

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAMS

Online Application System Instruction Booklet

*For application
cycle opening on
September 1, 2016*

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GENERAL

This booklet will provide you detailed instructions, information, and assist you with completing your NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) application. The LRP Online Application System (OAS) opens on September 1st each year, though application deadlines vary by program. Those interested in applying for an LRP award should thoroughly review the LRP website to better understand the eligibility requirements, the application process, and the application deadlines for each program. This booklet is intended to be a guide for all Loan Repayment Programs, both Extramural and Intramural. There are important differences between programs. See our website and NIH Guide Notices (extramural only) for specific information regarding program information.

ELIGIBILITY

Please read all the instructions below and refer to the LRP website and NIH Guide Notices (extramural only) to obtain specific information on the programs. It is the applicants' responsibility to read and understand the eligibility requirements prior to starting an LRP application.

Award Type:

Select "New" if you meet any of the following conditions:

- You have never received a prior LRP award.
- You have received a prior LRP award, but the end date of your last LRP contract will exceed 37 months from the start date of your next anticipated LRP contract. To determine the end date of your last LRP contract, please access your participant portal.
- You have a previous LRP award within the last 37 months, but you plan to change from one LRP to another (e.g. from Clinical Research to Pediatric Research).

Select "Renewal" if you have received an LRP award in the past, do not plan to change your LRP, and the end date of your last contract will not exceed 37 months. To determine the end date of your last LRP contract, please access your participant portal.

Contract Length Type:

For those applying to the Extramural LRPs:

- All New awards are two years in length.
- If you are applying for a Renewal award, you may choose either a one- or two-year award. The NIH Institute or Center to which your application is assigned will make the final determination of a one or two year award.

For those applying to the Intramural LRPs:

- New awards are two years in length, except the General Research and for ACGME Fellows, which are three years.
- Renewal awards are one year in length only.

Intramural or Extramural Loan Repayment Program:

Extramural Loan Repayment Programs are for researchers employed and supported by grant funding from a domestic, nonprofit organization.

Intramural Loan Repayment Programs are only available to researchers employed by the NIH.

Loan Repayment Program to which you are applying:

Select one Loan Repayment Program from the drop down list. Detailed information about each program is available on the LRP webpage.

Independent or Mentored Researcher:

Select “Independent Researcher” if you do not have a research supervisor. Generally, Independent Researchers hold their own grant funding and are listed as a PI or Co-PI on a grant.

Select “Mentored Researcher” if you have a research supervisor. Generally, Mentored Researchers are supported by grants held by another PI.

Preferred IC (Extramural Only):

Select one NIH Institute or Center (IC) from the drop down list. Please note your selection is a preference and your application may be assigned to another IC. Applications to certain LRPs require that your application be assigned to specific ICs as follows:

- For those applicants applying to the Health Disparities Research or Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds LRPs, your application will be assigned to the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.
- For those applicants applying to the Contraception and Infertility Research LRP, your application will be assigned to the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Secondary IC (Extramural Only):

You may select one additional NIH IC for secondary assignment from the drop down list. Please note your selection is a preference and your application may be assigned to another IC.

For those applicants applying to the Health Disparities Research, Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds, or Contraception and Infertility Research LRPs, no secondary assignments can be selected.

Not Preferred IC (Extramural Only):

You may select one NIH IC to which you do not wish your application to be assigned. Please note your selection is a preference only.

Eligibility Questions:

Please answer all questions either Yes or No in the Eligibility Questions section and then check the corresponding boxes at the bottom of the page before clicking the submit button. Please note that completing this section is not a guarantee of eligibility. Additionally, NIH LRPs are competitive and submission of an application is not a guarantee of award.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

The NIH LRPs collect contact and other personal information for important administrative purposes. Additional information, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and disability status are also collected here.

Name:

Enter your legal first, middle (optional) and last name as it appears on your driver's license or state issued identification.

Other Name:

Enter a secondary name such as a maiden name or another name used professionally.

Email:

Enter your preferred email address. The email address entered on this line will be the primary address used to communicate with you throughout the application process.

Other Email:

Enter an additional email address if desired.

U.S. /Non-U.S.:

Select the appropriate radio button if your primary mailing address is U.S. or foreign.

Address Line 1:

Enter your street address.

Address Line 2:

Enter Apartment Number, Condo Number or other additional mailing information.

City:

Enter your mailing address City.

State:

Select your mailing address State from the drop down.

Zip Code:

Enter your mailing address Zip Code.

Work Phone:

Enter your Work Phone Number.

Ext.:

Enter your Work Phone Extension if applicable.

Phone Type:

Select the primary phone number an NIH LRP representative may use to reach you.

Home Phone:

Enter your home phone number.

Cell Phone:

Enter your cell phone number.

SSN:

Enter your Social Security Number.

Confirm SSN:

Reenter your Social Security Number.

Date of Birth:

Enter your date of birth.

NIH Commons ID:

Enter your NIH Commons ID.

Confirm NIH Commons ID:

Reenter your NIH Commons ID.

Gender:

Select the appropriate radio button.

Race:

Select the appropriate radio button.

Ethnicity:

Select the appropriate radio button.

Disability Status:

Select the appropriate radio button.

How did you learn about the NIH LRPs?

Select from the drop down list. You may make multiple selections from the list. If you select more than one, you will be asked to choose how you initially heard about the LRPs.

EMPLOYMENT

Complete this section by entering information about your employer, your supervisor, your mentor (if applicable), your academic affiliation (if applicable), and your institution's business official. Follow the instructions below.

ORGANIZATION: Your employer/organization must be a domestic, nonprofit organization in order to meet NIH LRP eligibility requirements.

Employer (Organization):

Enter the name of the organization that employs you.

Department:

Enter your organization's department name, if applicable.

Division:

Enter your organization's division name, if applicable.

Branch:

Enter your organization's branch name, if applicable.

Position Title:

Enter your job title.

Salary:

Enter your current compensation. The amount entered will be confirmed with a Business Official at your organization.

Start Date:

Enter the month and year of your start date in the following format MM/YYYY.

ACGME Fellowship (Intramural Only):

Check this box if you are on an ACGME Fellowship.

SUPERVISOR: All applicants, regardless of whether you are applying as a mentored or independent researcher, must enter the name and contact information of a supervisor who can confirm you are meeting the terms and conditions of the LRP Contract on a quarterly basis.

Research Supervisor Name:

Enter the first, middle (optional) and last name of your Research Supervisor.

Is this individual your primary mentor?

If you are applying as a mentored applicant, check this box if your primary research supervisor is also your primary mentor.

Research Supervisor Email:

Enter your Research Supervisor's email address.

Primary Mentor Name:

If you are applying as a mentored applicant and your primary mentor is not your research supervisor, enter the first, middle (optional) and last name of your primary mentor.

Checkbox Note on Recommendations:

If you are applying as a mentored applicant, your mentor/supervisor will be asked to provide a recommendation letter on your behalf. By checking this box, you acknowledge that you will not have access to the recommendation letter submitted by your mentor/supervisor.

Primary Mentor Email:

If applicable, enter your Primary Mentor's email address.

Checkbox Note on Prior Mentors:

If you are applying as a mentored applicant and you have recently moved from one institution to another, you may want a prior mentor to review your LRP application. If so, check this box.

Prior Mentor Name:

If applicable, enter the first, middle (optional) and last name of your prior mentor.

Prior Mentor Email:

If applicable, enter your Prior Mentor's email address.

ACADEMIC AFFILIATION: Some individuals employed by hospitals or other nonprofit organizations have an academic affiliation with a university or academic institution.

Checkbox Note on Academic Affiliation:

If your employer and your academic affiliation are the same, check this box. Otherwise, complete the section below.

Organization:

Enter the name of your Academic Affiliation.

Division:

Enter your Academic Affiliation's division name.

Department:

Enter your Academic Affiliation's department name.

INSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS OFFICIAL: A signing official authorized by the organization where you work must be identified to confirm your salary and certify your application including protected time to conduct your research for the appropriate number of years.

Organization:

Enter the organization name of your Business Official.

Contact Name:

Enter the first, middle (optional) and last name of your Business Official

Email Address:

Enter your Business Official's email address.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Provide the necessary information to detail your academic and training history to include degrees conferred and post-doctoral fellowships. Most LRPs require applicants to hold an M.D., Ph.D. or similar doctoral degree in order to qualify for award. The Contraception and Infertility Research LRP also allows nurses, physician assistants and similar professionals to apply. Thoroughly review the degree requirements for the LRP to which you are applying on our website. If you do not currently

hold a qualifying degree, but anticipate it to be conferred before the start of an LRP award, you may still be eligible to apply.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING: You must enter at least one qualifying degree by clicking the “Add New Entry” button. Once you have entered your qualifying degree, you may enter as many additional degrees as you wish by clicking the “Add New Entry” button.

Education:

Select your degree from among the choices by clicking on the radio buttons.

Conferring Institution:

Enter the university or academic institution that conferred the degree.

Year Degree Conferred:

From the drop down list, select the year in which the degree was conferred.

Specialty:

Enter your area of specialty study.

Subspecialty:

Enter your area of subspecialty study.

Post-Doctoral Fellowship: If you have completed a post-doctoral fellowship, enter in the information by clicking the “Add New Entry” button. You may enter more than one.

Institution:

Enter the university, academic institution, or organization where you completed your fellowship.

Start Date:

Enter the start date of your fellowship.

End Date:

Enter the end date of your fellowship.

Percent of Time Spent on Research:

Enter in the amount of time you spent conducting research as a percentage, 0-100, as whole number.

RESEARCH FUNDING

Detail your research funding in this section. Your research must be funded by a domestic nonprofit entity in order to be eligible for the LRPs. Funding sources may include NIH grants, grants from other Federal, State or Local entities, and non-profit organizations. Your research may also be supported by institutional start-up funds or the salary you receive from your nonprofit employer. You may have more than one funding source in some combination of the above. *In the checkboxes at the top of the page, select all funding sources that apply.*

NIH GRANT SUPPORT: List all NIH Grant Support you receive by clicking the “Add New Entry” button.

Type of Award:

Select the type of award from the drop down box.

Other:

If you selected other in the drop down box above, please specify.

NIH Award/Application Number:

Enter the project number.

Award Status:

Select the award status from the drop down box.

Total Award Amount:

Enter the total award amount.

Start Date:

Enter the start date (may be a future date).

End Date:

Enter the end date.

PI/Co-PI?

Select the appropriate radio button.

Does this award support your LRP-eligible project?

Select the appropriate radio button.

OTHER GOVERNMENT RESEARCH FUNDING (NOT FROM NIH): List any other support you receive from governmental entities by clicking the “Add New Entry” button. These maybe federal, state or local funding grants.

Type of Organization:

Select the type of organization from the drop down box.

Organization Name:

Enter the organization name.

Award Status:

Select the award status from the drop down box.

Title of Project:

Enter the project title.

Total Award Amount:

Enter the total award amount.

Start Date:

Enter the start date (may be a future date).

End Date:

Enter the end date.

PI/Co-PI?

Select the appropriate radio button.

Does this award support your LRP-eligible project?

Select the appropriate radio button.

OTHER NONPROFIT RESEARCH FUNDING (NOT FROM NIH): List any other support you receive from nonprofit organizations by clicking the “Add New Entry” button.

Type of Organization:

Select the type of organization from the drop down box.

Organization Name:

Enter the organization name.

Award Status:

Select the award status from the drop down box.

Title of Project:

Enter the project title.

Total Award Amount:

Enter the total award amount.

Start Date:

Enter the start date (may be a future date).

End Date:

Enter the end date.

PI/Co-PI?

Select the appropriate radio button.

Does this award support your LRP-eligible project?

Select the appropriate radio button.

RESEARCH

The Research Tab of the LRP Application requires you to write and submit several attachments to your LRP application. You are encouraged to read all the instructions below, including formatting instructions, as it is your responsibility to comply with all stated page limits and format requirements.

Mentored applicants should write attachments collaboratively with their Mentor and/or Research Supervisor. Once you have submitted your attachments via the Online Application System your Mentor/Research Supervisor will be asked to review the documents and concur that each item appropriately reflects your research environment, research activities, and training and development plans. There is no resubmission of these attachments; once submitted your documents are final. You should work closely with your Mentor/Research Supervisor to produce these documents prior to submission.

Independent Researchers should be able to write these attachments without the assistance of a mentor or supervisor, though a third party may proof read your documents. A mentor or supervisor will not be required to review your attachments after submission.

FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS

Citations:

We do not require a specific style citation format; most style guides include guidance for citations and all are acceptable. [SciENcv](#), a tool to prepare biosketches for NIH and other agencies, uses a standard style adopted by the National Library of Medicine. If your organization does not already have a standard, you may want to consider this one.

Filenames:

Save all document attachments with descriptive filenames, as follows:

- Use unique filenames for all attachments in the application.
- Use any of the following characters: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign.
- Use one space (not two or more) between words or characters and do not include a space immediately before the .pdf extension.
- Avoid the use of ampersand (&) since it requires special formatting (i.e., &).

File Size:

Ensure file size is greater than 0 bytes - we cannot accept a 0 byte attachment and keep attachment file size to 5 MB or less.

Font (size, color, type density) and Line Spacing:

Legibility is of paramount importance. Adherence to font size, type density, line spacing, and text color requirements is necessary to ensure readability and fairness. Although font requirements apply to all attachments, they are most important and most heavily scrutinized in attachments with page limits. Text in your attachments must follow these minimum requirements:

- Font size: must be 11 points or larger (smaller text in figures, graphs, diagrams, and charts is acceptable as long as it is legible when the page is viewed at 100%).
- Some PDF conversion software reduces font size. It is important to confirm that the final PDF document complies with the font requirements.
- Type density: must be no more than 15 characters per linear inch (including characters and spaces).
- Line spacing: must be no more than six lines per vertical inch.
- Text color: must be black (color text in figures, graphs, diagrams, charts, tables, footnotes, and headings is acceptable).

We recommended the following fonts, although other fonts (both serif and non-serif) are acceptable if they meet the above requirements:

- Arial
- Garamond
- Georgia
- Helvetica
- Times New Roman
- Verdana

Grantsmanship:

Use English and avoid jargon. Spell out acronyms the first time they are used and note the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses. The abbreviation may be used thereafter.

Headers and Footers:

Do not include headers or footers in your attachments. Headings (e.g., Significance, Innovation) within the text of your attachments improve readability and are highly encouraged.

Hyperlinks and URLs:

Hyperlinks and URLs may not be used to provide information necessary to application review. Reviewers are not obligated to view linked sites.

Images:

Digital images of material such as electron micrographs or gels must only be included within the page limits of the Research Activities attachment. The maximum size of images to be included should be approximately 1200 x 1500 pixels using 256 colors. Figures must be readable as printed on an 8.5" x 11" page at normal (100%) scale.

Investigators must use image compression such as JPEG or PNG. Do not include figures or photographs as separate attachments in the Appendix or elsewhere in the application

Page Limits:

Adhere to the page limits defined by the instructions for each attachment listed below. System checks for application completeness do not address page limit requirements. Such checks are completed by staff after application submission. You must comply with all documented page limits.

Paper Size and Margins:

Use paper size no larger than *standard letter paper size (8 ½" x 11")*. Provide at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. No applicant-supplied information can appear in the margins.

Scanning:

Avoid scanning text documents to produce the required PDFs. It is best to produce documents using your word-processing software and then convert the documents to PDF. Scanning paper documents may hamper automated processing of your application for agency analysis and reporting.

Security Features:

Our systems must be able to open and edit your attached documents in order to generate your assembled application image for agency processing and award consideration. Disable all security features in your PDF documents. Do not encrypt or password protect your documents. Using these features to protect your documents prevents us from opening and processing them.

Single vs. Multi-Column Page Format:

A single-column page format easily adapts to various screen sizes and is highly encouraged. Multi-column formats, especially for information spanning multiple pages, can be problematic for online review.

ATTACHMENT INSTRUCTIONS**Biosketch:**

Page Limit: Five (5) pages

Submit a Biosketch in a specified NIH format. You may use the sample format on the [Biographical Sketch Format Page](#) to prepare your Biosketch or you may use [SciENCy](#), a tool to prepare biosketches for NIH and other agencies. It is not necessary to have a well-established career to apply to the LRP, but your Biosketch should include a list of significant honors and grants.

Personal Statement

Page Limit: One (1) page

Describe why you are a strong candidate for an LRP award. Relevant factors may include: your previous research training and/or previous experimental work; your short and long-term academic and research objectives; any relevant academic/professional achievements or honors; and any significant contributions to science.

Career Development Plan

Page Limit: Two (2) pages

Describe your career development plan and explain how this plan will foster the development of your career in research. This description should include not only your research, but also other developmental activities, such as seminars, scientific meetings, training in the responsible conduct of research, and presentations. Additionally, the nature and extent of supervision and mentoring should be discussed as they will occur during the award period. Once submitted, your mentor will be asked to review your career development plan for accuracy.

Research Activities

Page Limit: Eight (8) pages

Describe the research plan you will pursue over the course of the LRP contract and your specific role and responsibilities. The plan should include: a specific hypothesis; a list of the specific aims and objectives that will be used to examine the hypothesis; and a description of the methods/approaches/techniques to be used in each aim. Literature citations, tables, graphs, and images such as micrographs or gels are included in the eight (8) page limit. Include your name, employer, title of research project, and date at the top of the document.

It is important to relate the research plan to your scientific career goals. Describe how the research, coupled with other developmental activities, will provide the experience, knowledge, and skills necessary to achieve the objectives of your career development plan. Once submitted, your mentor will be asked to review your research plan for accuracy.

Research Accomplishments

Renewal Applications Only

Page Limit: Two (2) pages

Describe your research accomplishments as they occurred under your first LRP award and subsequent renewal awards (if any). If you experienced "breaks" between LRP awards, the accomplishments statement should include research progress made during those time breaks. Your research accomplishments should emphasize the progress made toward the achievement of your specific aims as described in your research plan. Explain any significant changes to the specific aims and any new directions including changes to the specific aims that may have occurred during the LRP Award(s) period. Once submitted, your mentor will be asked to review your research accomplishments for accuracy.

Research Environment

Page Limit: One (1) page

Describe your institution's scientific environment and how it will contribute to the probability of your success during the course of an LRP award (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport). In describing the scientific environment in which the research will be conducted, discuss ways in which the research will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment and any useful collaborative arrangements.

If you are applying as a Mentored applicant, also describe institutional investment in your success, e.g., resources for classes, travel, training, and financial support such as protected time for research with salary support.

Training and Mentoring Plan

Page Limit: Two (2) pages

Instructions: Describe your research training program and mentoring plan. Specify the types of training interactions, training mechanisms to be used, research methods, and scientific techniques to be learned, and include journal clubs or groups, conferences, and seminars. If another laboratory staff member will be involved in the mentoring program, provide his/her name, describe his/her degree of involvement, and attach his/her Biosketch to the application in the Additional Biosketch section (see above). Your mentor should include a summary of his/her prior experience as a mentor of other investigators.

RECOMMENDER/REFEREES: You must select three individuals to submit a letter of recommendation on your behalf. If you are submitting a mentored application, one of your recommenders must be your research supervisor/mentor, in which case two additional individuals should be chosen.

Care should be taken when selecting your recommenders. Be sure that you, your research accomplishments, and career trajectory are well known to your recommenders. Letters of recommendation are due at the same time as your application. You should talk with your potential recommenders in advance and ensure that they will be able to meet the application deadlines listed on the LRP website. Late recommendations will not be accepted. Once you have entered the required number of recommenders, review the release and waiver checkboxes, check each as necessary and then submit the Research Form. To enter a recommender, click the “Add New Entry” button.

LOAN INFORMATION (New Applications Only)

New applicants to the LRP must list their educational loans in this section. It is important to note that not all educational loans are eligible for repayment. For example, foreign loans are not eligible for repayment. Please refer to the LRP website for specific information regarding loan eligibility. If you enter a loan in this section that is ineligible, it will be removed from your loan portfolio. All the information necessary to complete this section should be available on your student loan account statement(s). At least one loan must be entered, but enter as many loans as necessary. To begin, click the “Add New Entry” button.

Loan Account Number:

Enter your loan account number as found on the loan statement issued by your loan servicer

Name of Lending Institution/Servicing Agent:

Select the Lending Institution or Servicing Agent from the drop down list. If you do not see your lender, click other.

Other:

If other is selected above, enter the name of the lending institution.

Type of Loan:

Select the loan type from the drop down list. If you do not see the loan type, click other.

Other:

If other is selected above, enter the loan type.

Loan Questions:

Select the “Yes” or “No” radio button in response to each of the loan questions asked.

Current Balance:

Enter your current loan balance as it appears on your statement.

Loan Status:

Select your loan status from the drop down box.

SUBMIT APPLICATION

Once you have completed all sections of the application, you may submit it. From the submit application tab, you will have several attachments that you must print, sign and return to the LRP offices either by email at lrp@nih.gov or by fax at **866-849-4046**.

Certification for Online Application:

Print, sign and return by either fax or email.

Citizenship Status:

Print, complete and sign then return by either fax or email along with a **legible** copy of your selected citizenship documentation.

Disadvantaged Background Certification:

If applying to the Clinical Research LRP for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds, please complete certification and return by either fax or email.

IC Preference

Please review your IC preference selections once more prior to submission of your application

Once the above steps are complete you may electronically submit your application. No paper applications will be accepted.