NIH R21 Proposal Guidelines & Checklist 2020 v1.0
- PA-20-195 (Clinical trial not allowed)
- PA-20-194 (Clinical trial required)
- PA-20-184 (Basic experimental studies with humans required)

Effective May 25, 2020 – FORMS F Applications; Expires May 8, 2023
Deadlines: NEW: Feb 16, Jun 16, Oct 16; RENEWAL, RESUBMISSION, REVISION: Mar 16, Jul 16, Nov 16; 5:00 p.m. local time

PI Name: __________________________________________________________
Proposal Title: ______________________________________________________

Purpose of R21 funding mechanism: The NIH Exploratory/Developmental Grant supports exploratory and developmental research projects by providing support for the early and conceptual stages of these projects. These studies may involve considerable risk but may lead to a breakthrough in a particular area, or to the development of novel techniques, agents, methodologies, models, or applications that could have a major impact on a field of biomedical, behavioral, or clinical research.

Budget limit: The combined budget for direct costs for the two-year project period may not exceed $275,000 (indirect costs are in addition to this limit). No more than $200,000 may be requested in any single year.

Project duration limit: 2 years

Note: All blue links are hyperlinks to NIH webpages

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<tr>
<th>Application Instructions</th>
<th>General Application Guide for NIH and Other PHS Agencies (SF424 (R&amp;R) Forms Version F)</th>
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General formatting
- File names: 50 characters or less, including spaces; no “&”; 1 space between words
- Recommended fonts: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, Georgia; black; 14 pts
- Margins: ½” +
- Header/Footer: clear of any information, including page numbers

☐ Cover letter: Optional – follow FOA and/or Cover letter instructions; PI recommendations regarding study section assignment for proposal review are now included in the PHS assignment request form, no longer in the Cover letter

☐ Project Summary/Abstract: no more than 30 lines of text, understandable to a scientifically/technically literate lay reader

☐ Project Narrative: 2-3 sentence summary in plain language

Budget and Budget Justification:
Since request is less than $250,000 in Total Direct Costs (excluding indirect costs) per project period:
- Modular budget form
- Modular budget justification (Personnel, Consortium [Subaward], Additional)
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<th>Facilities and Other Resources</th>
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<td>☐ <strong>Equipment</strong> (Optional): List major items of equipment already available and identify location &amp; pertinent capabilities</td>
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**Biosketch(es) for each senior personnel (Instructions, Samples, Template):**
- ☐ Up to 5 pages in length for each

**PHS 398 Research Plan Form**
- ☐ **Introduction** (Resubmission or Revision only)

**Research Plan Section**
- ☐ **Specific Aims**: 1-page limit
- ☐ **Research Strategy Page limit**: R21 = 6 pages; 3 separate sections: Significance, Innovation, Approach
- ☐ **Progress Report Publication List** (Renewal applications only)

**Human Subjects Section**
- ☐ **Protection of Human Subjects** (if Human Subjects is YES)
- ☐ Human Subjects and Clinical Trials **Information**

**Other Research Plan Section**
- ☐ **Vertebrate Animals** (if Vertebrate Animals is YES)
- ☐ **Select Agent Research** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan** (if more than one PD/PI is specified)
- ☐ **Consortium/Contractual Arrangements** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Letters of Support** (if applicable; would include consultants)
- ☐ **Resource Sharing Plan**: Describing dissemination
- ☐ **Authentication of Key Biological/Chemical Resources** (if applicable)

**PHS Assignment Request Form** (Optional; **Effective May 25, 2016**):
- ☐ Award Component Assignment Request: up to three NIH Institutes/Centers can be requested using their **abbreviations** (PI can also choose 3 “do not assign”). First choice should be #1.
- ☐ Study Section Assignment Request: up to three study sections or special emphasis panels (use short **abbreviations**) can be requested (PI can also choose 3 “do not assign”). First choice should be #1.
- ☐ List of individuals who should not review and why
- ☐ Expertise needed to review your application (Each field can have a maximum of 40 characters)