

National Institutes of Health (NIH): Overview

The [National Institutes of Health](#) is based in Rockville, Maryland and consists of 27 subagencies organized around specific professional disciplines and health-related concerns.

To which NIH subagencies should I consider applying?

- ⇒ **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)** seeks to produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable.
- ⇒ **National Institute of Aging (NIA)** leads a broad scientific effort to understand the nature of aging and to extend healthy, active years of life.
- ⇒ **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)** supports and conducts research on the impact of alcohol use on human health and well-being.
- ⇒ **National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)** conducts research to understand, treat, and prevent infectious, immunologic, and allergic diseases.
- ⇒ **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)** seeks to advance science on the causes and consequences of drug use and addiction, and to apply that knowledge to improve individual and public health.
- ⇒ **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)** leads federal research on mental disorders to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illness through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure.
- ⇒ **National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)** conducts scientific research to improve minority health and reduce health disparities.
- ⇒ **National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)** supports research and training that spans and integrates the behavioral and biological sciences to improve the health of individuals, families, communities, and populations
- ⇒ **National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH)** aims to define the usefulness and safety of complementary and integrative health interventions through rigorous scientific investigation.

This is not an exhaustive list. School of Social Work faculty may want to apply to other NIH subagencies or centers. For a full list of NIH subagencies and centers with funding opportunities, see page 4.



funding by the numbers:

\$39.2 billion*

invested annually in medical research



More than 80%
of NIH funding is awarded through competitive grants



50,000+ grants

awarded to 300,000+ researchers at 2,500+ institutions worldwide

* For more information about the FY2019 NIH Budget, click [here](#).

Grant Proposal Checklist



- Review grant application instructions for information on the application process.
- Carefully read the FOA for guidance on preparing specific sections of the proposal and any special instructions.
- Solicit feedback from colleagues and/or mentors on your research idea while it is still in the concept state.
- Prepare an outline following the application framework described in the application guide. Make sure you have adequate preliminary data.
- Develop a feasible timeline with draft application deadlines. Be realistic about the time it can take to write and revise an application.
- Review successfully completed NIH grant applications. Ask your colleagues and/or Dr. Michael Fendrich for samples.
- Contact ORS staff member Lindsay Wessell to assist you in understanding and completing application materials.
- Start work on the budget as soon as possible. Make sure you are realistic about the costs included. ORS will help facilitate this.
- Become familiar with the NIH peer review criteria. Click [here](#) for more information.

National Institutes of Health (NIH): Grants

Grant Mechanisms

NIH grants include prefix codes which reflect the different types of applications. These include:

- K – Career Development
- P – Program/Project Grants
- R – Research
- T – Training Awards
- U – Cooperative Agreements

The most common grants include the prefix “R” for research. Some of the most common “R” mechanisms are:

- R01 – Research Project
- R03 – Small Research Project Grant
- R15 – Academic Research Enhancement Award*
- R21 – Exploratory Development Grant
- R25 – Education Research Project/Training Award
- R34 – Clinical Trial Award

There are also K awards, which are focused on career development. K awards are agency specific. To find out more, click here: [K Awards](#).

Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs)

FOAs are issued periodically by the NIH and are usually focused on a particular topic area. They are often subagency and mechanism specific. Most FOAs are what the NIH calls Program Announcements (PAs), which have ongoing submission deadlines. A Request for Proposal (RFP) involves a limited submission window with specific deadlines and letters of intent.

Grant Due Dates

Each type of NIH grant has a standard deadline. For specifics, click [here](#).

Grant Forms

The standard NIH form is the SF424, which is available online. It is important to confirm that you have the latest version of the SF424.

There are also specific forms that need to be completed for UCONN prior to submission, and these are available at the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) in Storrs. You may contact ORS at the School of Social Work with questions. For information about UConn Research Proposal Preparation Guidelines, click [here](#).

** The R15 mechanism is important to note, because it targets small-scale research projects at underfunded academic institutions. Each funding opportunity announcement includes detailed eligibility information that OVPR’s Faculty Services staff can help review. For more on this mechanism, click here: [R15](#).*

National Institutes of Health (NIH): Grants

What is the secret to a successful grant proposal?

Successful proposals start with a well-defined research problem and solution. To clarify your problem and solution, write a concept piece that summarizes your project as concisely as possible. Get feedback by sharing the piece with colleagues, including those outside of your immediate circle.

The first part of the grant proposal is the “specific aims” page which explores the project’s objective(s). This should be written long before the grant deadline and shared with a program officer at the funding agency to which you are applying (if applicable).

Program officers can provide constructive suggestions for improvement and guide you as you complete the research plan. For specific guidance on research planning, follow [this link](#). ORS at the School of Social Work can also share examples of successful proposals.

How long does the grant process take?

After an NIH grant is submitted electronically it goes to the [Center for Scientific Review](#). It is assigned to a relevant review committee, which will read it within three months for HIV-related grants and four months for all other grants. After the review, the applicant receives a summary statement. If the full review committee sees merit in the grant, you will receive a score. For an explanation of the scoring process, see [NIH Scoring Process](#).

It is common for grants to be unscored the first time they are submitted, but applicants may rework and resubmit their proposals. The NIH has relaxed its re-submission rules, which has increased an applicant’s opportunities to respond to critiques. Up to two amended applications can be resubmitted.

What is an ERA Commons Account and why do I need one?

An ERA Commons Account holds all information that the NIH provides to you as a grant applicant. It includes review assignments, summary statements, and grant scores. It also includes your biographical information, like publications and job titles. If you plan to apply for an NIH grant, contact OVPR to create an account for you as soon as possible.

Why should I apply for NIH grants?

NIH grants are among the most prestigious of all funding opportunities. They generally provide large amounts of financial support for research activities with a promise of building better science while bettering the health and welfare of people.

They also come with substantial indirect funds, which provide infrastructure support to the school and university. Success rates have been low in recent years, especially among young investigators; it can take several years before a submitted proposal actually achieves funding. But persistence can pay off. Most well-conceived ideas ultimately get funded.

NIH Resources



⇒ [Find NIH Funding](#)

⇒ [NIH Grants Overview](#)



⇒ [NIH Grant Due Dates](#)

⇒ [NIH Application Guide](#)



⇒ [NIH Peer Review Process](#)

⇒ [NIH Peer Review FAQs](#)



⇒ [NIH Grant Compliance](#)

Grants & Contracts Process



NIH Grant Awarding Subagency Directory

Fogarty International Center (FIC).....	FIC Funding
National Cancer Institute (NCI).....	NIC Funding
National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS).....	NCATS Funding
National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH).....	NCCIH Funding
National Eye Institute (NEI).....	NEI Funding
National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI).....	NHLBI Funding
National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI).....	NHGRI Funding
National Institute on Aging (NIA).....	NIA Funding
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).....	NIAA Funding
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).....	NIAID Funding
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS).....	NIAMS Funding
National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB).....	NIBIB Funding
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).....	NICHD Funding
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD).....	NIDCD Funding
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR).....	NIDCR Funding
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK).....	NIDDK Funding
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).....	NIDA Funding
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).....	NIEHS Funding
National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS).....	NIGMS Funding
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).....	NIMH Funding
National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD).....	NIMHD Funding
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS).....	NINDS Funding
National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR).....	NINR Funding
National Library of Medicine (NLM).....	NLM Funding
Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR).....	OBSSR Funding
Office of Disease Prevention (ODP).....	ODP Funding

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