

RFA-DK-22-012: NIDDK Investigator Award to Support Mentoring of Early Career Researchers from Diverse Backgrounds (K26 - Independent Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility Questions

Q1. Are applicants with K24s eligible for this mechanism?

A1. Yes, applicants with K24s are not explicitly excluded from this mechanism.

Q2. R21 grantee doesn't necessarily have a "history of sustained, federally-funded research." The grantee is committed to mentorship. Are they eligible to apply?

A2. Yes, but applicants will need to convince reviewers that the funding they have is enough to sustain their research and that of their mentees. The applicant will also need to demonstrate that they are able to devote time to mentoring. *See Section IV: Other Candidate Information Section; Section V: Scored Review Criteria*

Q3. Are Co-Investigators eligible to apply for this mechanism?

A3. This role is allowed as a consultant or collaborator to enhance the applicant's professional skillset charged to "Other" budget category. However, K26 effort is only allowed for the single applicant who can be the sole mentor, or a co-mentor, for any individual mentee. *See Section IV: Mentor, Co-Mentor, Consultant, Collaborators Section*

Q4. I am an Assistant Professor/Senior Researcher. Am I eligible for this mechanism?

A4. Yes, strong candidates should have research programs robust enough to support the PD/PI's K26 effort and to serve as a training vehicle for K26 mentees. Per the FOA, this award is intended for experienced scientists with objectives to 1) Provide protected time for intensive, focused, state-of-the-art research by relieving these investigators from time-consuming institutional service; and 2) Increase their mentoring of junior investigators to build up the pool of skilled investigators who can fill the growing need for trained professionals. If the

applicant PD/PI already has significant protected time from the institution, it might be a harder case to make that there is a need for protected effort on a K26.

Q5. Does the applicant need a current NIDDK grant to be eligible? One part of the RFA says “equivalent to NIH research project grants (e.g., R01s, R21s...” Does a grant from a voluntary organization count?

A5. Per the FOA, only current NIDDK-funded applicants are eligible for this FOA. *See Section III: Eligibility Information*

Q6. I am a U24 grantee. Am I eligible to apply under this mechanism?

A6. U24s are supportive of research projects but do not support the research of the PI. *See Section III: Eligibility Information and Section I: Funding Opportunity Description. Text from Section I - “...applicants must also have a history of sustained, federally-funded, research in NIDDK mission areas, equivalent to NIH research project grants...”*

Q7. I have applied for an R01 equivalent grant but am not currently funded under such mechanism. I would like to apply for this K26. Am I eligible?

A7. Applications to this FOA may be premature, under such circumstances. There is no track record for the research activities or guarantee for funding on the pending R01 equivalent grant application.

Q8. Is there a citizenship requirement to apply for this RFA?

A8. By the time of the award, the individual must be a US Citizen, a non-citizen national of the United States, or be a permanent resident.

Application Instruction Questions

Q9. Should I follow the FOA’s instructions for the Candidate Section or follow the SF424 (R&R) instructions?

A9. Instructions in the FOA supersede the instructions listed on the SF424 application guide.

Q10. The SF424 requires the “Description of Candidate’s Contribution to Program Goals” for applicants to diversity-related FOAs. Is this attachment required?

A10. Yes, please submit this information with your application.

Q11. Are there page limit suggestions regarding track record and plans for mentorship?

A11. There are no page count suggestions for track record information or plans for mentorship. Both sections are equally important, and each application will be unique to the background of each applicant.

Q12. Should I include a separate Specific Aims page?

A12. Yes, please include a Specific Aims page. The aims should include your scope of activities and goals.

FOA Questions

Q13. What is the budget ceiling and maximum project implementation period?

A13. Budget is based on the applicant’s salary and effort requested. Applicants may request 3 to 6 calendar months of effort, and this must be commensurate to the amount of mentoring proposed. This is a five-year award.

Q14. Current mentees are using resultant data and infrastructure from projects that are no longer being funded. Should I include these in the currently supported research section?

A14. Yes, you may include this in the research section. Please indicate that they are no longer active or in NCE.

Q15. Does the FOA support costs for mentee projects?

A15. No, the FOA does not cover research costs.

Q16. How many mentees does this FOA support? What type of mentees are applicable?

A16. This FOA is intended for mentorship of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. Potential applicants must have one mentee at the time of application, with plans to increase during the award period. This number will be unique to each applicant's capacity and research plan. *See Section IV: Other Candidate Information Section*

Q17. Are potential mentees limited to US citizens?

A17. Although the FOA does not explicitly require citizenship for mentees, the goal of this FOA is to prepare mentees for the next step in their career, which often includes applying for grant funding. Most NIH/NIDDK career development mechanisms are restricted to US citizens or individuals lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the US.

Q18. Does this FOA require a Data Management Sharing Plan (DMSP)?

A18. NIH does not provide resources for research in this FOA, only for mentoring. Since the award does not include funds for research, the DMSP is not required.

Q19. Are reference letters required?

A19. No, reference letters are not required for this mechanism.