

Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology

Program Description

The Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO) awards Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology to recent recipients of the doctoral degree for research and training in *selected* areas supported by BIO and with special goals for human resource development in biology. The fellowships encourage independence at an early stage of the research career to permit Fellows to pursue their research and training goals in the most appropriate research locations regardless of the availability of funding for the Fellows at that site. For the 2020 solicitation (NSF 20-602), these BIO programs are **(1) Broadening Participation of Groups Underrepresented in Biology, (2) Integrative Research Investigating the Rules of Life Governing Interactions Between Genomes, Environment and Phenotypes, and (3) Plant Genome Postdoctoral Research Fellowships**. These areas change periodically as new scientific and infrastructure opportunities present themselves. For this reason, the program solicitation will be changed as necessary to reflect the areas being funded.

The fellowships are also designed to provide active mentoring of the Fellows by the sponsoring scientists who will benefit from having these talented young scientists in their research groups. The research and training plan of each fellowship must address important scientific questions within the scope of the BIO Directorate and the specific guidelines in this fellowship program solicitation. International tenures are encouraged. Fellowships are awards to individuals, not institutions, and are administered by the Fellows.

The Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology (PRFB) program page may be found at http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=503622

Sponsoring Scientist -> How to Prepare Statement

1. Document Guidelines:

- a. Prepare all documents according to guidelines in the Program Solicitation and the NSF Proposal and Awards Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG).
- b. Prepare all documents electronically with one of the approved typefaces identified below, a black font color, and a font size of 10 points or larger.
- c. Use one of the following typefaces identified below:
 - Arial, Courier New, or Palatino Linotype at a font size of 10 points or larger;
 - Times New Roman at a font size of 11 points or larger; or
 - Computer Modern family of fonts at a font size of 11 points or larger
 - In addition to the typefaces identified above, Macintosh users also may use Helvetica and Palatino typefaces.
 - A font size of less than 10 points may be used for mathematical formulas or equations, figure, table or diagram captions and when using a Symbol font to insert Greek letters or special characters. PIs are cautioned, however, that the text must still be readable;
- d. No more than 6 lines of text within a vertical space of 1 inch; and
- e. Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch.

2. Purpose of Sponsor's Statement. The sponsoring scientist(s) statement is meant to show how the proposed host(s) and host institution(s) provide a strong environment for the Fellow's proposed research and training plan and form the basis for a future independent research career. Therefore, it should include a specific mentoring plan, a description of how the Fellow's independence will be nurtured, including, as appropriate to the career goals, how the project could continue as an independent research focus for the Fellow in their next position. Regardless of the number of sponsors, one integrated statement must be developed and submitted. If the Fellow plans to teach as part of career development activities, the Fellow is limited to teaching in a course taught by the sponsoring scientist(s) or as part of a course directly related to the Fellow's doctoral or fellowship research project. The sponsoring scientist(s) statement must detail the mentoring that the Fellow will receive on teaching if applicable. Sponsors are not expected to provide all the mentoring themselves and may call on all resources available on campus or through other organizations, e.g., professional societies, postdoctoral offices, etc.

Evaluation of the fellowship applications will include assessing the value of the proposed research and training plan to provide the basis for a future independent research career. As applicants are free to choose the most suitable research environment, opportunities available to the applicant in the sponsor's research group will be an important factor in evaluating the application.

Sponsoring Scientist Statement. The statement should describe how the sponsor offers a research environment and mentoring opportunity that would be difficult to achieve without fellowship support. The Applicant will upload this statement during proposal preparation under *Supplementary Docs-Mentoring Plan*. A complete sponsoring scientist statement consists of 2 parts, a discussion and a **Curriculum Vitae**.

3. Sponsoring Scientist Discussion is limited to 3 pages

- A brief description of the research projects in the host research group(s) along with a description of how the research and training plan for the applicant would fit into and complement ongoing research of the sponsor(s) and an indication of the personnel with whom the Fellow would work.
- A statement of current and pending research support, both private and public, for each sponsor. If any sponsor has submitted similar research for funding, the degree of overlap must be addressed.
- An explanation of how the sponsor(s) will determine what mentoring the applicant needs in research, teaching, and career development skills and how these would be translated into a specific plan that fosters the development of the applicant's future independent research career.
- A description of the role the sponsor(s) will play in the proposed research and training and the other resources that will be available to the Fellow to complete his or her training plan during the fellowship.
- A description of any limitations that may be placed on the Fellow for continuing the research project in an independent capacity following the fellowship.

4. Sponsoring Scientist Curriculum Vitae is limited to 2 pages for each sponsor. **The Fellow** will upload the CV(s) and the Sponsoring Scientist discussion as a single document in FastLane within Proposal Preparation under *Supplementary Docs- Mentoring Plan*.

5. Multiple sponsors and/or locations. Regardless of the number of sponsors or locations, the fellowship application requires a 2-page CV for each sponsor. If more than one sponsor is proposed, one must be named lead sponsor and information from all sponsors must be integrated into a single Sponsoring Scientists statement. Likewise, if more than one site is proposed, the Sponsoring Scientists statement must integrate all sponsors and locations into a single statement.

Because of the multidisciplinary nature of modern biology, it is expected that dual sponsorship will be common.

6. Sponsoring Scientist Information needed for the application. The applicant also needs the following information from the Sponsoring Scientist to complete the application.

Proposed Fellowship Institution:

Organization name:

Department:

Street:

City:

State:

ZIP:

Country:

Proposed Sponsoring Scientist:

Name:

Title:

E-mail address:

Telephone:

FAX:

7. Documentation from the host institution. If a fellowship is offered, the applicant may be requested to provide documentation from the host institution that the terms and conditions of the fellowship are acceptable and that the Fellow will be provided adequate space, basic services, and supplies.

8. Changes in location or sponsorship after an award. Any changes in location or sponsorship after an award is made must be approved in advance in writing by the BIO Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Officer.