

## 7. Supplemental Instructions to the SF 424(R&R) for Preparing an Individual Research Career Development Award (CDA) Application (“K” Series)

### 7.1 Introduction

All applicants must use the SF 424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance, following the instructional information in this Application Guide. The supplemental instructions found in this section (I.7) are for Individual Career Development Award (CDA) series applications and include guidance and instructional information only when there is a difference in the required information to be submitted or there is a need for more specificity for the individual K program. Therefore, these supplemental instructions must be used along with the information found in Parts I.1 – I.6 of this document.

These instructions do not cover applications for K12 and other institutional career development programs. Institutions planning such applications should consult the applicable Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) concerning eligibility, award criteria, and application procedures. Some K-series funded through Requests for Applications (RFAs) may have special instructions.

It is imperative that applicants become familiar with the K activity code for which support is being requested. Before applying for a K award, applicants should carefully review the applicable FOA for the career award of interest, noting especially the eligibility requirements, requirements for a mentor, review criteria, award provisions, and any special application instructions. Each FOA contains more specific information associated with the award mechanism and includes names of individuals that may be contacted prior to submission of an application for additional or clarifying information.

The eligibility criteria, support levels, and other important aspects of specific career awards, including availability, may vary among NIH Institutes or Centers and other PHS agencies. For this reason, it is strongly recommended that applicants consult with the NIH Scientific/Research contact of the appropriate awarding component prior to submitting an application. FOAs and other guidelines are available on the NIH K-Kiosk website <http://grants.nih.gov/training/careerdevelopmentawards.htm>. Announcements for various career award opportunities are issued periodically in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts, a weekly electronic publication (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/index.html>).

Note: A few individual K-series programs supported by the NIH include a delayed-award activation and/or two award phases (e.g., K22, K99/R00). NIH intramural researchers may be eligible to apply for these awards. The FOA will include any additional and/or specific instructions that must be followed when applying for such support.

### 7.2 Individual Career Development Award Programs

The following chart provides a summary of the existing Career Development programs. Since this information is subject to change, prospective applicants are encouraged to review the [K-Kiosk](#) for the most current program information. The [K-Kiosk](#) includes information on NIH-wide Parent FOAs as well as IC-specific FOAs for a particular K program.

Extracts from SF424 (R&R) Instructions (7/25/2013. Download full version at:

[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424\\_RR\\_Guide\\_General\\_Adobe\\_VerC.pdf](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424_RR_Guide_General_Adobe_VerC.pdf)

### Summary of Research Career Development Award Programs

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	MENTOR	REFERENCE LETTERS
K01	Mentored Research Scientist Development Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	Yes	Yes
K02	Independent Scientist Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	No	No
K05	Senior Scientist Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	No	No
K07	Academic Career Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	*	*
K08	Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	Yes	Yes
K18	Career Enhancement Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	Yes	Yes
K22	Career Transition Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	*	Yes
K23	K23 Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	Yes	Yes
K24	Mid-Career Investigator Award in Patient Oriented Research ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	No	No
K25	Mentored Quantitative Research Career Development Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	Yes	Yes
K26	Midcareer Investigator Award in Mouse Pathobiology Research ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	No	No
K99/R00	NIH Pathways to Independence (PI) Award ( <a href="#">see K Kiosk</a> )	Yes	Yes

\*Varies with career status and source of award. Check the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).

## 7.3 Letters of Reference (must be submitted electronically through the eRA Commons)

At least three (but no more than 5) Letters of Reference are required for all applications defined as New and Resubmissions (see Note below) for mentored support as indicated in the table above. The letters should be from individuals not directly involved in the application, but who are familiar with the applicant's qualifications, training, and interests. The mentor/co-mentor(s) of the application cannot be counted toward the three required references. It is important for the applicant to include the names of those individuals in the application so that the NIH staff will be aware of planned reference letter submissions. Within the application, the list of referees (including name, departmental affiliation, and institution) is included in Other Attachments on the Other Project Information Form (see special K instructions in Section 7.4.3). In addition, applicants must include the same list and information on the SF424 (R&R) Cover Form in the Cover Letter Attachment.

The reference letters are critically important and should address the candidate's competence and potential to develop into an independent biomedical or behavioral investigator. Only those individuals who can make the most meaningful comments about the candidate's professional training and qualifications for a research career should be used as referees. Where possible, some referees who are not from the candidate's current department or organization, but are knowledgeable about their qualifications, should be selected.

Letters of Reference are due by the application receipt deadline date. Although previously NIH provided a 5 business days grace period for the receipt of letters of reference after the application receipt due date, the new policy eliminates the grace period. More information can be found in NIH Guide Notice [NOT-OD-11-079](#).

The candidate should request reference letters only from individuals who will be able to submit them to the NIH at the time of the application submission due date (see [NOT-OD-11-079](#)).

Applications that are missing the required letters of reference may be delayed in review or may not be accepted.

Note: For resubmission applications, it is critical that NEW Letters of Reference be submitted providing up-to-date evaluation of the applicant's potential to become an independent researcher, and the continued need for additional supervised research experience.

Electronic submission of a letter of reference is a separate process from submitting an application electronically. Reference letters are submitted directly through the eRA Commons and do not use Grants.gov. Therefore, this process requires that the referee be provided information including (a) the PI's (candidate's) eRA Commons user name, (b) the PI's first and last name as they appear on the PI's eRA Commons account, and (c) the number assigned to this Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Confirmation e-mails will be sent to both the referee and the candidate following reference letter submission. The confirmation sent to the candidate will include the referee's name and the date the letter was submitted. The confirmation sent to the referee will include the referee and applicant's names, a confirmation number, and the date the letter was submitted.

The candidate may check the status of submitted letters by logging into their Commons account and accessing the "check status" screen for this application. The candidate is responsible for reviewing the status of submitted reference letters and contacting referees to ensure that letters are submitted by the receipt deadline. While the candidate is able to check on the status of the submitted letters, the letters are confidential and he/she will not have access to the letters themselves. Note: Because e-mail can be unreliable, it is the candidate's responsibility to check the status of his/her letters of reference in the Commons.

Candidates should provide the following instructions to their referees.

**Instructions for Referees:** (these instructions are also found at: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/Referee\\_Instructions\\_Mentored\\_Career\\_Awards.doc](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/Referee_Instructions_Mentored_Career_Awards.doc))

Name of Candidate (First & Last Name as shown in the eRA Commons): \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's eRA Commons UserName: \_\_\_\_\_

FOA Number: \_\_\_\_\_

The candidate is applying to the NIH for a Career Development Award. The purpose of this award is to develop the research capabilities and career of the candidate. These awards provide salary support and guarantee them the ability to devote at least 9 person months (75% of their total professional effort) to research for the duration of the award. Many of these awards also provide funds for research and career development costs. The award is available to persons who have demonstrated considerable potential to become independent researchers, but who need additional supervised research experience in a productive scientific setting, as well as to newly independent researchers.

In two pages or less (PDF format), describe the qualities and potential of the candidate for the career development award program for which support is being requested. This should include your evaluation with special reference to:

- potential to become an independent research scientist;

- evidence of originality;
- adequacy of scientific background;
- quality of research endeavors or publications to date, if any;
- commitment to health-oriented research; and
- need for further research experience and training
- any additional related comments that the referee may wish to provide

Please put the name of the candidate at the top of the letter. Also, be sure to include your name and title in the letter.

### **Submitting Reference Letters**

Letters must be submitted directly to the eRA Commons at:

<https://public.era.nih.gov/commons/public/reference/submitReferenceLetter.do?mode=new> and must be submitted by the application receipt deadline date. More information can be found in NIH Guide Notice [NOT-OD-11-079](#).

You will be requested to enter the following information on-line at the time of submission:

#### **Referee Information:**

- Referee First Name (Required)
- Referee Last Name Required)
- Referee MI Name (Not Required)
- Referee e-mail (Required)
- Referee institution/affiliation (Required)
- Referee department (Required)

#### **Candidate Information:**

- PI Commons User ID (Required)
- PI's last name, as it appears on the PI's Commons account (Required) (will be validated to ensure they match)
- Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number (Required)
- Reference letter confirmation number (Required only if resubmitting a letter; not required otherwise)
- Reference letter – two pages maximum; PDF format

After you have submitted your letter, both you and the candidate will receive a confirmation of receipt by e-mail. The confirmation sent to the candidate will include your name and the date your letter was submitted. However, the letters are confidential and the candidate will not be able to access the letters themselves. Your e-mail confirmation will include a Reference Letter Submission Confirmation Number. The Confirmation Number will be required when resubmitting letters for the current round. Please print the confirmation e-mail for your records.

Revised reference letters may be submitted at the time of the application receipt date.

## Referee Instructions for Mentored Research Career Development Awards:

Name of Candidate (*First & Last Name as shown in the eRA Commons*): \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's eRA Commons UserName: \_\_\_\_\_

FOA Number: \_\_\_\_\_

The candidate is applying for a Career Development Award. The purpose of this award is to develop the research capabilities and career of the candidate. These awards provide 3 to 5 years of salary support and guarantee them the ability to devote at least 9 person-months (75% of their total professional effort) to research for the duration of the award. Many of these awards also provide funds for research and career development costs. The award is available to persons who have demonstrated considerable potential to become independent researchers, but who need additional supervised research experience in a productive scientific setting, as well as to newly independent researchers.

In two pages or less (PDF format), describe the qualities and potential of the candidate for the career development award program for which support is being requested. This should include your evaluation with special reference to:

- potential for conducting research;
- evidence of originality;
- adequacy of scientific background;
- quality of research endeavors or publications to date, if any;
- commitment to health-oriented research;
- need for further research experience and training; and
- any additional related comments that the referee may wish to provide.

Please put the name of the candidate at the top of the letter. Also, be sure to include your name and title in the letter.

### Submitting Reference Letters

Letters may be submitted directly to the eRA commons at:

<https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/reference/submitRefereeInformation.jsp>. Letters of Reference are due by the application receipt deadline date, but may be submitted any time after the FOA opens. Reference Letters can be submitted before the grant application submission, and will be held and later linked to the appropriate application once they are received at NIH.

You will be requested to enter the following information on-line at the time of submission:

#### Referee Information:

- Referee First Name (Required)
- Referee Last Name (Required)
- Referee MI Name (Not Required)
- Referee Email (Required)
- Referee institution/affiliation (Required)
- Referee department (Required)

#### Candidate Information:

- PI Commons User ID (Required)
- PI's last name, as it appears on the PI's Commons account (Required) (will be validated to ensure they match)
- Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Number (Required)
- Reference letter confirmation number (Required only if resubmitting a letter; not required otherwise)
- Reference letter – two pages maximum; PDF format

After you have submitted your letter, both you and the candidate will receive a confirmation of receipt by email. The confirmation sent to the candidate will include your name and the date your letter was submitted. However, the letters are confidential and the candidate will not be able to access the letters themselves. Your email confirmation will include a Reference Letter Submission Confirmation Number. The Confirmation Number will be required when resubmitting letters. Please print the confirmation email for your records.

Revised reference letters may be submitted within 7 days of the application receipt date.

(See section I.7.3 of the SF424(R&R) Application Guide for additional information on Reference Letters.)

## 7.5 PHS 398 Career Development Award Supplemental Form

### PHS 398 Career Development Award Supplemental Form

Please attach applicable sections, below

OMB Number: 0925-0001

<b>Introduction (if applicable)</b>			
1. Introduction to Application (for RESUBMISSION applications only)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
<b>Candidate Information</b>			
2. Candidate's Background	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
3. Career Goals and Objectives	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
4. Candidate's Plan for Career Development/ Training Activities During Award Period	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
5. Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
6. Candidate's Plan to Provide Mentoring (as applicable)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
<b>Statements and Letters of Support</b>			
7. Plans and Statements of Mentor and Co- Mentor(s)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
8. Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors, and Consultants	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
<b>Environment and Institutional Commitment to Candidate</b>			
9. Description of Institutional Environment	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
10. Institutional Commitment to Candidate's Research Career Development	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
<b>Research Plan</b>			
11. Specific Aims	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
12. * Research Strategy	<input style="background-color: yellow;" type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
13. Progress Report Publication List (for RENEWAL applications only)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
<b>Human Subject Sections</b>			
14. Protection of Human Subjects	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
15. Inclusion of Women and Minorities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
16. Inclusion of Children	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>

The PHS 398 Career Development Award Supplemental Form should include sufficient information needed for evaluation of the project, independent of any other document (e.g., previous application). Be specific and informative, and avoid redundancies. Some sections are required for all K award applications and some sections are only to be used when required by the FOA. Be sure to read all instructions in the FOA before completing this section since errors could lead to incomplete or rejected applications.

**Career Development Award Attachments** (See also [Section 2.3.2 Creating PDFs for Text Attachments](#))

Although many of the sections of this application are separate PDF attachments, page limits referenced in the instructions and/or funding opportunity announcement must still be followed. Agency validations will include checks for page limits (and use of appropriate font). Some accommodation will be made for sections that, when combined, must fit within a specified limitation.

Text attachments should be generated using word processing software and then converted to PDF using PDF generating software. Avoid scanning text attachments to convert to PDF since that causes problems for the agency handling the application. In addition, be sure to save files with descriptive file names.

Do not include any information in a header or footer of the attachments. A header will be system-generated that references the name of the PD/PI. Page numbers for the footer will be system-generated in the complete application, with all pages sequentially numbered.

Since a number of reviewers will be reviewing applications as an electronic document and not a paper version, applicants are strongly encouraged to use only a standard, single-column format for the text. Avoid using a two-column format since it can cause difficulties when reviewing the document electronically.

Full-sized glossy photographs of material such as electron micrographs or gels must only be included within the page limits of the Career Development Award application. The maximum size of images to be included should be approximately 1200 x 1500 pixels using 256 colors. Figures must be readable as printed on an 8.5 x 11 inch page at normal (100%) scale.

Candidates must use image compression such as JPEG or PNG. Do not include figures or photographs as separate attachments either in the Appendix or elsewhere in the application.

**Separate Attachments**

Separate attachments have been designed for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form sections to maximize automatic validations conducted by the eRA system. When the application is received by the agency, all of the CDA Supplemental Form sections will be concatenated in the appropriate order so that reviewers and agency staff will see a single cohesive application.

When attaching a PDF document to the actual forms, please note you are attaching an actual document, not just pointing to the location of an externally stored document. Therefore, if you revise the document after it has been attached, you must delete the previous attachment and then reattach the revised document to the application form. Use the **View Attachment** button to determine if the correct version has been attached.

**Page Limits**

**Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits ([Table 2.6-1](#)), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.** All tables, graphs, figures, diagrams, and charts must be included within the 12-page limit (note that this may span to 15 pages in the eRA Commons application image due to white space inserted at the end of sections when separating files).

**Follow page limitations as specified in Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs).**

All applications and proposals for NIH funding must be self-contained within specified page limits. Agency validations will include checks for page limits. Note that while these computer validations will help minimize incomplete and/or non-compliant applications, they do not replace the validations conducted by NIH staff. Applications found not to comply with the requirements may be delayed in the review process. Unless otherwise specified in an NIH solicitation, internet website addresses (URLs) may not be used to provide information necessary to the review because reviewers are under no obligation to view the internet sites. Moreover, reviewers are cautioned that they should not directly access an internet site as it could compromise their anonymity.

Applicants are prohibited from using the Appendix to circumvent page limitations in any section of the application for which a page limit applies.” For additional information regarding Appendix material and page limits, please refer to the NIH Guide Notice NOT-OD-11-080, <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-11-080.html>.

### **Notice of Proprietary Information**

Applicants are discouraged from submitting information considered proprietary unless it is deemed essential for proper evaluation of the application. However, when the application contains information that constitutes trade secrets, or information that is commercial or financial, or information that is confidential or privileged, make sure you have checked “Yes” for proprietary/privileged information question in the Other Project Information form.

When information in the application constitutes trade secrets or information that is commercial or financial, or information that is confidential or privileged, it is furnished to the Government in confidence with the understanding that the information shall be used or disclosed only for evaluation of this application. However, if a grant is awarded as a result of or in connection with the submission of this application, the Government shall have the right to use or disclose the information to the extent authorized by law. This restriction does not limit the Government’s right to use the information if it is obtained without restriction from another source.

Although the grantee institution and the PD/PI will be consulted about any such release, the PHS will make the final determination. Any indication by the applicant that the application contains proprietary or privileged information does not automatically shield the information from release in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request should the application result in an award (see [45 CFR Part 5](#)). If an applicant fails to identify proprietary information at the time of submission as instructed in the application guide, a significant substantive justification will be required to withhold the information if requested under FOIA.

### **Research Plan**

A Research Plan is required for all types of individual K awards. The Research Plan is a major part of the research career development plan. It is important to relate the research to the candidate’s scientific career goals. Describe how the research, coupled with other developmental activities, will provide the experience, knowledge, and skills necessary to achieve the objectives of the career development plan and launch and conduct an independent research career, or enhance an established research career. For mentored K awards, explain the relationship between the candidate’s research on the CDA and the mentor’s ongoing research program.

For most types of research, the plan should include: a specific hypothesis; a list of the specific aims and objectives that will be used to examine the hypothesis; a description of the methods/approaches/techniques to be used in each aim; a discussion of possible problems and how they will be managed; and, when appropriate, alternative approaches that might be tried if the initial approaches do not work.



The Research Plan of a CDA is expected to be appropriate for, and tailored to the experience level of the candidate, and allow him/her to develop the necessary skills needed for further career advancement, and reviewers will evaluate the plan accordingly. The plan should be achievable within the requested time period. Pilot or preliminary studies and routine data gathering are generally not appropriate as the sole part(s) of a CDA research plan. Although candidates for mentored K awards are expected to write the Research Plan, the mentor should review a draft of the plan and discuss it in detail with the candidate. Review by other knowledgeable colleagues is also helpful. Although it is understood that CDA applications do not require the extensive detail usually incorporated into regular research applications, a fundamentally sound Research Plan and a reasonably detailed Approach section should be provided.

In general, less detail will be expected in descriptions of research planned for the future years of the proposed CDA. However, sufficient detail should be provided to enable the peer reviewers to determine that the plans for those years, including the approach to be used, are worthwhile and are likely to enable the candidate to achieve the objectives of the Research Plan.

The PHS 398 Career Development Award Supplemental Form is comprised of sections for: Candidate Information; Statement of Support (Mentors); Environment & Institutional Commitment to the Candidate; and the Research Plan (including Human Subjects and Other Research Plan Sections).

Begin each text section of the Candidate Information and Research Plan with a section header (e.g., Introduction, Specific Aims, Background & Significance, etc). See Specific FOA for additional information.

Field Name	Instructions
1. Introduction to Application (for RESUBMISSION applications only)	<p>NIH policy allows a thirty-seven month window for resubmissions (A1 applications) following the submission of a New, Renewal, or Revision application (A0 application). See NIH Notice <a href="#">NOT-OD-12-128</a> for additional information/clarification of NIH policy.</p> <p>Use only if Type of Application is Resubmission. Resubmission applications must include an Introduction to Resubmission Application, not to exceed one page. The Introduction must include responses to the criticisms and issues raised in the Summary Statement. Summarize the substantial additions, deletions, and changes. In the body of the application, highlight paragraphs with significant changes by bracketing and changing typography.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>

**Candidate Information**

Field Name	Instructions
2. Candidate’s Background	<p>This attachment is required. Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>Use this section to provide any additional information not described in the Biographical Sketch Format Page such as research and/or clinical training experience.</p>

Field Name	Instructions
	<p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
<p>3. Career Goals and Objectives</p>	<p>This attachment is required. Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>Describe your past scientific history, indicating how the award fits into past and future research career development. If there are consistent themes or issues that have guided previous work, these should be made clear; if your work has changed direction, the reasons for the change should be indicated. It is important to justify the award and how it will enable you to develop or expand your research career. You may include a timeline, including plans to apply for subsequent grant support.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
<p>4. Candidate's Plan for Career Development/ Training Activities During Award Period</p>	<p>This attachment is required. Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>Stress the new enhanced research skills and knowledge you will acquire as a result of the proposed award. If you have considerable research experience in the same areas as the proposed research, reviewers may determine that the application lacks potential to enhance your research career. For mentored awards, describe structured activities, such as course work or technique workshops, which are part of the developmental plan. If course work is included, provide course numbers and descriptive titles. Briefly discuss each of the activities, except research, in which you expect to participate. Include a percentage of time involvement for each activity by year, and explain how the activity is related to the proposed research and the career development plan.</p> <p>Note that recipients of mentored K awards may receive concurrent support from an NIH research grant award or cooperative agreement only under certain conditions (see NIH Notice <a href="#">NOT-OD-08-065</a>).</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
<p>5. Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research</p>	<p>This attachment is required. Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>For mentored career development awards, describe a plan to acquire instruction in the responsible conduct of research. For independent career awards, describe a plan to obtain or provide instruction in the responsible conduct of research. See Supplemental Instructions <a href="#">Part III Section 1.16</a></p>

Field Name	Instructions
	<p>for information on the NIH Policy on Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR).</p> <p>Attach a description of plans for obtaining instruction in the responsible conduct of research. This section should document prior instruction or participation in RCR training during the applicant’s current career stage (including the date instruction was last completed) and propose plans to either receive instruction or participate as a course lecturer, etc., in order to meet the once every four-year requirement. The plan should address how applicants plan to incorporate the five instructional parts outlined in the NIH Policy on Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research: format, subject matter, faculty participation, duration, and frequency. The plan may include career stage-appropriate individualized instruction or independent scholarly activities that will enhance the applicant’s understanding of ethical issues related to their specific research activities and the societal impact of that research. The role of the mentor in RCR instruction must be described.</p> <p>Where applicable, Renewal applications must describe the RCR instruction activities undertaken during the project period as well as future plans.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
<p>6. Candidate’s Plan to Provide Mentoring (Include only when required by the specific FOA, e.g., K24 and K05)</p>	<p>The plan should provide information about the candidate’s commitment to serve as a mentor to other investigators, and describe previous mentoring activities. The plan should describe the setting and provide information about the available pool of mentees with appropriate backgrounds and interests in the same field of science. It should also include information on the candidate’s past and proposed mentees sufficient to evaluate the quality of prior mentoring experiences, including the professional levels of mentees, and the frequency and kinds of mentoring interactions between the candidate and the mentees. Describe the productivity of the mentoring relationship for the scientific development of the new scientists as judged by their publications and current research activities. Senior level (K05) candidates should describe any financial and material support from their own funded research and research resources that will be available to their mentees. The candidate’s proposed percent effort commitment to the mentoring plan should also be stated.</p> <p>Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA. Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>

**Statements and Letters of Support**

Field Name	Instructions
7. Plans and Statements of Mentor and Co-mentor(s)	<p>This section is to be completed by the mentor and co-mentor(s), as appropriate. The letters must be appended together and uploaded as a single pdf file. Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>For mentored awards (see <a href="#">Summary of Career Development Award Mechanisms table</a>), the mentor must explain how they will contribute to the development of the candidate's research career. This statement should include all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The plan for the candidate's training and research career development. This description must include not only research, but also other developmental activities, such as seminars, scientific meetings, training in the responsible conduct of research, and presentations. It should discuss expectations for publications over the entire period of the proposed project and define what aspects of the proposed research project the candidate will be allowed to take with him/her to start their own research program.</li> <li>2. The source of anticipated support for the candidate's research project for each year of the award period.</li> <li>3. The nature and extent of supervision and mentoring of the candidate, and commitment to the candidate's development that will occur during the award period.</li> <li>4. The candidate's anticipated teaching load for the period of the award (number and types of courses or seminars), clinical responsibilities, committee and administrative assignments, and the portion of time available for research.</li> <li>5. A plan for transitioning the candidate from the mentored stage of his/her career to the independent investigator stage by the end of the project period of the award. The mentor should describe previous experience as a mentor, including type of mentoring (e.g., graduate students, career development awardees, postdoctoral students), number of persons mentored, and career outcomes.</li> </ol> <p>All mentored career development applications should identify any and all co-mentors involved with the proposed research and career development program. Co-mentors must specifically address the nature of their role in the career development plan and how the responsibility for the candidate's development is shared with the mentor. Describe respective areas of expertise and how they will be combined to enhance the candidate's development. Also describe the nature of any resources that will be committed to this CDA. Letters from the mentor(s) and co-mentor(s) documenting their role and willingness to participate in the project must be included in this section of the application. Do not place these letters in the Appendix.</p>

Field Name	Instructions
	Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b> , browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b> .
8. Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors, and Consultants	<p>Attach all appropriate letters of support. Letters are not required for personnel (such as research assistants) not contributing in a substantive, measurable way to the scientific development or execution of the project. For consultants, letters should include rates/charges for consulting services.</p> <p>All <b>mentored career development award applications</b> should identify any and all collaborators, contributors, and consultants involved with the proposed research and career development program not already included in Item 7. Letters should briefly describe their anticipated contributions and document their role and willingness to participate in the project.</p> <p>Additionally, <b>non-mentored career development award applications</b> should include letters from collaborators, consultants and contributors listing their proposed roles and documenting their willingness to participate in the project. The letters should also briefly describe research materials, data, guidance, or advice each person will provide.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, and the click <b>Open</b>.</p>

**Environment and Institutional Commitment to the Candidate**

Field Name	Instructions
9. Description of Institutional Environment	<p>The sponsoring institution must document a strong, well-established research program related to the candidate's area of interest, including the names of key faculty members relevant to the candidate's proposed developmental plan. Referring to the resources description (See section 4.4.10 Facilities and Other Resources), indicate how the necessary facilities and other resources will be made available for career enhancement as well as the research proposed in this application. Describe opportunities for intellectual interactions with other investigators, including courses offered, journal clubs, seminars, and presentations. This attachment is required and is limited to one page.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
10. Institutional Commitment to Candidate's Research Career Development	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>The institution should provide a document on institutional letterhead that describes its commitment to the candidate and the candidate's career development, independent of the receipt of the CDA. The document</p>

Field Name	Instructions
	<p>should include the institution’s agreement to provide adequate time and support for the candidate to devote the proposed protected time to research and career development for the entire period of the proposed award. The institution should provide the equipment, facilities, and resources necessary for a structured research career development experience. It is essential to document the institution's commitment to the retention, development and advancement of the candidate during the period of the award.</p> <p>Because of the diverse types of K awards, applicants should contact the appropriate awarding component Scientific/Research contact listed in the specific FOA to determine the level of commitment required for this application.</p> <p><b>Agreement</b></p> <p>The applicant organization must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Agree to release the candidate from other duties and activities to devote the required percentage of time for development of a research career. For most K awards, commitment of at least 75 percent of time is required. Describe actions that will be taken to ensure this; e.g., reduction of the candidate's teaching load, committee and administrative assignments, and clinical or other professional activities for the current academic year. (For example, describe the actions that will be taken to compensate for the reduction in clinic responsibilities of the candidate, e.g., hiring of additional staff). Describe the candidate's academic appointment, bearing in mind that it must be full-time, and that the appointment (including all rights and privileges pertaining to full faculty status if in an academic setting) and the continuation of salary should not be contingent upon the receipt of this award. Describe the proportion of time currently available for the candidate's research experience and what the candidate's institutional responsibilities will be if an award is made.</li> <li>b. Provide the candidate with appropriate office and laboratory space, equipment, and other resources and facilities (including access to clinical and/or other research populations) to carry out the proposed Research Plan.</li> <li>c. Provide appropriate time and support for any proposed mentor(s) and/or other staff consistent with the career development plan.</li> </ol> <p><b>Signatures</b></p> <p>The institutional commitment must be dated and signed by the person who is authorized to commit the institution to the agreements and assurances listed above. In most cases, this will be the dean or the chairman of the department. The signature must appear over the signer's name and title at the end of the statement. If the candidate will be working away from the home institution, signatures from both the home and the</p>

Field Name	Instructions
	<p>host institution are required.</p> <p>The sponsoring institution, through the submission of the application and in the institutional commitment section, certifies that all items outlined above will be provided and that the institution will abide by the applicable assurances and PHS policies. See: <a href="#">NOT-OD-06-054</a>.</p> <p>This attachment is required and is limited to one page. Create a single file of the institutional letter and save it in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>

**Research Plan**

Field Name	Instructions
<p>11. Specific Aims</p>	<p>State precisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s) including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the research field(s) involved.</p> <p>List succinctly the specific objectives of the research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology.</p> <p>The Specific Aims attachment is required. Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
<p>12. Research Strategy</p>	<p>Follow the page limits for the Career Development Award Supplemental Form in the table of page limits (<a href="#">Table 2.6-1</a>), unless specified otherwise in the FOA.</p> <p>Organize the Research Strategy in the specified order and using the instructions provided below. Start each section with the appropriate section heading – Significance, Innovation, Approach. Cite published experimental details in the Research Strategy section and provide the full reference in the Bibliography and References Cited section (<a href="#">Part I Section 4.4.9</a>).</p> <p><i>I. Significance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.</li> <li>• Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.</li> <li>• Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies,</li> </ul>

Field Name	Instructions
	<p>treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.</p> <p>2. <i>Innovation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how the application challenges current research or clinical practice paradigms.</li> <li>• Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.</li> </ul> <p>3. <i>Approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Unless addressed separately in the Resource Sharing Plan, include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any resource sharing plans as appropriate.</li> <li>• Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.</li> <li>• If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high risk aspects of the proposed work.</li> <li>• Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised. A full discussion on the use of select agents should appear in Item 18 below.</li> <li>• If research on Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs) is proposed but an approved cell line from the NIH hESC Registry cannot be identified, provide a strong justification for why an appropriate cell line cannot be chosen from the Registry at this time.</li> </ul> <p>If an applicant has multiple Specific Aims, then the applicant may address Significance, Innovation and Approach for each Specific Aim individually, or may address Significance, Innovation and Approach for all of the Specific Aims collectively.</p> <p>As applicable, also include the following information as part of the Research Strategy, keeping within the three sections listed above: Significance, Innovation, and Approach.</p> <p><b>Preliminary Studies for New Applications:</b> For new applications, include information on Preliminary Studies. Discuss the PD/PI's preliminary studies, data, and or experience pertinent to this application.</p> <p><b>Progress Report for Renewal and Revision Applications.</b> For renewal/revision applications, provide a Progress Report. Provide the beginning and ending dates for the period covered since the last competitive review. Summarize the specific aims of the previous project</p>



Field Name	Instructions
	<p>period and the importance of the findings, and emphasize the progress made toward their achievement. Explain any significant changes to the specific aims and any new directions including changes to the specific aims and any new directions including changes resulting from significant budget reductions. A list of publications, patents, and other printed materials should be included in the Progress Report Publication List; do not include that information here.</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>
<p>13. Progress Report Publication List (for RENEWAL applications only)</p>	<p>List the titles and complete references to all appropriate publications, manuscripts accepted for publication, patents, and other printed materials that have resulted from the project since it was last reviewed competitively. When citing articles that fall under the Public Access Policy, were authored or co-authored by the applicant and arose from NIH support, provide the NIH Manuscript Submission reference number (e.g., NIHMS97531) or the PubMed Central (PMC) reference number (e.g., PMCID234567) for each article. If the PMCID is not yet available because the Journal submits articles directly to PMC on behalf of their authors, indicate “PMC Journal – In Process.” A list of these journals is posted at: <a href="http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm">http://publicaccess.nih.gov/submit_process_journals.htm</a>.</p> <p>Citations that are not covered by the Public Access Policy, but are publicly available in a free, online format may include URLs or PubMed ID (PMID) numbers along with the full reference (note that copies of these publications are not accepted as appendix material).</p> <p>Save this information in a single file in a location you remember. Click <b>Add Attachment</b>, browse to where you saved the file, select the file, and then click <b>Open</b>.</p>

**Human Subjects Sections**

Field Name	Instructions
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## Table of Page Limits

The page limits for most forms sections are listed below, organized by Activity Code

- [Fellowship \(F\) Applications](#)
- [Individual Career Development Award \(K\) Applications](#)
- [For institutional Training \(T\), International Training \(D43, D71\), Institutional Career Awards \(K12\), and Research Education Applications \(R25\)](#)
- [For R01, R03, R21, and all other Applications](#)

The Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) instructions always supersede these page limits; therefore, be sure to check the FOA for any exceptions.

### For all [Fellowship \(F\) Applications](#)

Section of Application	Page Limits * (if different from FOA, FOA supersedes)
<b>Introduction to Resubmission or Revision Application</b> (when applicable)	1
<b>Specific Aims</b>	1
<b>Research Strategy</b>	6
<b>Respective Contributions</b>	1
<b>Selection of Sponsor and Institution</b>	1
<b>Responsible Conduct of Research</b>	1
<b>Applications for Concurrent Support</b> (when applicable)	1
<b>Goals for Fellowship Training and Career</b>	1
<b>Activities Planned Under This Award</b>	1
<b>Doctoral Dissertation and Other Research Experience</b>	2
<b>Sponsor(s) and Co-Sponsor(s)</b>	6
<b>Biographical Sketch</b>	4

### For [Individual Career Development Award \(K\) Applications](#)

Section of Application	Page Limits * (if different from FOA, FOA supersedes)
<b>Introduction to Resubmission or Revision Application</b> (when applicable)	1
<b>Specific Aims</b>	1
<b>First three items of Candidate Information</b> (Candidate's Background, Career Goals and Objectives, and Career Development/Training Activities During Award Period <b>and Research Strategy</b> )	12 pages (for all sections combined)
<b>Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research</b>	1
<b>Mentoring Plan</b> (Include only when required by the specific FOA, e.g., K24 and K05)	6
<b>Statements by Mentor, Co-Mentors, Consultants, Contributors</b>	6
<b>Description of Institutional Environment</b>	1
<b>Institutional Commitment to Candidate's Research Career Development</b>	1
<b>Biographical Sketch</b>	4