



Students
Career Path Postbaccalaureate Predoctoral
Mentoring Opportunities
Grants Training Prevention
Research Internships Fellowships Clinical
Basic Science Diversity
Collaboration Postdoctoral Innovation
Data Science Epidemiology



Awards to Support Mentored Early Career Cancer Researchers

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DCB New Grantee Workshop
January 15, 2026



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NCI Remains Committed to Cancer Research Training

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January 13, 2026, by Sanya Springfield, Ph.D., Nastaran Zahir, Ph.D., Douglas Lowy, M.D., Nelson Aguilu, D.V.M.

At NCI, we recognize that the discoveries that will redefine cancer research are already taking shape in the hands of today's trainees and early-stage investigators. By continuing to invest in their growth, we are cultivating the leaders and innovators who will chart the future of cancer research.

We are eager to start a new year. In 2026, NCI is strengthening our commitment to train the next generation of researchers and support a robust and skilled cancer research workforce. The future of cancer discovery is being shaped now, and it is our responsibility to ensure emerging talent is ready to lead it.

Cancer research training that supports everyone, from middle school students to established, independent scientists, is a fundamental pillar of NCI's mission that was forged when the institute was started more than 80 years ago. Many of the field's most influential leaders—pioneers in basic,



<https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/nci-bottom-line-blog/2026/commitment-to-cancer-research-training>



The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is dedicated to promoting diversity in the cancer research workforce, addressing cancer disparities, and advancing health equity. To achieve this, NCI provides paid mentored research opportunities including:

- Summer internships
- Postbaccalaureate fellowships
- Graduate partnerships
- Postdoctoral fellowships



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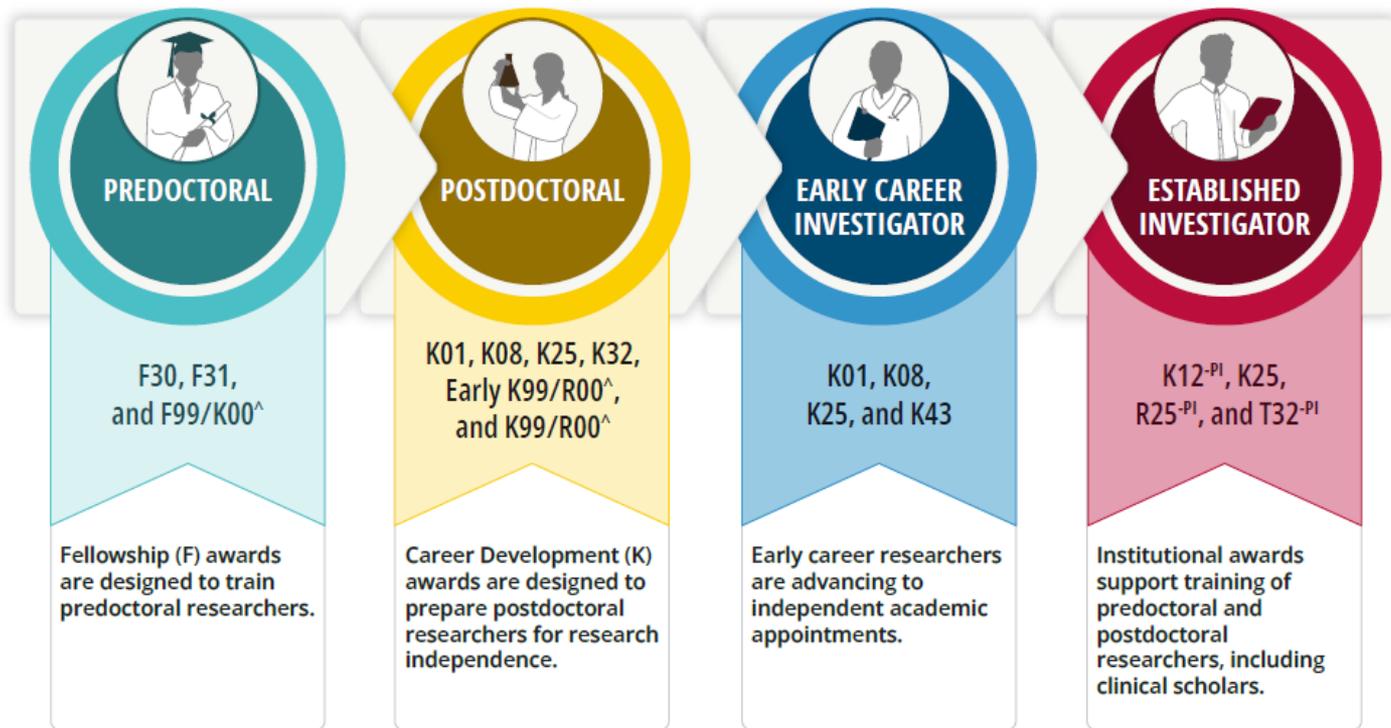
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NCI Funding Opportunities for Cancer Training

The career stage indicated is when an applicant is eligible to apply for each award.



Key

F = Fellowship
K = Career Development
R = Research
T = Training

[^] = NIH intramural postdocs are eligible to apply

^{-PI} = The principal investigator of the application must be an established investigator

Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs)



<https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/funding>

Individual Awards

The NIH Loan Repayment Program Helps Pay Back Education Loans

- NCI Eligible Candidates: Researchers with post-graduate degree and eligible educational debt conducting cancer-focused studies
- Award is up to \$100K over 2 years and renewable if applicant continues to meet eligibility criteria and has eligible educational debt
- 2-year research commitment
- Application deadline: annually in November
- FY25: NCI funded 245 applications. Success rate: 95%
- NCI LRP Liaison: Mark Damico, PhD mark.damico@nih.gov



Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA)

Individual Fellowships

Objective

To enable promising predoctoral students with potential to develop into productive, independent research scientists by supporting mentored dissertation research training leading to a PhD or combined dual doctoral degrees.

Benefits



Stipend and tuition support for mentored research training.



Present and publish research findings.



Strengthen grants skillset.



Enhance competitiveness for NIH funding.



Student / postdoc is the PI of the Fellowship.

| Receipt Cycle | Application Due Date (new, resubmission) |
|---------------|--|
| 1 | April 8 |
| 2 | August 8 |
| 3 | December 8 |

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA)

Individual Fellowships Supported by NCI

F30 Predoc

- Supports predocs during clinical & graduate training for a **combined doctoral** degree (e.g., MD/PhD, DDS/PhD, DVM/PhD, AuD/PhD, DO/PhD).
- Must be **within 48 months** of matriculation into an accredited MD/PhD program for the initial application (not resubmissions).
- Provides **up to 6 years support** for tuition/fees & \$4,750 annually for training related expenses/ health insurance.

F31 Predoc

- F31 supports **PhD research** candidates who have achieved candidacy and performing dissertation research.
- Provides **up to 5 years support** for tuition/fees & \$4,750 annually for training expenses/ health insurance.

Individual Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Transition Award (F99/K00)



Eligibility

- 3rd and 4th year health-related PhD students
- U.S. Citizens and permanent residents

1-2 years of support for completing PhD dissertation (F99)

- Stipend, Tuition, and Training Related Expenses at NRSA levels

Up to 4 years of support for postdoc training (K00) at a US institution

- Salary with annual increases at levels greater than NRSA levels



<https://researchtraining.nih.gov/programs/fellowships/F99-K00>

Funding opportunity in process of being reviewed and published by NIH

NIH Fellowship Application Updates

- View the [Focus on Fellowships video series](#). Please note that applicants and their supporters should refer to the current instructions (in this instance, FORMS-I) when preparing their application.
- The most recent fellowship application instructions may be found in the [NIH How to Apply – Application Guide](#).



<https://grants.nih.gov/news-events/nih-extramural-nexus-news/2025/12/updated-nih-fellowship-resources-are-available>

Individual Research Career Development Awards (Ks)

Foster advancement of new investigators to research independence

| | “Early” K99/R00 | Parent K99/R00 | K01 | K08 | K25 |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mentored vs. Independent | Mentored/ Independent phase | Mentored/ Independent phase | Mentored | Mentored | Mentored |
| Citizenship | U.S. citizens or non-U.S. citizens | U.S. citizens or non-U.S. citizens | U.S. citizens or permanent residents | U.S. citizens or permanent residents | U.S. citizens or permanent residents |
| Eligibility | ≤ 2 years postdoc | ≤ 6 years postdoc | postdocs and early career stage | postdocs and early career stage clinical scholars | postdoc – established investigator |
| Duration | 1-2 years K99 1-3 years R00 | 1-2 years K99 1-3 years R00 | 3 - 5 years | 3 – 5 years | 3 – 5 years |
| Budget | K99 phase: Salary: ≤ \$100K Fringe benefits R&D: ≤ \$30K R00: ≤ \$249K (total costs) | K99 phase: Salary: ≤ \$100K Fringe benefits R&D: ≤ \$30K R00: ≤ \$249K (total costs) | Salary: ≤ \$100K Fringe benefits R&D: ≤ \$50K | Salary: up to legislative cap Fringe benefits R&D: ≤ \$50K | Salary: ≤ \$100K Fringe benefits R&D: ≤ \$50K |

NCI Pathway to Independence Award for Early-Stage Postdoctoral Researchers (K99/R00)

PAR-23-286; PAR-23-287; PAR-23-288

- Postdocs with **less than 2 years of postdoctoral research experience** (as of submission due date); research in **data science, molecular/precision cancer prevention, or cancer control science** especially encouraged
 - Extensions of eligibility window may be considered on a case-by-case basis (contact NCI program director)
- Candidate must be nominated by an institution. Institution may nominate up to 4 candidates, one in **data science**, one in **cancer control science**, one in **molecular/precision cancer prevention**, and one in **other cancer research**.
- U.S. citizenship or permanent residency not required - **Individuals on U.S. visas are eligible to apply and receive the award.**
- Due dates annually on **Feb 14, June 14, Oct 14**



NCI Pathway to Independence Award (Extended K99/R00)

PAR-25-135, PAR-25-313

K99 (1-2 yrs): mentored training → R00 (up to 3 yrs): independent scientist

- Postdocs with **less than 6 years of postdoctoral research experience** (as of submission due date)
 - Extensions of eligibility window may be considered on a case-by-case basis (contact NCI program director)
- Individuals on U.S. visas are eligible to apply and receive the award

NCI K99/R00 award provides:

- **K99 phase:** *Salary:* up to \$100,000/year + fringe benefits;
R&D funds: up to \$30,000/year
- **R00 phase:** up to \$249,000/year in total costs



<https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/funding/k99>

Home > Journal of Cancer Education > Article

Evaluation of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Pathway to Independence Award (K99/R00) Program

Open access | Published: 18 March 2024

(2024) [Cite this article](#)

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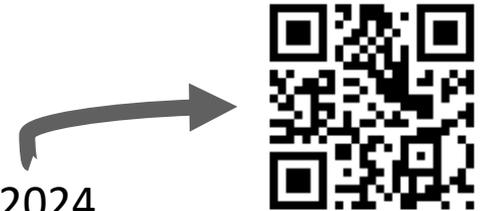
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Avoid common mistakes on your manuscript.



Schmidt et al. J Cancer Educ. 2024

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38499846/>

The NCI Mentored Research Scientist Development Award (K01)

PA-24-175, PA-24-176, PA-24-177

NCI-specific requirements:

- Intended for postdoctoral and early career-stage (e.g., Assistant Professor or equivalent) researchers. The application will not be considered for funding if the PD/PI has already been promoted to Associate Professor or an equivalent position at the time of the award.
- NCI encourages K01 applications in the areas of Cancer Control and Population Sciences and Cancer Prevention

K01 award provides (NCI-specific):

- *Salary:* up to \$100,000/year + fringe benefits;
R&D funds: up to \$50,000/year
- *Duration:* 3 – 5 years



Mentored Quantitative Research Career Award (K25)

PAR-24-190, PAR-24-191, PAR-24-192

Supports investigators with quantitative scientific and engineering backgrounds outside of biology or medicine who have made a commitment to focus their research endeavors on behavioral and biomedical research (basic or clinical).

- Eligible career stages: from postdocs to established investigators
- U.S. citizenship or permanent residency required by *the time of award*

K25 award provides (NCI-specific):

- *Salary:* up to \$100,000/year + fringe benefits;
R&D funds: up to \$50,000/year
- *Duration:* 3 – 5 years



<https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/funding/k25>

Anticipated Academic Career Excellence (ACE) Award (K32)

- For postdoctoral scholars to obtain experience in applying for NIH funding up to one year before and no more than two years into their postdoctoral phase.
- Support for up to \$80,000 salary and \$30,000 research development per year for up to 3 years.
- U.S. Citizenship or permanent residency required to be eligible for award.
- Subsequent NCI career development awards are allowable (e.g. K01, K99,R00) for K32 awardees.
- Anticipated publication around May 2026 with first due date in June 2026

CCT Awards to Support Cancer Training: *Funding Rates 5-Year Average (FY21-FY25)*

| Program | Funding Rate |
|---------------|--------------|
| F30 | 27% |
| F31 | 18% |
| F99/K00 | 41% |
| K01 | 28% |
| K08 | 23% |
| K25 | 31% |
| Early K99/R00 | 24% |
| K99/R00 | 15% |
| R25 | 29% |
| T32 | 36% |

Resources

Resources for Applicants: NCI FAQ and Video Overview



General All Funding Awards

Read frequently asked questions about NCI fellowships, career development awards, training grants, and cancer research education awards.

General Fellowship Awards

Read about frequently asked questions about NCI fellowship awards (F30, F31, F32, and F99/K00). Fellowship awards are individual research training opportunities for mentored researchers at the graduate and postdoctoral levels.

General Career Development Award

Read about frequently asked questions about NCI Career Development Awards. These awards provide individual and institutional research training opportunities to mentored researchers at the graduate and postdoctoral levels.

NCI Transition Career Development Award (K22)

Read about frequently asked questions about NCI Transition Career Development Award (K22). The K22 supports mentored, non-independent investigators ready to transition to independent academic faculty positions.

NIH K99/R00 The Pathway to Independence Award

Read about frequently asked questions about the NIH Pathway to Independence Award (K99/R00). The K99/R00 helps postdoctoral researchers complete needed mentored training and transition in a timely manner to independent, tenure-track or equivalent faculty positions.

Subscribe to **NCI Bottom Line: A Blog about Grants and More** to learn the latest on NCI's fiscal landscape, funding decisions, grant policy news and more.



Overview: Applying to NCI Fellowships

This video describes an overview of the main components involved in applying to NCI fellowships, provides tips for successful applications, and shares additional resources to support the application process.



**Overview:
Applying to
Fellowships**

Overview: Applying to NCI Career Development (K) Awards

This video describes an overview of the main components involved in applying to NCI Career Development (K) Awards, provides tips for successful applications, and shares additional resources to support the application process.



**Overview:
Applying to Career
Development (K)
Awards**

NCI Career Development Workshop: Advancement to Research Independence

Monday, March 9, 2026
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM EDT

The goal of the workshop is to support NCI career development awardees and prospective applicants in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to advance toward independent cancer research careers.

<https://events.cancer.gov/nci/K-workshop>

Will be a virtual event, open to all prospective applicants and current awardees



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NCI Rising Scholars: Cancer Research Seminar Series

A virtual monthly seminar series highlighting the research and important contributions made by NCI-supported postdoctoral fellows and early career investigators.



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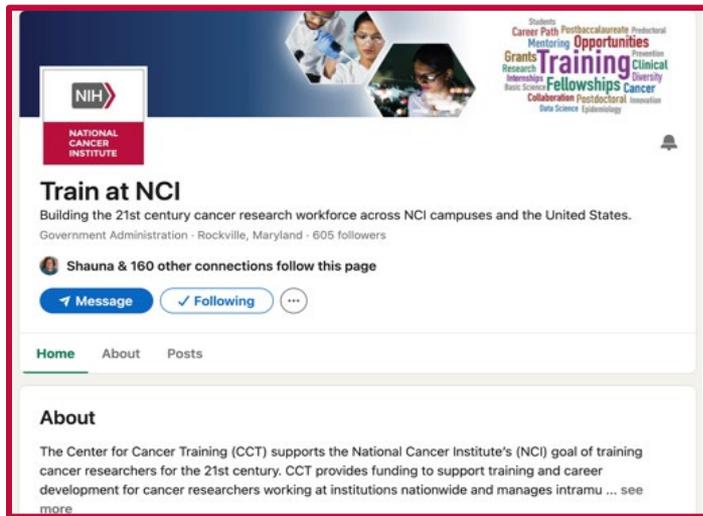


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<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/train-at-nci/>

Contact a program director to discuss!

<https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/funding>

Thank you for your attention

Email: nas.zahir@nih.gov

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