



F32 BOOT CAMP

From start to submission (grants due Aug 8, 2019)

Letters of Reference



Letters of Reference

- *neither the sponsor nor any co-sponsor of this application may serve as a reference for the application. The sponsor/co-sponsor's recommendation is included as part of the application.*
- At least 3 (and no more than 5) references are required
- Applications lacking the required reference letters will not be reviewed.
- Reference letters are submitted directly by referees through eRA commons
- Include list of referees in the cover letter



Different than the Letters of Support

- Advisors, collaborators, etc
- Specifically what they will be doing
- They send to you and you attach

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Letters of Reference

Review Workshop slides (on Box) for who you should ask. They need to comment on:

- Research ability and potential to become an independent researcher
- Adequacy of scientific and technical background
- Written and verbal communication abilities including ability to organize scientific data
- Quality of research endeavors or publications to date, if applicable
- Perseverance in pursuing goals
- Evidence of originality
- Need for further research experience and training
- Familiarity with research literature

Letters of Reference – Instructions available online

The screenshot shows the NIH Grants & Funding website. The top navigation bar includes the NIH logo, the text 'National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research', and a search bar. Below the navigation bar is a menu with tabs for HOME, ABOUT GRANTS (highlighted), FUNDING, POLICY & COMPLIANCE, NEWS & EVENTS, and ABOUT OER. The main content area is titled 'Reference Letters' and contains three sections: 'Some types of programs...', 'Resubmission applications...', and 'Selecting a Referee'. The 'Selecting a Referee' section includes a bulleted list of requirements. Below this is the 'Instructions to Provide to Referees' section, which includes a paragraph and two links to download instructions for Fellowship and Career Development Applicant Referees. A sidebar on the left lists navigation options like 'About Grants', 'How to Apply', and 'Write Application'. A 'Related Resources' sidebar on the right lists 'Reference Letter FAQs' and 'Submitting a Reference Letter (Video)'.

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services | National Institutes of Health

NIH National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research

Grants & Funding NIH's Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

Entire Site Search this Site

eRA | Glossary & Acronyms | FAQs | Help

HOME ABOUT GRANTS FUNDING POLICY & COMPLIANCE NEWS & EVENTS ABOUT OER

Home » About Grants » How to Apply - Application Guide » Submission Process » Reference Letters

About Grants

Grants Process Overview

Get Started +

How to Apply

Prepare to Apply +

Write Application

Write Your Application

Develop Your Budget

Format Attachments

Page Limits

Data Tables

Reference Letters

Biosketches

Submit +

How to Apply Video Tutorials +

Application Referral and Review +

Reference Letters

Some types of programs, such as fellowships and some career development awards, require the submission of reference letters by the referee. Referees must submit these letters by the application deadline in order to be considered as part of the application. Applications that have fewer than the required numbers of reference letters will not be reviewed.

Resubmission applications require referees to submit updated reference letters.

Selecting a Referee

- At least three, but no more than five, reference letters are required.
- 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 sponsor/co-sponsor(s) of the application cannot be counted toward the three required references.
- Make sure you include a list of referees (including name, departmental affiliation, and institution) in the cover letter of the application so that the NIH staff will be aware of planned reference letter submissions.

Instructions to Provide to Referees

Fellows/candidates should provide their referees with the appropriate instructions. Remember to include your name as it is shown in your Commons account, your eRA username, and the number of the FOA to which you are applying.

- [Instructions for Fellowship Applicant Referees](#) (MS Word - 16 KB)
- [Instructions for Career Development Applicant Referees](#) (MS Word - 17 KB)

Related Resources

[Reference Letter FAQs](#)

[Submitting a Reference Letter \(Video\)](#)

Download the instructions page

Complete your information

Send to Referee



Letters of Reference – Requesting

- Be professional – send:
 - Downloaded Instructions with your info
 - Your cv or biosketch
 - Specific aims of your proposal
 - Latest published paper or draft of ‘in preparation’ paper so that letter writer can refer to your publication
 - If writer is a co-author be sure to remind writer to refer to the manuscript (especially if in preparation)
- 2-3 weeks before due date, start checking in eRA commons
 - You can see what has been submitted, but not the actual letter
 - Start sending gentle reminders of the due date