

**Restructured NIH Application
Summary of Changes
Notice NOT-OD-09-149**

Key Dates and Information

- Changes are effective for submissions due on or after **January 25, 2010**
- New versions of forms and instructions (paper 398 and electronic 424) will be available by **December 2009**
- New applications forms and instructions **MUST** be used for all application packages even resubmissions

Two Types of Proposal Changes

- 1) Shortened page limits

| Current page limit (Section 2-5 of the Research Plan) | New page limit (Research Strategy) |
|---|---|
| <25 pages | 6* |
| 25 pages | 12* |
| >25 pages | Follow FOA Instructions *Does not include Specific Aims page |

- 2) Alignment of the application with the enhanced peer review criteria, including changes to the Research Plan, Resources, and Biographical Sketch.

RESTRUCTURED RESEARCH PLAN

| Current Research Plan | Restructured Research Plan |
|---|--|
| Introduction to Application (Resubmission or Revision Applications only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission: 3 pgs • Revision: 1 pg | Introduction to Application (Resubmission or Revision Applications only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 pg (unless specified in the FOA) • No introduction for new applications |
| Specific Aims (1 pg is recommended) | Specific Aims (limited to one page) |
| Background and Significance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Strategy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Significance Innovation Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preliminary Studies for New Applications ▪ Progress Report for Renewal/Revision Applications |
| Preliminary Studies/Progress Report | |
| Research Design and Methods | |

Introduction to Application – limited to one page (resubmissions only)

Specific Aims – limited to one page

State concisely 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.

Research Strategy – limited to 6 pages (e.g. R03, R21) or 12 pages (e.g. R01, individual project of Program Project/Center (P) applications) not including specific aims

Organize the Research Strategy in the specified order, using the headings and instructions below.

Experimental details should be cited using the Bibliography and Reference Cited section and need not be detailed in the Research Strategy.

(a) Significance

- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
- Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.

- Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.

(b) Innovation

- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
- Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions(s) to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation or interventions(s).
- Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions.

(c) Approach

- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
- Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
- 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.
- Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous and precautions to be exercised.

Preliminary Studies for New Applications (part of the Approach section). Discuss the PD/PI's preliminary studies, data, and/or experience pertinent to this application. Early Stage Investigators should include preliminary data. (However, for R01 applications, reviewers will be instructed to place less emphasis on the preliminary data in applications from Early Stage Investigators than on the preliminary data in applications from more established investigators.)

Progress Report should be included as part of the Approach section for renewal/revision applications.

RESOURCES have been revised to include a description of how the scientific environment will contribute to the probability of success of the project, unique features of the environment, and for Early Stage Investigators, the institutional investment in the success of the investigator (e.g. resources, classes, etc.).

- Identify the facilities to be used including laboratory, clinical, animal, computer, office, etc). (unchanged)
- Describe how the scientific environment contributes to the probability of success (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport). Discuss ways in which the proposed studies will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment or subject populations or will employ useful collaborative arrangements.
- For Early Stage Investigators, describe institutional investment in the success of the investigator, e.g., resources for classes, travel, training; collegial support such as career enrichment programs, assistance and guidance in the supervision of trainees involved with the ESIs project, and availability of organized peer groups; logistical support such as protected time for research with salary support.
- If there are multiple performance sites, describe the resources available at each site.
- Describe any special facilities used for working with biohazards or other dangerous substances.

REVISED BIOSKETCH

- Following the educational block, a new Personal Statement will be incorporated as Part A (changing the parts formerly called A, B, and C to Parts B, C, and D). Total limit of 4 pages remains.
- Personal statement. Briefly describe why your experience and qualifications make you particularly well-suited for your role (e.g., PD/PI, mentor, participating faculty) in the project that is the subject of the application.
- Applicants' are encouraged to limit the list of selected peer-reviewed publications to no more than 15. The individual may choose to include selected publications based on recency, importance to the field, and/or relevance to the proposed research.

REVISED SCORING

- Reviews are now presented as "bullet points" addressing strengths and weaknesses
 - Significance
 - Approach
 - Innovation
 - Investigators
 - Resources
 - "Overall impact"
- Each area receives an independent numerical score from 1 – 9 (only integers)
- Score of 1 – 3 (High Impact) – "exceptional" through "exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses"
- Score of 4 – 6 (Moderate Impact) – "very good" through "strong but with numerous minor weaknesses"
- Score of 7 – 9 (Low Impact) – "low impact" through "major weaknesses"