

National Institutes of Health Funding Guideline

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Research Opportunities Office, Bureau of Educational Research
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) offers an important funding stream for the Education faculty. NIH is a large umbrella institution that encompasses 29 specialized institutes. Through its institutes, the NIH accepts both solicited and unsolicited proposals for grant funding. While many of the grant competitions elicit competition from scientific and medical institutions, there are programs across a number of institutes that would be appropriate for educational research.

The following list includes NIH institutes, in order of popularity, with specific subdivisions offering good opportunities for faculty in the College of Education at the University of Illinois to seek funding:

Acronym	Institute Full Name	Most Relevant Areas(s)	Website
NICHD	National Institute for Child & Health Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Center for Research for Mothers and Children</i>• <i>Division of Epidemiology, Statistics and Prevention Research</i>	www.nichd.nih.gov
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Counseling Initiatives</i>	www.nimh.nih.gov
NIA	National Institute on Aging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Behavioral and Social Research Program</i>	www.nia.nih.gov
NCI	National Cancer Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Cancer Research Initiatives</i>	www.nci.nih.gov
NCMHD	National Center for Minority & Health Disparities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Office of Minority Health</i>	www.ncmhd.nih.gov
NIDCD	National Institute on Deafness & Communication Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Hearing, Ear Infections, & Deafness Program</i>• <i>Neural Prosthesis Program</i>	www.nidcd.nih.gov
NIGMS	National Institute of General Medical Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Center for Bioinformatics and Computational Biology</i>	www.nigms.nih.gov
OBSSR	Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>This office fosters social science research across NIH, and coordinates, and posts information about trans-Institute and trans-agency initiatives, all of which are funded through individual institutes.</i>	obssr.od.nih.gov/

Methods for Funding Extramural Research:

Faculty can obtain funding from NIH through either unsolicited requests or solicited program submissions. These methods, which can be described in four variations, provide funding over period of time to research a specific area of scientific need:

- **Investigator-Initiated Research. Unsolicited:** The investigator initiates the research and submits a grant application within an area that is relevant to the NIH. Most applications for NIH support are unsolicited.
- **Program Announcement (PA). Solicited:** NIH solicits grant applications or cooperative agreements in a given research area representing a new, ongoing or expanded interest and/or high-priority program. Program Announcements are solicited grant competitions that come from an institute or multiple institutes requesting research investigation in an area of need. PAs are funded over a period of several years (generally three to five years) and follow a yearly cycle of standardized dates for the application receipt, peer review, council review, and start date of the project. Faculty are eligible to apply for a PA at each cycle deadline until the expiration of the PA. For example, for program announcements that last for three years, faculty have nine cycle deadlines to apply for the PAs before it expires. Program announcements are the most common form of NIH grant competitions available.

NIH accepts unsolicited and Program Announcement submissions three times during the year:

	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle III
Application Receipt Date	February 1	June 1	October 1
Peer Review	June-July	October-November	February-March
Advisory Council Review	September	January-February	May-June
Earliest Project Start Date	December	April	July

Source: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm>

- **Request for Applications (RFA). Solicited:** NIH solicits research grant applications for a one-time competition on a specific topic. These describes Institute/Center initiatives in well-defined scientific areas to stimulate research in a priority area and allocates funds for a certain number of awards. Submissions are due on the date specified in the RFA.
- **Request for Proposals (RFP). Solicited:** NIH solicits offers to submit research proposals for a one-time competition on a specific Institute/Center topic and allocated funds for a certain number of awards. RFP opportunities are the least common of the funding avenues. Submissions are due on the date specified in the RFP.

RFAs (grants/cooperative agreements) and RFPs (contracts) tend to be used more in problem-oriented research efforts, such as disease-specific programs in their beginning stages (for example, in the early years of the War on Cancer and of research on AIDS and Alzheimer's disease).

Faculty are highly encouraged to consider submission of unsolicited proposals, since this is the most common allocation of research grants within the NIH. As the table below depicts, a high proportion of grant dollars were given to researchers who initiated requests for grant funding.

Allocations of R01 Research Grants (FY 2003)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ~82% of the awards were allocated to investigator-initiated research grants ▪ ~10% of the awards were allocated in response to PAs ▪ ~ 8% of the awards were allocated in response to RFAs

Source: National Institutes of Health (n.d.). Choosing the appropriate funding instrument and funding mechanism for extramural research support. Retrieved April 20, 2005, from http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/choosing_fundInstrument.doc

Types of Grant Activities Within NIH

The following table describes most common grant types, with links where faculty can get more information about each funding type.

Table 1. Major Grant Activities NIH Uses to Fund Extramural Research	
Activity	Description
Research Grants	
Traditional Research Project Grant (R01) http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/r01.htm	Research Project Grants are awarded to eligible institutions on behalf of a principal investigator to support a discrete project related to the investigator's area of interest and competence. These grants make up the largest category of NIH funding.
Small Research Grant (R03) http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r03.htm	Small Research Grants support small research projects that can be carried out in a short period of time with limited resources for projects such as pilot or feasibility studies; secondary analysis of existing data; development of research methodology and/or technology. Not all Institutes/Centers accept R03 applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accept</u>: NIA, NICHD & NIMH • <u>Do Not Accept</u>: NCI, NCMHD, NIGMS & NIDCD
National Research Service Award (NRSA) http://grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm#fellowships	National Research Service Awards provide support predoctoral and postdoctoral research training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRSA <u>Institutional Research Training Grants</u> (T32) provide funding to develop or enhance research training opportunities for individuals, selected by the institution, who are training for careers in specified areas of biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research • Ruth L. Kirchenstein NRSA <u>Individual Fellowships</u> include both predoctoral (F31) and postdoctoral (F32) awards, and support promising applicants with the potential to become productive, independent investigators in their scientific mission areas.
Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA) (R15) http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/area.htm	Academic Research Enhancement Awards provide support to scientists at eligible domestic institutions for small-scale health-related research projects, such as pilot research projects and feasibility studies; development, testing, and refinement of research techniques; and similar discrete research projects that demonstrate research capability. Award is directed toward those smaller public and private colleges and universities that provide undergraduate training for a significant number of the U.S. research scientists.

Table 1. Major Grant Activities NIH Uses to Fund Extramural Research

Activity	Description
<p>Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant (R21/R33) http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r21.htm</p>	<p>Exploratory/Developmental Research Grants seek to broaden the base of inquiry in fundamental biomedical research by encouraging applications for research projects that involve an especially high degree of innovation and novelty. NIH provides pilot-scale support for potentially ground-breaking ideas and methods that meet the following criteria: they lack sufficient preliminary data for feasibility to be established, their successful demonstration would have a major impact on biomedical research, and they fall within the areas supported by the awarding Institute/Center. Not all Institutes/Centers accept R21/R33 applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Accept:</u> NIA, NICHD, NIDCD & NIMH • <u>Do Not Accept:</u> NCI, NCMHD & NIGMS
<p>Resource Related Research Projects (R24) http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not99-116.html</p>	<p>Resource-Related Research grant projects support research projects that will enhance the capability of resources to serve biomedical research.</p>
<p>Program Project Grant (P01) http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-00-005.html</p>	<p>Program Project Grants are more complex in scope and budget than the individual basic research (R01) grant. While R01s are awarded to support the work of one principal investigator who, with supporting staff, is addressing a scientific problem, program project grants are available to a group of several investigators with differing areas of expertise who wish to collaborate in research by pooling their talents and resources. Program project grants represent synergistic research programs that are designed to achieve results not attainable by investigators working independently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all Institutes/Centers accept P01 applications.
<p>Research Center Grant (P50/P60) http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-DC-01-001.html</p>	<p>Research Center Grants serve varying scientific and Institute/Center-specific purposes. The grants are multidisciplinary in scope and may focus more on an area or discipline of science than on a specific theme or goal. Independent investigators direct the projects and cores. Center grants offer a greater opportunity for scientific interactions and overall progress than with individually-funded projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all Institutes/Centers accept P50/P60 applications.

Sponsorship of Grant Requests

Specific institutes will announce competitions to address a specific scientific need. On many occasions one institute will collaborate with other institutes to address a similar research question based on the institutes' specific focus. The sponsoring institute will be in charge of the competition and headline the funding announcement. However, the announcement will also identify collaborating institutes and explain how they are involved in the grant.

An example of individual institute request:

Components of Participating Organizations: NIMH
Title: *Functional Assessment of People with Mental Disorders*
Program Announcement (PA) Number: [PA-05-037](#) (click on hyperlink for more details)
Key Dates: Released: 12/30/2004; Expires 11/2/2007

An example of multiple institutional collaborative effort:

Components of Participating Organizations: NCI, NIMH, NIDCD, NIA, (with fourteen other groups)
Title: *Social and Cultural Dimensions of Health*
Program Announcement (PA) Number: [PA-05-029](#) (click on hyperlink for more details)
Key Dates: Released: 12/17/04; Expires 1/3/08

Searching for Grant Funding

Faculty can locate funding opportunities either by specific institutes or by searching the NIH wide funding announcements page <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>. On the NIH announcements page, faculty can grants select by date, Table of Contents (TOC), Program Announcements, or Requests For Applications. Both the Program Announcements and the Request For Application webpage are shown in tabular form and can be sorted by date (start or expiration), institute, type of grant, or by title of grant. Faculty can use the sorting function to select grants that might be of interest to them.

Faculty can browse the webpage for each specific institute to understand what their overall funding and get a better sense of the type of grant funding each specific institute would sponsor.

NIH LISTSERVS offer a convenient way for subscribers to routinely monitor news of NIH RFA and PA releases and other grant funding developments at the NIH:

1. **BSSR-GUIDE-L** is sponsored by the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences (OBSSR), covers a range of opportunities that include many NIH institutes. See subscription information at <http://obssr.od.nih.gov/publications/bssr-guide/index.htm>.
2. **Table of Contents, Current NIH Guide Weekly Publication** covers the full gamut of NIH funding, including all RFAs, PAs and Notices published in a given week. <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/listserv.htm>.

Helpful Web Links

NIH-Wide Funding Announcements:

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>

Funding Announcements by Institute

National Cancer Institute

<http://www.nci.nih.gov/researchandfunding/announcements>

National Center for Minority & Health Disparities

<http://www.omhrc.gov/omh/whatsnew/2pgwhatsnew/funding.htm>

National Institute on Aging

<http://www.nia.nih.gov/ResearchInformation/FundingAndTraining/CurrentFunding.htm>

National Institute for Child & Health Disparities

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/funding/funding-opps.htm>

National Institute on Deafness & Communication Disorders

<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/funding/opps/index.asp>

National Institute of Mental Health

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/researchfunding/grants.cfm>

National Institute of General Medical Sciences

<http://www.nigms.nih.gov/biocomputing/funding.html>

Additional Web Resources

NIH Grants Home Page

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm>

Listing of Grant Program Types (e.g. R01, R03, & R21)

http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/funding_program.htm

Forms and Applications (e.g. PHS 398 Forms)

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/forms.htm>

Information on Revisions to PHS 398 Forms

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>

Standardized Schedule of Important Dates (e.g. application, peer review, council review dates)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm>

NIH Web Resources for New Investigators (e.g. researchers new to NIH grants)

http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/new_investigators/index.htm

All About Grants Tutorial (From Allergy and Immunology)

<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/ncn/grants/default.htm>

Glossary of NIH terms

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/glossary.htm>