraception and Infertility Research** – for investigators conducting research in conditions that impact on the ability of couples to either conceive or bear young, or research on providing new or improved methods of preventing pregnancy. Applications for this LRP are reviewed solely by NICHD.
- **Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds** – for clinical investigators coming from an environment that inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skill, and ability required to enroll in, and graduate from, a health professional school, or from a family with an annual income below low-income thresholds. Applications for this LRP are reviewed solely by NIMHD.

For expanded information on eligibility criteria for the five extramural NIH LRPs, please visit the [application page](#) on the LRP web site or call the LRP Information Center at (866) 849-4047.

What are the Eligibility Criteria for an Extramural NIH LRP Applicant?

No applicant will be excluded from consideration on the basis of age, race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other non-merit factors.

Citizenship - You must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident of the U.S. by the LRP award start date.

Qualifying Degree - Possess an M.D., Ph.D., Pharm.D., Psy.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.P.M., D.C., N.D., O.D., D.V.M., or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited institution. The exception is the Extramural Contraception and Infertility LRP, which also accepts certain master's degrees and certifications. See the Extramural Contraception and Infertility LRP page for additional details.

Qualified Educational Debt - You must have total qualified educational debt in excess of 20 percent of your institutional base salary at the time of award. Institutional base salary is the annual amount you are paid for your appointment, whether the time is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other

activities. Institutional base salary excludes any income that you may earn outside of the duties of the organization. It is not necessary for renewal applicants to satisfy the 20 percent debt-to-income requirement.

Qualified Research - You must agree to conduct only research that is not prohibited by Federal law, regulations, or policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or National Institutes of Health (NIH). If you receive an LRP award, you must conduct your research in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local law (e.g., applicable human subject protection regulations) for the entire contract period. Additionally, you must engage in qualified research for an average of at least 20 hours per week during each quarterly service period of your LRP award.

Domestic, nonprofit research funding – Your research must be supported by a domestic, nonprofit foundation, university, professional association, or other nonprofit institution, or a U.S. government agency (Federal, State, or local). A domestic foundation, professional association, or institution is considered to be nonprofit if it is exempt from Federal tax under the provisions of Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501). NIH grants and university salaries are considered eligible funding. Your primary employment must be with a nonprofit institution.

Ineligible Individuals

You are ineligible to apply for the NIH LRPs if you are:

- An individual who is not a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident of the U.S. by the LRP award start date;
- An individual who has or had a Federal judgment lien against his/her property arising from Federal debt;
- An individual who owes an obligation of health professional service to the federal government, a state, or other entity, unless deferrals or extensions are granted for the length of the NIH LRP contract;
- An individual employed by a federal government agency, with a work schedule of more than 20 hours per week (5/8ths time or more);
- An individual who receives any research funding support or salary from a for-profit institution or organization;
- A current recipient of an NIH Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA) or a Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA);
- An individual conducting research for which funding is precluded by Federal law, Federal regulations, or HHS/NIH policy, or that does not comply with applicable Federal, State, and local law regarding the conduct of the research (e.g., applicable human subject protection regulations);
- An individual who does not meet the 20% debt-to-income ratio.

What are the Application Deadlines? Do You Need an eRA Commons ID to Submit Your Application?

Make sure prospective applicants are aware of all application deadlines. Also, please note that all applicants are now required to have an NIH eRA Commons ID to submit an LRP application. If a prospective applicant does not have one, please suggest that they contact their grants administrator or research supervisor to request one right away as it can take several weeks to receive an NIH eRA Commons ID.

In general, the deadlines for extramural new and renewal awards are the following:

Online Application Period

🕒 September 1 – November 15

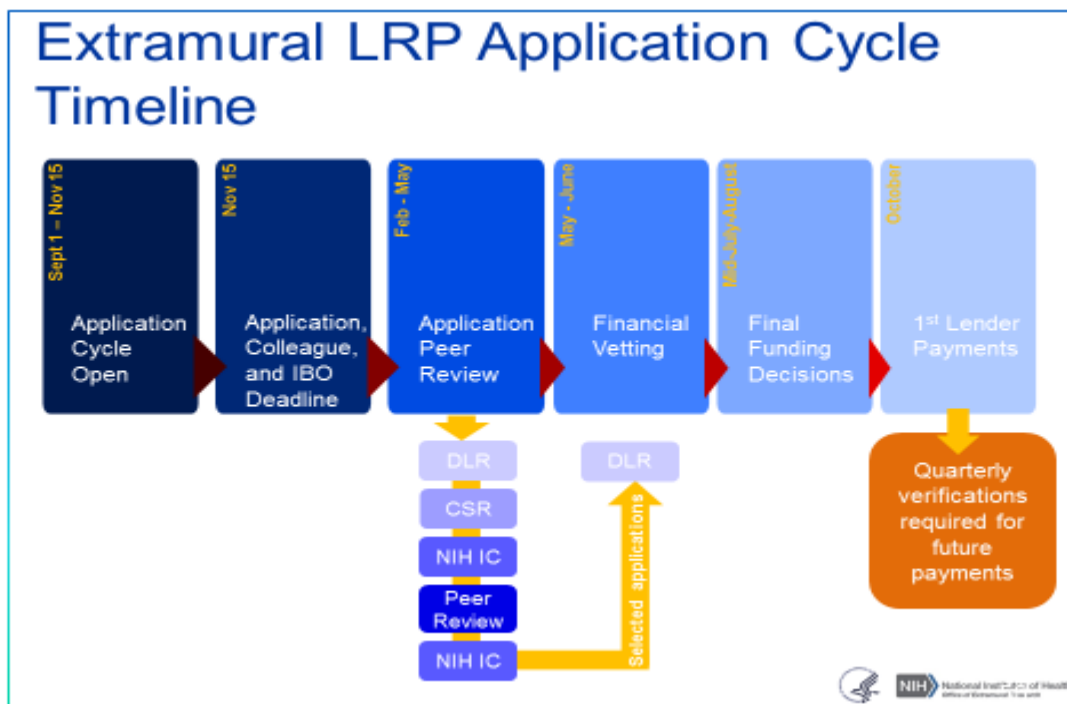
Online Application, Colleague and Institutional Documentation Deadline

🕒 November 15

NIH IC Peer Review Period

🕒 February – May

A timeline of the LRP application and approval process appears below. Check the [current application deadlines](#) on the LRP website for this year's application cycle.



What are the LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, Referee/Recommender, and Institutional Business Official Roles?

Describe the NIH LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, and Referee/recommender roles to the potential applicant. To help him or her understand these important roles, please provide examples of your LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, and Referee/Recommenders.

Research Supervisor Description

A research supervisor is an individual with the ability to verify that an LRP awardee is conducting research as described in the awardee's research plan at the required level of effort. A research supervisor will be asked to verify an awardee's research service at the end of each quarter (13 weeks) throughout the length of an awardee's LRP contract. At the end of each quarter, the research supervisor will receive an email from DLR with instructions regarding how to log into the Research Supervisor's Portal to complete the service verification process. The service verification serves to certify that:

- An awardee is still employed to conduct research at the institution for an average of at least 20 hours per week each quarter (13 weeks);
- An awardee's research has not changed significantly; and
- An awardee is not expected to leave the research institution before the end of the next quarter.

Research Mentor Description

A research mentor is an accomplished and trusted advisor who gives help and advice to a less experienced researcher. A mentor will be asked to provide the following items in support of an applicant by the published deadline:

New Award Applicants

- Recommendation letter (additional information can be found on the [Referees/Recommenders page](#));
- Concurrence of the applicant's research activities statement;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research environment;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research training and mentoring plan;
- Mentor's NIH Biosketch; and
- NIH Biosketch of a colleague contributing to the applicant's research career (optional).

Renewal Award Applicants

- Description of the applicant's progress toward becoming an independent researcher;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research accomplishments;

- Recommendation letter (additional information can be found on the [Referees/Recommenders](#) page);
- Concurrence of the applicant's research activities statement;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research environment;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research training and mentoring plan;
- Mentor's NIH Biosketch; and
- NIH Biosketch of a colleague contributing to the applicant's research career (optional).

Mentors will receive a DLR email containing instructions regarding how to access colleague support forms. To access these forms, mentors must first register for an LRP login account. Registration must be completed during the colleague and institutional support documentation period.

For more information on Research Supervisors and Mentors, click [here](#).

Referee/Recommender Description

A referee/recommender can address an applicant's research capabilities and commitment to a research career. A referee/recommender completes a recommendation form via the LRP websystem by the published deadline. The recommendation form is composed of the following elements for an applicant:

New Award Applicants

- Previous training and experience to prepare for a research career
- Commitment to a career in research
- Potential for a successful career in research
- Research related strengths and weaknesses
- Overall recommendation

Renewal Award Applicants

- Previous training and experience to prepare for a research career
- Commitment to a career in research
- Potential for a successful career in research
- Research related strengths and weaknesses
- Research accomplishments during the current/most recent LRP award period
- Development as an independent investigator
- Overall recommendation

Referees/Recommenders will receive a DLR email containing instructions regarding how to submit your reference letter in support of an applicant. To submit a reference letter, referees/recommenders must first register for an LRP login account. Registration must be completed during the colleague and institutional support documentation period.

For more information on Referees/Recommenders, click [here](#).

Institutional Business Official Description

An Institutional Business Official (IBO) represents the LRP applicant's employing institution in an official capacity. An IBO will be asked to certify by the published deadline that the applicant is eligible for an LRP. In addition, the IBO assures that the applicant will be provided the necessary time and resources to engage in the research project for the period of the Loan Repayment Program award (two years for a new award and one or two years for a renewal award)

For more information on the role of an IBO, click [here](#).

What are the Criteria by Which Extramural LRP Applications Are Evaluated?

The applicant's potential to pursue a career in research, including:

- Appropriateness of the applicant's previous training and experience to prepare for a research career;
- Appropriateness of the proposed research activities during the LRP award period to foster a career in research;
- Commitment to a research career, as reflected by the personal statement of long-term career goals and plan to achieve those goals; and
- Strength of the reference letters (recommendations) attesting to the applicant's potential for a successful career in research.

Quality of the overall environment to prepare the applicant for a research career, including:

- Quality and availability of appropriate scientific mentors and colleagues to help achieve or enhance the applicant's research independence, including the mentors' record in mentoring researchers, funding history and research productivity; and
- Quality and appropriateness of institutional resources and facilities.

For renewal award applications, progress under the previous project period is an additional evaluation criterion:

- Assessment of the renewal applicant's research accomplishments during the previous LRP support period; and
- Assessment of the renewal applicant's development as an independent investigator.

Who are the NIH LRP Institute and Center Program Coordinators?

For the Clinical Research and Pediatric Research LRPs, applicants have the option to indicate a preferred NIH Institute or Center (IC) for peer review. For help determining the best IC match, applicants should contact the appropriate NIH LRP IC Program Coordinators). It is recommended that applicants read the mission and research priorities statements for each of the NIH ICs first in order to determine the best match.

Refer individuals to the NIH LRP IC Coordinators for specific questions about each of the five NIH extramural LRPs.

A listing of the NIH LRP IC Liaison(s), IC mission research priorities statements can be found on the [Contact & Engage](#) section of the LRP website.

How do I Contact DLR?

For additional questions about the LRPs and the application process, contact the LRP Information Center via the following ways.

Toll free: (866) 849-4047

Fax: (866) 849-4046

Email: lrp@nih.gov

Mailing address: 6011 Executive Blvd, Suite 206, Bethesda, MD 20852

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=NIH%20LRP): <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=NIH%20LRP>

[Twitter](https://twitter.com/NIH_LRP): https://twitter.com/NIH_LRP

What are Some Helpful Resources?

The Division of Loan Repayment (DLR) has developed technical assistance resources to help applicants craft their applications. Share the following resources with applicants:



[***Online Application System Instruction Booklet***](#)

This booklet provides detailed instructions and information for completing an NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) application.



[***Tips for Writing a Successful Application***](#)

This tip sheet provides useful information about characteristics of strong applications and common reasons that applications are not funded.



[**Application Process Interactive Roadmap**](#)

The interactive application process roadmap provides guidance for what an applicant should be doing or thinking about at each stage of the application process.



[**NIH Loan Repayment Programs Technical Assistance Webinar**](#)

DLR offers a live webinar each year to introduce features of the application process and answer common questions about the application process. DLR will share information about the upcoming webinar with Ambassadors so that they may share the information with potential applicants. As it becomes available, the recorded yearly webinar may be accessed by clicking the title above.



[**Information on NIH research training and career development funding opportunities**](#)

Funding opportunities for each stage of a researcher's training and career path are described.