NIGMS Postdoctoral Research Associate Training (PRAT) Program Applicant Webinar

Program Overview and Application Webinar – July 14, 2020
Today’s Webinar - Participants

PRAT Program Leadership
• Kenneth Gibbs, Ph.D., PRAT Director
• Desirée Salazar, Ph.D., Program Officer

PRAT Fellows
• Sara Young-Baird, Ph.D., NICHD
• Chase Francis, Ph.D., NIDA
• Adenrele Gleason, Ph.D., NHGRI
• Elizabeth Martin, Ph.D., NIEHS
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Use #NIGMSPRAT
Today’s Webinar - Format

• PRAT program

• PRAT application process & review

• Hearing from PRAT fellows!

• Your questions
PRAT Program
NIGMS PRAT Program

• Competitive **three-year** postdoctoral fellowship program that provides high quality research training in the basic biomedical sciences in NIH **intramural research laboratories**, and prepares fellows for leadership positions in biomedical careers

• Provides stipend, health insurance, and travel/training allowance

• Access to extensive NIH resources – facilities, expertise, collaborations, and **office of intramural training and education**

• Structured postdoctoral program with defined training components

[https://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/Pages/PRAT.aspx](https://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/Pages/PRAT.aspx)
PRAT Curriculum Principles

- Leadership
- Communication
- Networking
- Mentorship
- Biomedical Ecosystem Knowledge
- Diversity
- Service
Sample of PRAT Training Activities

• Monthly seminar series
  o NIH/OD, FDA, Howard Hughes Janelia Research Campus, University of Puerto Rico, University of Pennsylvania, Johns Hopkins University, University of Maryland

• Professional skills development & communications training
  o Practice Chalk Talks
  o Three Minute Talks
  o “Managing Up,” “Emotional Intelligence”

• NIH Funding – 101 (Research Grants, K awards)
Sample of PRAT Training Activities

- Established & Early Career Scientific Leaders
  - Hannah Valantine
    NIH, COSWD
  - Sharon Milgram
    NIH, OITE
  - Olivia Rissland
    University of Colorado

- Annual Scientific Symposium
  - Melissa Moore
    Moderna Therapeutics
  - Phil Sharp
    MIT

Monday, September 14
1-5 PM ET

See PRAT website in early September for more information
Recent PRAT Alumni – Career Outcomes

Sample of Post-PRAT Institutions

- Yale
- Uniformed Services University
- University of Washington
- NIH
- FDA
- Genentech
- Pfizer
- AAAS
- Cooley

N=77 PRAT alumni (2005 – Present)

Academia (n=29)
Government (n=24)
Industry (n=16)
Other (n=8)

10% Academia
38% Government
31% Industry
21% Other

https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/PRAT/Pages/prat-alumni.aspx
PRAT Application Process & Review
NIGMS PRAT Program - Eligibility

- **Citizenship** - US citizens and permanent residents

- **Scientific focus** – All research areas supported by NIGMS

- **Career stage**
  - Current NIH postdocs must have started *no earlier than June 1, 2019*
  - Graduate students who intend to begin postdoc experience at NIH by fall 2021

*We are especially interested in ensuring the applicant pool reflects the diversity of the biomedical Ph.D. talent pool.*
NIGMS Research Areas

- Biological chemistry
- Biophysics
- Bioinformatics
- Cell & molecular biology
- Computational biosciences
- Developmental biology
- Genetics
- Immunology
- Neuroscience
- Pharmacology
- Physiology
- Technology development
Current PRAT Fellows at 13 ICs

- NCI (n=3)
- NIAMS (n=3)
- NIDA (n=3)
- NHGRI (n=2)
- NIAID (n=2)
- NINDS (n=2)
- NIA (n=1)
- NIEHS (n=1)
- NIMH (n=1)
- NICHD (n=2)
- NCCIH (n=1)

Identifying a Mentor

- The NIH Intramural Program has approximately 1200 investigators who can be identified by scientific focus area or by name.
- OITE webpage of postdoc positions (career services tab).
- Intramural Training Directors can also be extremely helpful in understanding training opportunities and mentors in their institutes.
PRAT Application Process

• Competitive application process - Fi2 (i= intramural) mechanism with applications submitted via grants.gov

• Read everything *thoroughly*
  • Specific guidance for each part of the application (e.g. length, content, due date)

• Begin or continue record of independent funding

### Application Form Instructions

Need help selecting the right instructions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Instructions</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>SF424 (R&amp;R) - Version E</th>
<th>SF424 (R&amp;R) - Version F</th>
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<td>Comprehensive guidance for research, training, fellowship, career development, multi-project, and small business applications</td>
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#### Filtered Application Instructions

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<th>R Research Instructions</th>
<th>Guidance for research only</th>
<th>PDF</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K Career Development Instructions</td>
<td>Guidance for career development only</td>
<td>PDF</td>
<td>PDF</td>
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<td>T Training Instructions</td>
<td>Guidance for training only</td>
<td>PDF</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Fellowship Instructions</td>
<td>Guidance for fellowship only</td>
<td>PDF</td>
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**Use the Forms-F application guide**

# NIGMS PRAT Program – FOA

## Department of Health and Human Services

### Part 1. Overview Information

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<thead>
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<th>Participating Organization(s)</th>
<th>National Institutes of Health (NIH)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Components of Participating Organizations</td>
<td>National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding Opportunity Title</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Research Associate Training (PRAT) Program (Fi2)</td>
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<td>Activity Code</td>
<td>Fi2 Intramural Postdoctoral Research Associate</td>
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**Related Notices**

- **March 10, 2020** - Reminder: FORMS-F Grant Application Forms & Instructions Must be Used for Due Dates On or After May 25, 2020 - New Grant Application Instructions Now Available. See Notice NOT-OD-20-077.

Important Dates:

Due Date – October 2, 2020 (work with Institute Signing Official early)

Review timeframe- Feb/March 2021

Selection – May/June 2021

Starting Date – September 2021

Interacting with Institute AOR

- Application needs to be submitted by Institute where proposed work will be conducted. Each Institute has one or more designated AORs.

- Make sure you contact your AOR **early in the process**
  - Many can be found here: [https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/PRAT/Pages/prat-faq.aspx#q7](https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/PRAT/Pages/prat-faq.aspx#q7)
  - Contact [kenneth.gibbs@nih.gov](mailto:kenneth.gibbs@nih.gov) if you need help identifying who this is

- The AOR will submit the application on your behalf and has important information you need.

- The AOR needs to create an eRA Commons account for PI and Sponsor(s)

- You will need to schedule a time to upload your grant with your AOR. Respect the AOR’s deadlines.

**AOR= Authorized Organization Representative**
Application 101

• Terminology
  • The institute where you perform the work (e.g. NIMH) is the applicant
  • You, the postdoc, are the PI (no multi-PIs)
  • Your preceptor is the sponsor (you can have multiple)

• Ensure all requirements of the FOA are met – incomplete applications are returned without review

• Demonstrate integration of research and training components, and additional training potential

• Contact AOR early in the process

AOR=Authorized Organization Representative
Leadership Statement (1 page)

• Past leadership and service activities in the scientific community, or to enhance public engagement or understanding of scientific research

• Commitment to diversity in the biomedical sciences, and your leadership, mentoring and outreach activities to enhance diversity – especially involving groups underrepresented in the biomedical research enterprise

• Planned activities during the fellowship to develop or enhance leadership skills

• The leadership statement is a required component of the PRAT application. Applications without a leadership statement will not be reviewed.
PRAT Application – Tips for Successful Review

• Fellowship Applicant
  - Tell your story
  - Clearly articulate career goal

• Sponsors, Collaborators and Consultants
  - Important to provide a detailed and tailored plan for you (e.g., mentorship, career advancement)
  - Robust training plan, mentoring and training record (as applicable)
  - If multiple mentors, explain how they’ll work together for your training
  - Use current NIH biosketch
  - Collaborators should provide letters of support (different from reference letter)
PRAT Application – Tips for Successful Review

• Research Training Plan
  ○ Rationale
    • Significance – literature/preliminary data supporting feasibility
    • Central hypothesis (in addition to aim specific hypotheses)
  ○ Approach
    • Ambitious but not unrealistic
    • Aims should be related but not interdependent
    • Discuss expected outcomes, potential challenges, and alternative strategies
    • Statistical analysis (e.g., sample size, power analysis) and attention to relevant biological variables
  ○ Avoid jargon, and don’t “oversell” proposal
PRAT Application – Tips for Successful Review

• **Training Potential**
  
  o Clarify *training* benefit (e.g., new system, techniques, or skills)
  
  o Can include OITE programs, FAES Courses, conferences, etc.
  
  o Should include PRAT program activities

• **Institutional Environment and Commitment to Training**
  
  o Why this is the best environment to conduct the proposed research training

The entire application is reviewed — a rigorous research proposal is necessary but not sufficient
Criteria for Application Withdrawal

• For any application due date, multiple applications have the same primary sponsor.

• Missing biosketch for any key personnel (PI or sponsors) or leadership statement.

• Inappropriate or incomplete letters of reference.
  - Three letters of reference are **required**
  - Key personnel on the application (e.g. your sponsor and collaborators) cannot provide reference letters.
Reference Letters

• **Electronic submission** of a letter of reference is a separate process from application submission.

• Reference letters are submitted directly through the eRA Commons and do not use Grants.gov.

• This process requires that the referee be provided:
  - The PI’s (candidate’s) eRA Commons user name,
  - The PI’s first and last name as they appear on the PI’s eRA Commons account, and
  - The number assigned to this Funding Opportunity Announcement (PAR-19-286).

• **Letters can be submitted well in advance of application being submitted**—ask early.

Letters are due 5 PM on due date. NO GRACE PERIOD
Common Mistakes – Big Picture

• Not giving yourself enough time to:
  o Identify a mentor in the NIH Intramural Research Program
  o Work on the proposal
  o Work with the AOR on logistics of submission

• Incomplete application – letters of reference, biosketch, or leadership statement

• Forgetting to send an update if a paper is accepted between submission and review of the application

Hearing from PRAT Fellows
Sara Young-Baird (NICHD)  “Molecular analysis of MEHMO syndrome mutations in translation factor eIF2γ”

Chase Francis (NIDA)  “Investigating Nucleus Accumbens input-specific activity underlying salience and aversive conditioned response”

Adenrele Gleason (NHGRI)  “Can exosome profiles reflect the disease states of patients with Gaucher disease and GBA1 carriers with or without Parkinson disease?”

Elizabeth Martin (NIEHS)  “Pregnancy-induced epigenetic changes in breast duct epithelia as biological mechanism influencing breast cancer risk”
NIGMS PRAT Program – 2021 Recruitment

• Timeline
  - October 2, 2020 – Application deadline
  - February/March 2021 – Peer review
  - May/June 2021 – Notification
  - September 2021 – PRAT start

• PRAT home page

• PRAT Funding Opportunity Announcement

• For more information – kenneth.gibbs@nih.gov and follow us @NIGMSTraining
Extramural NIH Training Opportunities for Postdocs

NIGMS Division of Training Workforce Development and Diversity

- **F32**
- **IRACDA**
- **Research Supplements to Promote Diversity**

NIH [Extramural Research Training Website](#)
Questions?
Thank you for listening & good luck with your application!