

NCI Diversity Supplements Guidelines

This document applies to applications requesting research supplement funding to active National Cancer Institute (NCI) grants in response to PA-20-022. The purpose is to clarify the application process and highlight NCI-specific requirements. This document is not intended to replace the full and detailed application information in the Program Announcement:

[Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research, PA-20-022](#)

Investigators are encouraged to contact the [NCI Supplement Program Director](#) prior to submission.

NCI Diversity Supplements Application Receipt Dates are **October 1 – December 1** and **February 1 – April 30 (for FY 2021)**.

1. ELIGIBILITY

1.1 Candidate

NCI Diversity Supplements support the research training of students, post-baccalaureate and post-Masters individuals, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty investigators. Supplemental awards under this announcement are limited to citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States or to individuals who have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States (i.e., in possession of a Permanent Resident Card, Form I-551). This program may not be used to provide technical support to NIH-supported investigators. Each candidate may receive one diversity supplement per career level. NCI particularly encourages applications from individuals from groups identified in NIH's Notice of Interest in Diversity ([NOT-OD-20-031](#)) as underrepresented in the biomedical, clinical, behavioral, and social sciences, including:

- Individuals from racial and ethnic groups that have been shown by the National Science Foundation to be underrepresented in health-related sciences on a national basis ([see data](#) and the report [Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering](#)). The following racial and ethnic groups have been shown to be underrepresented in biomedical research: Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. For more information on racial and ethnic categories and definitions, see [NOT-OD-15-089](#).
- Individuals with disabilities who are defined as those with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, as described in the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended](#). See [NSF data](#).
- Individuals from financially and/or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly before graduating from high school, while residing in the United States.

Detailed eligibility criteria and diversity information may be found in the [Program Announcement](#).

High school and undergraduate student candidates are expected to demonstrate **at least two years** of commitment to the supplement program. **Post-baccalaureate and post-Masters individuals** as well as **investigator candidates** may apply for a **maximum of two years** support in a new supplement application.

Graduate student and postdoctoral fellow candidates who are receiving support from an agency of the Public Health Service (PHS) at the time of submission are not eligible.

Because this program is not intended to provide an alternative or additional means of supporting individuals who receive support from PHS funding mechanisms, graduate students and individuals in postdoctoral training who are supported by an institutional Kirschstein-NRSA may not be transferred to supplemental support prior to the completion of their appointed period of training.

In addition, individuals may not be transferred to a supplement to increase the availability of funds to the parent grant for other uses. Eligible graduate student and postdoctoral fellow candidates may be supported by the parent grant for short periods after submission of supplement application, at the recipient's risk, pending NCI decision on the supplement application. See the [Program Announcement](#) for details.

Investigators should contact the [NCI Supplement Program Director](#) to verify eligibility.

1.2 Parent grant

At the time of the supplement application, the parent grant must have at least two years of NCI support remaining. The eligible grant types are listed in the [Program Announcement](#), with the following exceptions:

- NCI does not accept P30, SC1, SC2 or SC3 as parent grants for Diversity Supplements.

In addition, the following limitations apply:

- An R01 or R01-equivalent grant is allowed to support a maximum of two Diversity Supplement candidates.
- An R21 or R21-equivalent grant is allowed to support a maximum of one Diversity Supplement candidate whose career level is graduate student or more junior.

1.3 Research project

Proposed supplement project must be relevant to (contributes to, expands or extends) the parent grant project, and the relevance needs to be explicitly explained in the application. If the parent grant has multiple research projects, the supplement project must not only be within the general scope of the parent grant, but also be relevant to a specific project listed within the parent grant.

Clinical Trials: This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is designed specifically for applicants proposing research that does not involve leading an independent clinical trial, a clinical trial feasibility study, or an ancillary study to a clinical trial. Applicants to this FOA are permitted to propose research experience in a clinical trial led by a mentor or co-mentor.

2. SALARY AND BUDGET

Please note: if awarded, **the budget period for the supplement will sync with the budget period of the parent grant during the first 12 months.** For example, as shown in Table 1, if the parent grant budget period ends on June 30 of each year, and the supplement is awarded starting March 1, then the first budget period of the supplement will be only 4 months, March 1 – June 30 of the same year, and the second budget period will be a full 12 months, July 1 – June 30 (of the next year). In addition, please note that any one budget period must be 12 months or less. Please configure your budget request accordingly.

Table 1. Example of supplement budget periods.

Parent Grant Budget End Date	First Supplement Budget Period	Next Supplement Budget Periods
June 30	March 1 – June 30 of same year	July 1 – June 30 (of the next year)

For all candidates: salary and fringe benefits are allowed. F&A costs are allowed per institution policy. For budget periods that are less than 12 months, salary and fringe benefits are pro-rated; supplies and travel (with justification) are not pro-rated. Equipment purchase is not allowed, unless specifically stated below.

2.1. High school students

- Salary: consistent with the institutional salary policy. Institutional salary rates for high school students which exceed the hourly minimum wage must be justified.
- Supplies and travel: not allowed.
- Encouraged to participate for at least two years.

2.2. Undergraduate students

- Salary: consistent with the institutional salary policy.
- Supplies and travel: up to \$200 per month, with justification.
- Encouraged to participate for at least two years.

2.3. Post-baccalaureate and post-master's degree individuals

- Salary: consistent with the institutional salary policy, but not to exceed the amount allowable for a first year graduate student at the same institution performing comparable work. For fiscal year 2019, salary will be capped at \$31,000 per year, with additional fringe.
- Supplies and travel: up to \$3,000 per year, with justification.
- Allowed to apply for a maximum of two years support.

2.4. Graduate students

- Salary: consistent with the institutional salary policy; salary, fringe and tuition together must not exceed the amount allowable for a first-year postdoctoral fellow at the same institution performing comparable work.
- Supplies and travel: up to \$4,000 per year, with justification.
- May be supported for the duration of the parent grant, but typically for three years or less.

2.5. Postdoctoral fellows

- Salary: consistent with the institutional salary policy, up to the allowable stipend amount commensurate with experience, according to the [NIH National Research Service Award policy](#).
- Supplies and travel: up to \$6,000 per year, with justification.
- May be supported for the duration of the parent grant, but typically for three years or less.

2.6. Investigators developing independent research careers

- Salary: consistent with institutional policy and with the level of support provided by a NCI Career Development Award, but not to exceed \$100,000 per year, with additional fringe.
- Supplies and travel: up to \$10,000 per year, with justification.
- Allowed to apply for a maximum of two years support.

2.7. Individuals with disability

- Salary, supplies, support duration and travel: consistent with career levels as detailed above.

- Equipment: reasonable accommodations necessary for the individual to complete the proposed research training, consistent with the type of disability and the nature of the research, with justification.

3. APPLICATION CONTENT

Applicants should refer to the [Program Announcement](#) for what to include in a diversity supplement request. Work with your business office to ensure the correct forms are used. See below for further details and clarification on the information that NCI requires.

3.1. Principal Investigator (PI)

The PI of the parent grant is the PI of the supplement.

3.2. Biosketch

Application must include NIH biosketch of all involved personnel, including the PI. Biosketches may be up to five pages each.

3.3. Statement of eligibility and diversity

This document must be signed by the PI and an institutional official, establishing the candidate's eligibility for support under this program. The statement must include:

- Clearly presented information on U.S. citizenship or permanent residency;
- Explicit information on the nature of the candidate's disability, circumstances, background or characteristics that enhance cancer research workforce diversity under this program;
- A description of any current or previous PHS research grant support the candidate has received, including start and end dates. If applicable, include a statement indicating that the candidate has not received any current or previous PHS support.

3.4. For candidates who are investigators

- Application must include a letter from the institution about the position of the candidate including the title, the duration, a brief description and any institutional commitment.

3.5. Personal statement of the candidate

Application must include a signed personal statement of up to one page, describing the diversity candidate's career goals, both immediate and long term. Candidates are strongly encouraged to submit career stage-appropriate grant applications during or at the end of period of supplement support. Statements should include plans to develop such applications, if applicable. Personal statement may be included as part A of an NIH biosketch or as a separate document.

3.6. Transcripts

For high school, undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, post-masters and graduate students, digital transcripts of the most recent education stage are required.

3.7. Qualification of mentor(s)

- If there is more than one mentor, clearly define each mentor's role and relationship to the candidate.
- Clearly describe each mentor's mentoring track record, including individuals previously mentored and their current positions if applicable, especially the current status of any previous diversity supplement candidates.
- If primary mentor is relatively junior, it may be helpful to include an experienced co-mentor.

- The primary mentor does not need to be the PI of the parent grant, but the PI of the parent grant must be in concurrence with the supplement application.

3.8. Research, mentoring and career development plan

A brief description of up to six pages that includes the following items is required:

3.8.1. Research plan:

- A summary or abstract and specific aims of the funded parent grant or project;
- A description of the specific research project proposed for the supplement candidate, including relevancy to the parent grant or project, research design and aims, methods and techniques, and how the proposed experience will enhance the candidate's research potential.
- The proposed supplement research plan must be relevant to the parent grant. For multi-component grants, the supplement must be associated with a specific research project listed in the parent grant.

3.8.2. Mentoring and career development plan:

- A candidate-specific career development plan that is consistent with the goals laid out in the candidate's personal statement.
- A description of career skills to be gained during the supplement experience and career-stage appropriate benchmarks to be reached, including, but not limited to, abstract and publication submissions, oral presentations, and grants submissions.
- Outline of a detailed plan that will help the candidate to transition to the next education or career stage.

3.8.3. Timeline with appropriate benchmarks for both research progress and career development of candidate.

3.9. In case of multiple institutions

A letter of support signed by a designated institution official from each institution is required. The mentoring and career development plan must clearly indicate the logistics of communications and the impact of multiple locations on the candidate's research and career progress. If awarded, the supplement award is provided to the institute where the parent grant resides. The PI of the parent grant is ultimately responsible for the supplement.

3.10. Extras

Letters of recommendation and/or support for the candidate are not required but may be included.

4. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please follow the instructions in the [Program Announcement](#).

All supplement applications **must be** submitted electronically. It is suggested that the [NCI Supplement Program Director](#) be notified once the application is submitted.

5. REVIEW AND AWARD

Supplement applications are reviewed internally at NCI based on scientific merit and training potential. For applications submitted in the October 1 – December 1 period, funding recommendations are

anticipated in March; for applications submitted in the February 1 – March 30 period, funding recommendations are anticipated in June.

6. POST AWARD PROCEDURES

6.1. Supplement progress reports

6.1.1. Annual supplement progress reports

- Annual supplement progress reports are due at least once per 12 months. Once awarded, supplements will align with the parent grant's budget periods.
- **Annual supplement progress reports must be submitted each year at the time of submission of the parent grant progress report through RPPR.**
- To facilitate progress report generation and program analysis, **investigators are strongly encouraged to generate progress reports via CareerTrac.**
- The generated .pdf file of the progress report should be attached to section G.1 of the parent grant RPPR. If the submission of the supplement progress report is late, it should be submitted to the NCI supplement program director with institution approval.

6.1.2. Final supplement progress reports

Final supplement progress reports are due within 120 days of the completion of the supplement. PIs are strongly encouraged to generate the final supplement progress report through CareerTrac in the same fashion as the annual progress reports. They should be attached to section G.1 of the parent grant RPPR. If late, they may be sent to the NCI supplement program director with institution approval.

6.1.3. Additional progress reports

In addition to annual supplement progress reports, NCI may request interim progress reports during a budget period in order to help ensure candidates' progress along their chosen trajectory.

6.2. Early Termination of Supplement Awards

The PI is strongly encouraged to notify NCI **as soon as possible** about a supplement award termination. The termination must be reported in the next RPPR of the parent grant, and a final supplement progress report as described in 6.1.2 must be submitted at that time. Unobligated funds at the time of termination will be returned to NCI.

6.3. Changes in Supplement Awards

A Diversity Supplement is specific to the parent grant and the candidate. If either changes, the supplement must be terminated. In the event that the parent grant PI or candidate changes institutions, the PI and the candidate should contact the [NCI Supplement Program Director](#) to discuss options.

7. EXTENSIONS

7.1. Cost extensions

For a candidate who has not completed the originally proposed research training at the completion of the supplement award, a cost extension to the supplement may be requested. Cost extension requests may be made only under extenuating circumstances, provided that adequate time remains on the parent grant. An application for a cost extension is permissible when the parent grant is on a no-cost extension. If approved, cost extensions are awarded for a maximum of one year. Support for a cost extension is not guaranteed. Cost extensions for a postdoctoral fellow or an investigator are rarely granted.

[NCI Supplement Program Director](#) must be informed of the intent to apply for a cost extension **at least six months prior to the end of the supplement award**. Cost extension requests must be submitted during the two application receipt periods for new supplement applications.

A cost extension application must include the following:

- Cover letter signed by PI, including time period and reason for extension;
- Face page (PHS 398), with all the required signatures;
- Updated budget and budget justification forms;
- Annual supplement progress report of the candidate during the preceding funding period, including both research and career development, as described in 6.1.1;
- Updated mentoring and career development plan, including updated timeline for research progress and career development, if applicable.

Collect all material into one PDF file and submit the file as one single attachment by email from the institution program or business office to the [NCI Supplement Program Director](#). **Use the subject line “NCI Diversity Supplement Cost Extension Application PDF”, and include the PI’s contact information in the body of the email.**

Important considerations for the funding decision of a cost extension application include how much progress the candidate has made and how the extension may help further the candidate’s career progress, both of which may be reflected by publications, grant submissions or education progress.

In the case where the parent grant is submitting a Renewal (Type 2) application, funds for continuation of support of the supplemental award will depend on the successful renewal of the parent grant and will be handled as follows:

- Funds for the continuation of support for students must be requested as a new diversity supplement. The request must be submitted promptly in anticipation of a renewal award to avoid an interruption of support. Additional time may be considered for individuals with disabilities, but must be well justified.
- Funds for continued support for a postdoctoral researcher or an investigator must be requested by name in the parent grant application at the time of renewal and may not be requested as a research supplement. Postdoctoral researchers and investigators are expected to be fully integrated in the research laboratory when considered for continuation of support.

7.2. No-cost extensions

No-cost extensions are allowed on NCI diversity supplements provided adequate time remains on the parent grant. The [NIH Standard Terms of Award](#) provide the recipient the authority to extend the final budget period of a previously approved project period one time for a period of up to 12 months beyond the original expiration date in the Notice of Award. One-time no-cost extensions are requested via the eRA commons, as noted [here](#).

In the case of a no-cost extension, an annual supplement progress report as described in 6.1.1 is required on or before the original supplement award end date. [Submit](#) the progress report with institution approval to the NCI Supplement Program Director.

If a no-cost extension is associated with carryover funds, a request needs to be submitted to the NCI Supplement Program Director including the amount of carryover, the reason for the carryover, and plans for spending the carryover.

8. NCI PROGRAM STAFF CONTACT

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