

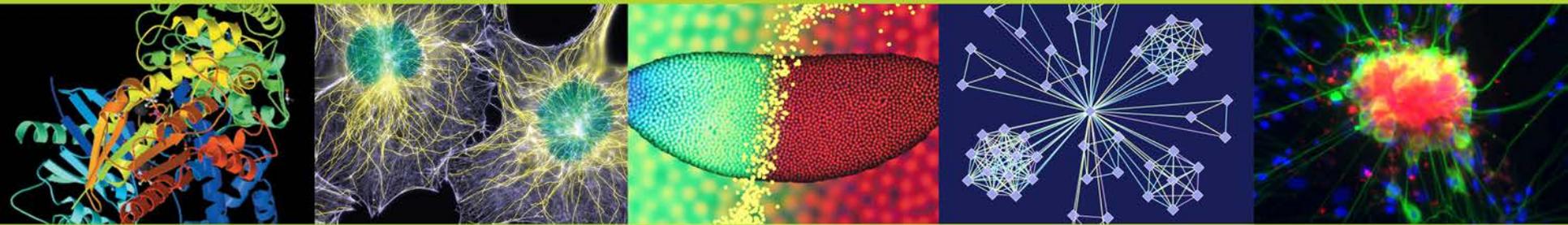


National Institute of  
General Medical Sciences



# NIGMS Postdoctoral Research Associate Training (PRAT) Program

Program Overview and Application  
Webinar – June 20, 2018



# Today's Webinar - Participants

## PRAT Program Leadership

- Kenneth Gibbs, Ph.D., PRAT Director
- Mercedes Rubio, Ph.D., Program Officer



## PRAT Fellows

- Amy Elliott, Ph.D., NIMH/NIBIB
- Sam Golden, Ph.D., NIDA
- Laura Corrales-Diaz Pomatto, Ph.D., NIA

# Today's Webinar - Format

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- PRAT program
- PRAT application process & review
- Hearing from PRAT fellows!
- Your questions

# PRAT Program

# NIGMS PRAT Program

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- 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
- Structured postdoctoral program with defined training components

# PRAT Program Components

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Three year program providing:

- Outstanding laboratory experience
- Access to extensive NIH resources – facilities, expertise, collaborations, and [office of intramural training and education](#)
- Community and networking
- Personal mentorship
- Extensive career development activities

# Sample of PRAT Training Activities

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- Monthly seminar series
  - Recent speakers from NIH OD, Research Triangle International, MedImmune, Glaxo Smith Kline, New York University, University of Colorado
- Professional skills development & communications training
  - Conflict resolution
  - Three-minute talk
- Mock K99/R00 study section

# Sample of PRAT Training Activities

- [Dr. Maddie Sofia](#), “From Ph.D. to NPR”\*



- Annual Scientific Symposium



Michael Eisen  
University of California, Berkeley



Rick Horwitz  
Allen Institute for Cell Science

# NIGMS PRAT Program - Eligibility

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- **Citizenship** - US citizens and permanent residents
- **Scientific focus** – All research areas supported by NIGMS
- **Career stage** – Prior to, or within first 12-15 months of postdoctoral appointment at NIH
  - Can apply before you begin at NIH (e.g. in your final year as a graduate student)
  - Current NIH postdocs must have started **no earlier than July 2017**

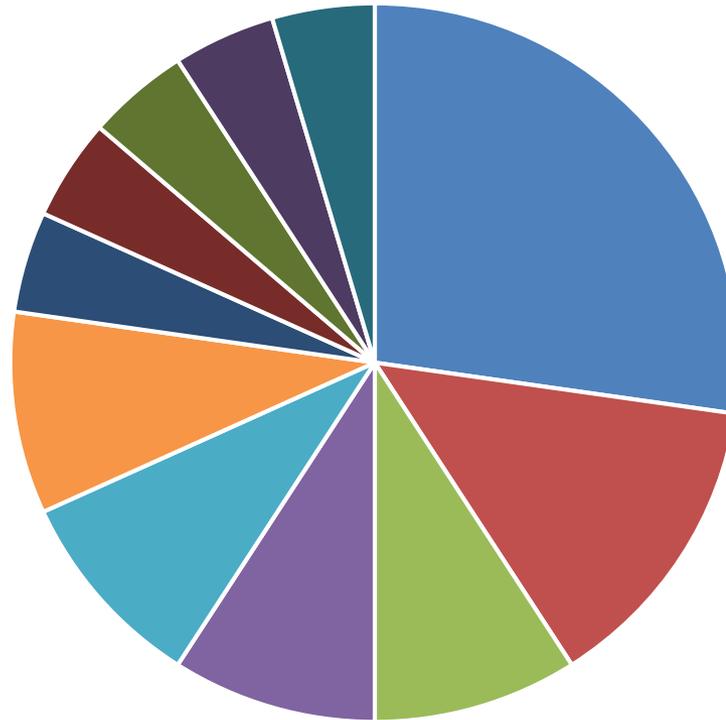
***We are especially interested in ensuring the applicant pool reflects the diversity of the biomedical Ph.D. talent pool.***

# NIGMS Research Areas

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- Biological chemistry
- Biophysics
- Bioinformatics
- Cell & molecular biology
- Computational biosciences
- Developmental biology
- Genetics
- Immunology
- Neuroscience
- Pharmacology
- Physiology
- Technology development

# Current PRAT Fellows from 11 ICs



■ NICHD (n=6)

■ NIAID (n=3)

■ NCI (n=2)

■ NIEHS (n=2)

■ NIMH (n=2)

■ NIDDK (n=2)

■ NIA (n=1)

■ NIAAA (n=1)

■ NIDA (n=1)

■ NHLBI (n=1)

■ NIBIB (n=1)

# PRAT Application Process & Review

# PRAT Application Process

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- Competitive application process - Fi2 (i= intramural) mechanism with applications submitted via grants.gov
  - <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-16-130.html>
- **Read everything thoroughly**
  - Specific guidance for each part of the application (e.g. length, content, due date)
- Begin or continue record of independent funding



Research Portfolio Online Reporting Tools  
(RePORT)

# NIH Application Guide

## Application Form Instructions

Need help selecting the right instructions?

Application Instructions	Description	SF424 (R&R) - Version E
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<b>G</b> General Instructions	Comprehensive guidance for research, training, fellowship, career development, multi-project, and small business applications	<a href="#">HTML / PDF</a>
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### Filtered Application Instructions

<b>R</b> Research Instructions	Guidance for research only	<a href="#">PDF</a>
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<b>K</b> Career Development Instructions	Guidance for career development only	<a href="#">PDF</a>
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<b>T</b> Training Instructions	Guidance for training only	<a href="#">PDF</a>
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<b>F</b> Fellowship Instructions	Guidance for fellowship only	<a href="#">PDF</a>
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# NIGMS PRAT Program – FOA

## Department of Health and Human Services

### Part 1. Overview Information

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**Participating Organization(s)**

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

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**Components of Participating Organizations**

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)

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**Funding Opportunity Title**

Intramural NIGMS Postdoctoral Research Associate (PRAT) Program (Fi2)

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**Activity Code**

Fi2 Intramural Postdoctoral Research Associate

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**Announcement Type**

Reissue of [PAR-15-094](#)

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**Related Notices**

- [May 21, 2018](#) - Notice of Informational Webinar on the Intramural NIGMS Postdoctoral Research Associate Training (PRAT) Program and Fi2 Application Process. See Notice [NOT-GM-18-033](#).
- [NOT-OD-18-009](#) - Reminder: FORMS-E Grant Application Forms and Instructions Must be Used for Due Dates On or After January 25, 2018.

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-16-130.html>

# Important dates

**Due Date – October 3, 2018** (work with Institute Signing Official early)

Review timeframe- Feb/March 2019

Selection – May/June 2019

Starting Date –August/September 2019

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**Application Due Date(s)**

October 3, 2016; October 3, 2017; **October 3, 2018**, by 5:00 PM local time of applicant organization. All [types of non-AIDS applications](#) allowed for this funding opportunity announcement are due on these dates.

Applicants are encouraged to apply early to allow adequate time to make any corrections to errors found in the application during the submission process by the due date.

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**AIDS Application Due Date(s)**

Not Applicable

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**Scientific Merit Review**

February-March 2017; February-March 2018; **February-March 2019**

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**Advisory Council Review**

Not Applicable for Fellowships

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**Earliest Start Date**

August 2017; August 2018; August 2019

# Interacting with Institute AOR

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- 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>
  - 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.

# Application 101

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- Terminology
  - The institute where you perform the work (e.g. NIMH) is the applicant
  - You (the postdoc) are the PI
  - 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**

# PRAT Application – Tips for Successful Review

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- **Fellowship Applicant**

- Tell your story
- Clearly articulate career goal

- **Sponsors, Collaborators and Consultants**

- Important to provide a detailed and tailored plan *for you*
- Main sponsor should describe training record (including career outcomes for previous trainees at similar career stage)
- 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

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- **Research Training Plan**

- Rationale

- Significance
- 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 calculations)

- Avoid jargon, and don't "oversell" proposal

# PRAT Application – Tips for Successful Review

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- **Training Potential**

- Clarify training benefit (e.g., new system, techniques, or skills)
- Can include [OITE programs](#), [FAES Courses](#), conferences, etc.
- Should include PRAT program activities

- **Institutional Environment and Commitment to Training**

- Why this is the best environment to conduct the proposed research training

- *The entire application is reviewed—excellent science is necessary but not sufficient*

# Criteria for Application Withdrawal

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- For any application due date, multiple applications have the same primary sponsor.
- Missing biosketch for key personnel (PI and sponsors).
- 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

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- 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-16-130**).
- **Letters can be submitted well in advance of application being submitted—ask early.**

# Common Mistakes – Big Picture

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- Not giving yourself enough time to:
  - Identify a mentor in the [NIH Intramural Research Program](#)
  - Work on the proposal
  - Work with the [AOR](#) on logistics of submission
- Incomplete application
- Forgetting to send an update if a paper is accepted between submission and review of the application

# Suggested Application Timeline

6 months  
before  
submission  
deadline

- ▶ Read the **funding opportunity announcement**.
- ▶ Watch the **PRAT webinar** and read the **frequently asked questions**.
- ▶ Attend a **grant writing workshop** through NIH's Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE) or at your institution.

4 months  
before  
submission  
deadline

- ▶ Identify **potential preceptors**.
- ▶ Confirm their ability to serve as mentor in the PRAT program. *Note: Each preceptor may be the primary sponsor on only one PRAT/Fi2 application in the same review cycle but may be a co-sponsor on more than one application. If multiple applications from the same primary sponsor are received in a single cycle, none will be considered.*
- ▶ Discuss your research idea with selected mentor(s).

# Suggested Application Timeline

**3** months  
before  
submission  
deadline

- Begin writing your application (e.g., research proposal, biosketch, etc.).
  - Use of research organisms is highly encouraged.
  - Applications using **human subjects** and **vertebrate animals** must address additional review criteria.
- Identify the signing official (Authorized Organization Representative) for the NIH institute where you are proposing to conduct your postdoctoral research and discuss intent to apply, timeline for application submission and obtain an **NIH-affiliated eRA Commons account**.
- Identify **letter of reference** writers.

# Suggested Application Timeline

**2** months  
before  
submission  
deadline

- ▶ Get feedback on your application (from research advisor, other mentors, colleagues and OITE career services).

**1** month  
before  
submission  
deadline

- ▶ Finalize your application and ensure all necessary components are included (consult the FOA and PRAT website for guidance).
- ▶ Coordinate submission of materials by the signing official/AOR noted above.
  - ▶ *Note: Some representatives prefer to submit grant applications ahead of the official due date to maximize your opportunity to correct any errors, so maintain contact with them throughout the process.*
- ▶ Ensure letters of reference are submitted through eRA Commons by the deadline.

# Hearing from PRAT Fellows

# Hearing from PRAT Fellows



- Amy Elliott (NIMH/NIBIB)
- “Light Sheet Microscopy & Neural Control of Behavior”



- Sam Golden (NIDA)
- “Nucleus accumbens cell type specific control of operant aggression & relapse in mice”



- Laura Corrales-Diaz Pomatto (NIA)
- “Impact of Caloric Restriction with Age in Nrf2 Regulation in flies and mice”

# NIGMS PRAT Program – 2019 Recruitment

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- Timeline

- October 3, 2018 – Application deadline
- February/March 2019 – Peer review
- Late May 2019 – Notification
- Late summer 2019 – PRAT start

- [PRAT home page](#)

- [PRAT Funding Opportunity Announcement](#)

- For more information – [kenneth.gibbs@nih.gov](mailto:kenneth.gibbs@nih.gov)

# Questions?



**Thank you for listening & good  
luck with your application!**

