

So You're Applying for a GEMSSTAR – Part II

Time	Topic	Presenter
10:00 am ET	The Big Picture: NIA Overview, Who's Who, Grant Lifecycle	Sue Ziemann, M.D., Ph.D. Program Officer (PO), Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology
10:10 am ET	The Details: Tips on Specific Aims Pages and Resubmissions	Janine Simmons, M.D., Ph.D. PO, Division of Behavioral and Social Research
10:15 am ET	Crafting a Professional Development Plan	Basil Eldadah, M.D., Ph.D PO, Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology)
10:25 am ET	Tips and Online Resources for NIH Grant Applications	Marcel Salive, MD PO, Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology
10:35 am ET	Q&A	All

So... You're Applying for a GEMSSTAR, Part II

Susan Zieman, M.D., Ph.D.

Medical Officer, Geriatrics Branch

Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology, NIA, NIH

GEMSSTAR Webinar 06/07/21

Title	Name	Division
The Big Picture: NIA/NIH, GEMSSTAR, Who's Who	Sue Zieman	Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology
The Details: Tips on Specific Aims and Resubmissions	Janine Simmons	Behavioral and Social Research
Crafting a Professional Development Plan	Basil Eldadah	Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology
Tips and Online Resources for NIH Grant Applications	Marcel Salive	Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology
Summary, Audience Q & A		

About Today's Webinar:

- **Goal – to provide guidance, tips and resources** for early career investigators applying for the Grants for Early Medical and Surgical Specialists' Transition to Aging Research (GEMSSTAR)
 - RFA-AG-022-027 to be released this summer, (**RFA-AG-21-023** - last year)
 - RECEIPT DATE: late Oct/early Nov 2021, Review- approx. Feb 2022, Funding start – July/Aug 2022.
 - **Overview on NIA/NIH and helpful tips**
- Sponsored by NIA, the **Clin-STAR Coordinating Center** (AFAR) and the **American Geriatrics Society** (AGS)
- Session will be recorded and archived
- Please send questions through the chat and we will address them during the Q&A sessions
- Please visit the **GEMSSTAR FAQ Website**
- Please send all communications to NIA about GEMSSTAR to the GEMSSTAR Email (**NIAGEMSSTAR@mail.nih.gov**)
- Thank you for attending!

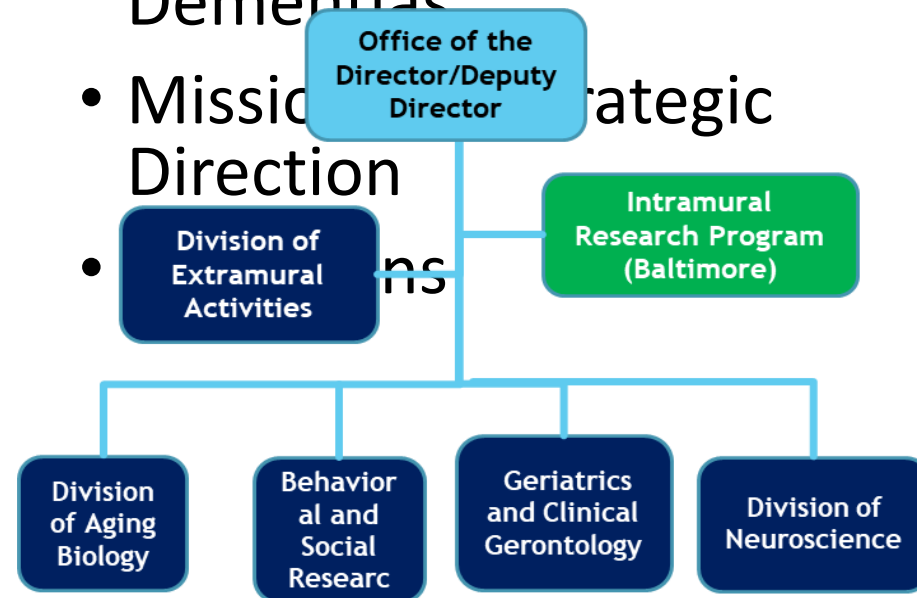
Overview of the NIH/NIA: Who Are We?

National Institutes of Health

- NIH is made up of [27 institutes and centers](#) (ICs)
 - Most have Intramural and Extramural Programs
- ICs award >80% of the NIH budget each year
 - Minimal budget to support staff
- Each IC has a budget and a director, and typically their own review for early career/training awards and RFAs (like GEMSSTAR)
- The Center for Scientific Research (CSR) oversees triage and review of most applications

National Institute on Aging

- 3rd largest IC at NIH
- Primary funder of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias
- Mission Statement: Strategic Direction
- **Divisions**



GEMSSTAR – Nuts and Bolts

- **Why was GEMSSTAR created?**

- To attract and foster medical/surgical/dental specialist clinician researchers to improve care of older adults within their specialty

- **What is it?**

- NIA-sponsored annual award (approx.15 awards/y)



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- RECEIPT DATE: late Oct/early Nov 2021, Review- approx. Feb 2022, Funding start – July/Aug 2022

- **Who is it for?**

- Clinician Researchers, MD or equivalent, Early Career (faculty position at start of funding), no prior K* or R01 type award
- Goal- to obtain preliminary data in aging research, mentor in aging/geriatrics, career development skills, join community of specialist researchers, flexibility in effort – to launch a career in aging research within specialty (K, R01, etc)

- **Other Info:**

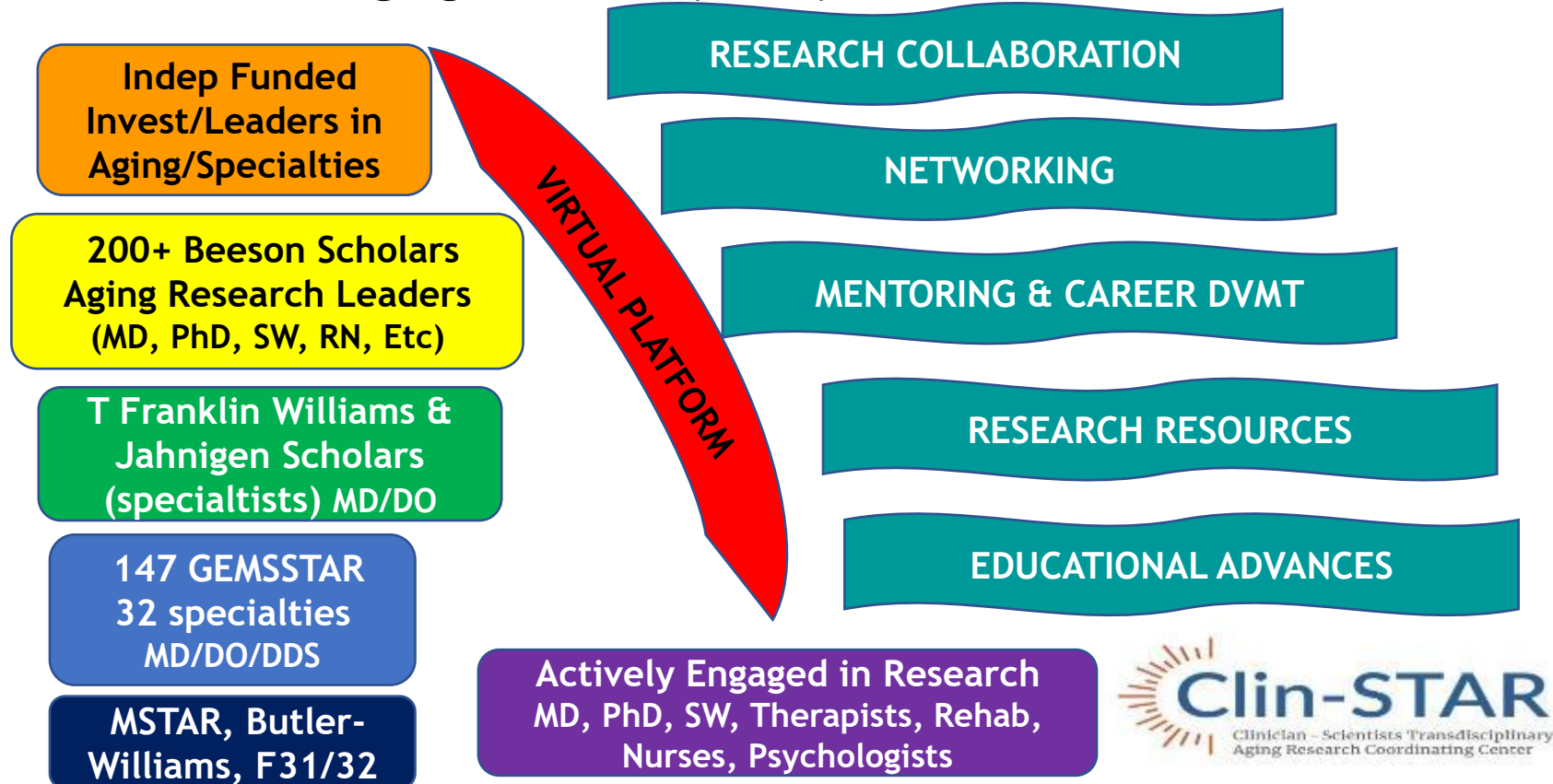
- Reviewed by NIA Special Emphasis Panel – have aging expertise by broad array of backgrounds – PDP is NOT reviewed by NIA and will not impact score
- Letter of Intent (due 1 month before deadline) – optional but helpful to obtain optimal expertise on review panel
- NIA PO's can offer feedback – please prepare ahead, POs have no input on peer review/score
 - ALL COMMUNICATION via GEMSSTAR EMAIL – niagemsstar@mail.nih.gov
- FOLLOW RFA INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY!!!!!! – THIS IS A LONG PROCESS- PATIENCE IS ESSENTIAL!!

Who's Who and What do We Do?

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
Program Officers	Create, advise, promote, administer grants. THEY DO NOT PLAY A ROLE IN REVIEW except to listen when we can!! Each PO has a portfolio based on expertise (web). We divide and conquer- SAME ADVICE. Review summary statements with applicant. Participate in U13 conferences. Review progress reports.	BEFORE grant submitted, AFTER summary statement released. Ideas, review aims, ask about mechanisms. When you run into trouble or have Qs. Promote research.
Scientific Review Officer	Set up and run peer review. Release summary statements.	Call after submitted until SS released.
Grant Management Officer	Administer grant funds, request documentation, Just in Time Documents	Questions about budget, grant documents, JIT info.

Clin-STAR – A Network with Resources for Specialists in Aging Research!

- More Resources for Investigators focusing on Aging/Geriatrics aspects within Specialties:
- Introducing **Clinician Scientists Transdisciplinary Aging Research** – Clin-STAR – a Virtual Wonderland of Opportunities!! Funded by NIA to American Federation of Aging Research (AFAR)

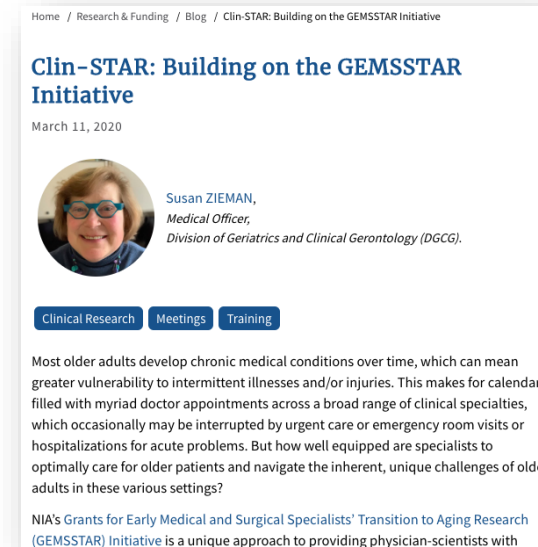




*Synergizing Career
Development
Toward Improved Care of
Older Adults
across Specialties and
Disciplines*



- NIA identified need to facilitate transdisciplinary aging research by medical and surgical specialists by:
 - Funding the creation of **virtual platform** (database designed, executed and overseen by AFAR and PIs) – **Clinician Scientist Transdisciplinary Aging Research (Clin-STAR Coordinating Center)**
 - **Expand GEMSSTAR Scholars Community** to include specialty Clinician Scientists at all career levels and background (investigator defined by NIH) – pharmacists, therapists, post-doc, social workers, nursing investigators, etc)
- Opportunities and resources: webinars, career development, transdisciplinary research, networking, mentoring, aging research skills, in person and online meetings/interest groups, mini-sabbaticals, visiting professor
- Core Structure
 - Leadership – Tom Gill, Yale
 - Mentorship & Career Development – Kristine Yaffe-UCSF
 - Research & Dissemination – Jeremy Walston



Read the blog here:
<https://bit.ly/39nSWoE>

- NIA Administrative Supplement to AGS

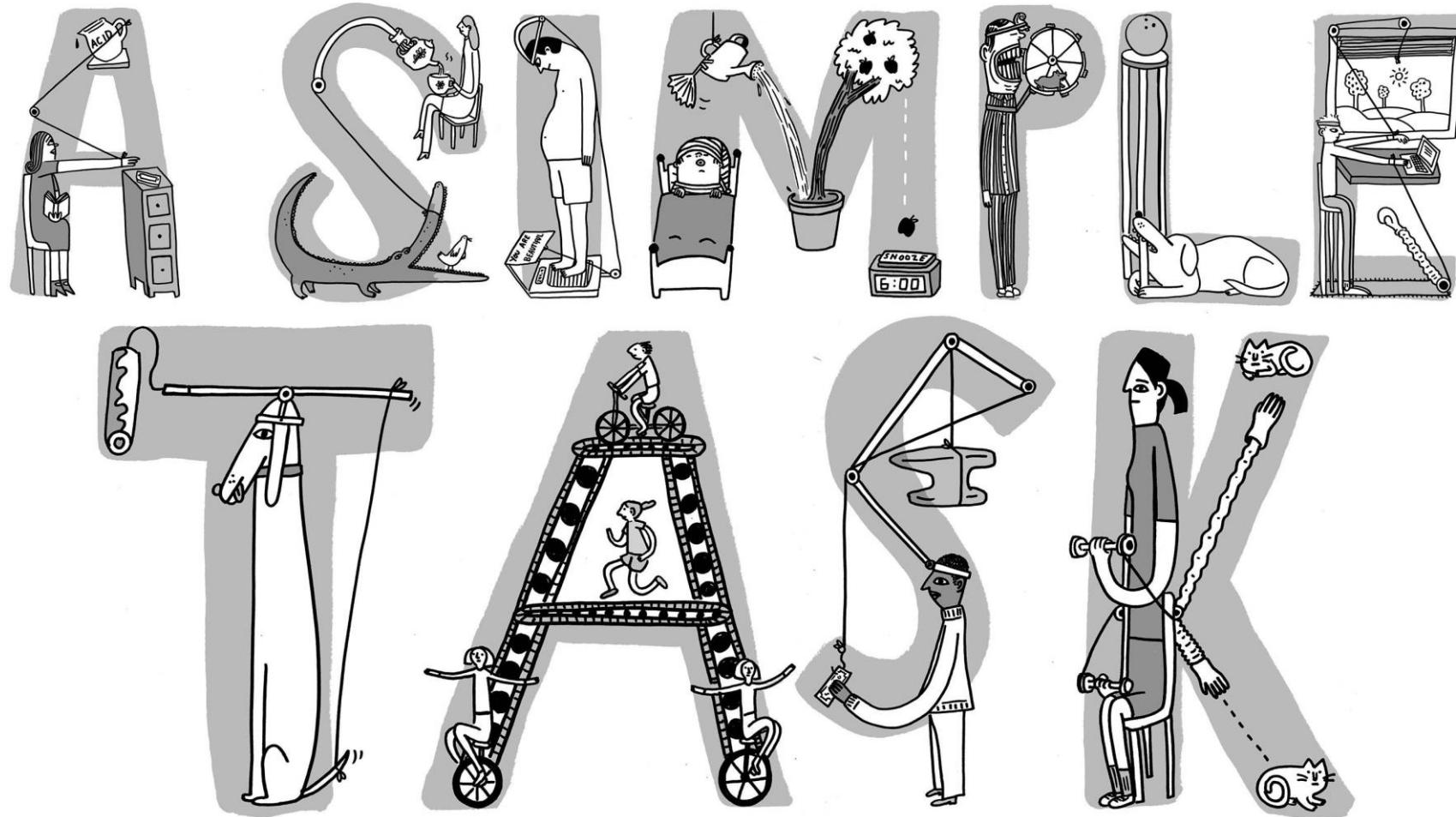
Website: Clin-STAR.org
Twitter: [@ClinSTARCC](https://twitter.com/ClinSTARCC)



Tips on Specific Aims and Resubmissions

Janine M. Simmons, MD, PhD
Chief, Individual Behavioral
Processes Branch
Division of Behavioral &
Social Research

Grant Writing is not ...



Specific Aims 1

❖ Writing

- Create a compelling narrative.
- Strive for clarity, readability, logical flow.
- Think about your audience.
- Avoid hyperbole

❖ Scope

- The proposal must be *feasible*
- R03 – *small* research project (\$100K/yr x 2)
- Integrate aims.
- Avoid over-ambitiousness

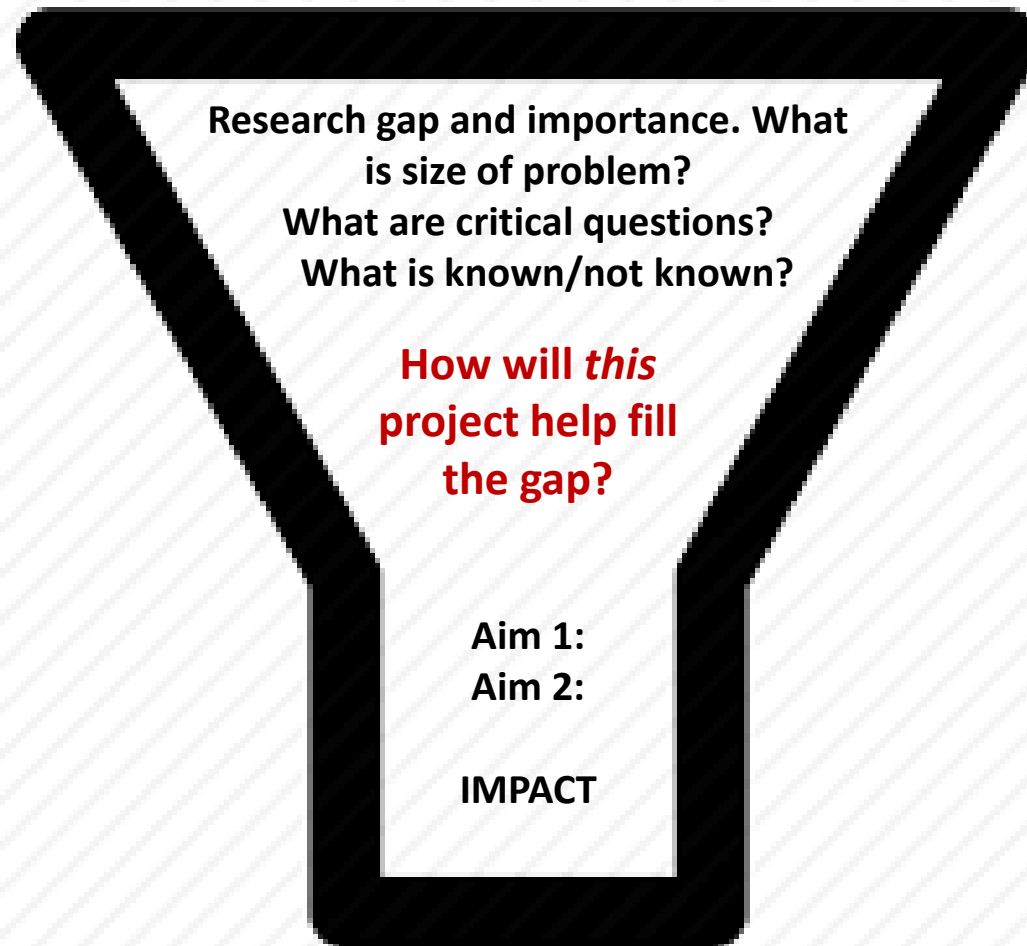
❖ Impact:

- What will we know after these experiments are done that we don't know now?
- Where do I plan to take this work in the future?
- Focus on tangible, near term goals as basis for longer-term research career



“Agreed. We fund only those proposals we can understand.”

Specific Aims 2



Crafting a Professional Development Plan

Basil Eldadah, MD, PhD

Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology, NIA

Clin-STAR Grantwriting Workshop

June 7, 2021

What's the purpose?

“Applicants are encouraged to describe specific activities that will augment their skills in geriatrics and/or aging research in order to develop into independent researchers in aging science.”

What does the RFA say?

- Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to include a section titled "Evidence of a Supportive Environment" that describes an individualized Professional Development Plan supported by non-R03 sources.
- This plan would provide for cultivating and garnering resources, activities, collaborations, and/or didactic or practical experiences **concurrent** with the R03 research project that will
 - **lead to enhanced knowledge and skills in aging/geriatrics science, and**
 - **increase the applicant's likelihood of successful completion of his/her GEMSSTAR project.**
- This plan would complement the GEMSSTAR R03 award and could **be supported through a variety of non-R03 sources** as described in Part 2, Section I.
- **This section will not impact peer review scores.**
- ***This section is limited to 5 pages within the Facilities & Other Resources attachment.***

Example PDP activities

- Mentorship plan: meetings, practical experiences
- Formal coursework (could lead to additional degree or certification); e.g., aging biology, biostatistics in aging
- Participation at geriatrics/aging national meetings
- Geriatrics clinical exposures
- Journal clubs
- Grand rounds
- Professional milestones (e.g., publications, presentations, grant applications, academic advancement)
- Curriculum development

Funding your PDP

- Support for PDP activities should come from non-R03 sources; e.g.:
 - Your institution
 - KL2, K12, R25 program
 - Mentored K award
 - Specialty societies – see American Geriatrics Society (<https://www.americangeriatrics.org/programs/geriatrics-specialists-initiative/gsi-advancing-research>)
 - NIA research center (e.g., Pepper, Alzheimer's, Shock, Roybal, RCMAR, Demography)
 - Foundations, other private sources
- Support can be in \$'s, in-kind, or a combination
- Seek funding when you start developing your GEMSSTAR application
- Provide documentation of support in R03 application (“Other Attachment”)
 - If you have applied for support but have not yet received a commitment, tell us about it in the application

How much time should I commit to my PDP

- Short answer: as much as you can afford
- Longer answer: GEMSSTARs are for physicians/dentists who want to combine their clinical specialty with aging research. If that's what you want, let your PDP show it!

Biosketch or Letter of Support?

- Biosketches are for senior/key personnel and other significant contributors to R03 project
- Letters of support are for individuals who are not contributing to the research project should provide a letters of support
 - E.g. mentors not involved in research project, department/division chairs, other institutional officials
- Include in the Letters of Support section (not the PDP section)

Who evaluates the PDP?

- Peer reviewers
 - Provide administrative comments for the benefit of NIA program staff
 - Comments do not factor into the score of the R03 application
 - Only what's available in the R03 application
- NIA program committee
 - Evaluate as evidence of a supportive research environment
 - Consider peer reviewers' administrative comments (if any)
 - Additional material (if any) requested after submission

What does a geriatrician's PDP look like?

- Geriatricians are experts in aging clinical care, but not necessarily in aging research
- A geriatrician's research project may involve other clinical specialties or research disciplines
- Remember: the PDP is intended to reflect a supportive research environment

Tips and Online Resources for NIH Grant Applications

Marcel Salive

NIA/Division of Geriatrics & Clinical Gerontology

June 7, 2021

grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/write-your-application.htm

ABOUT GRANTS

- Grants Process Overview
- Get Started
- How to Apply
- Application Referral and Review
- Pre-Award and Post-Award Processes
- Forms Library
- Information For

Write Your Application

- + The following guidance may assist you in developing a strong application that allows reviewers to better evaluate the science and merit of your proposal. This page provides tips for demonstrating to reviewers and NIH staff the high quality of the personnel involved in your project and documenting resources and institutional support of the project. We provide information for new investigators and foreign applicants, as well.
- + Though the advice provided is relevant for all research grants, it is general in nature and geared toward the [NIH Research Project \(R01\)](#). The tips should not replace your organization's internal guidance, specific advice provided by NIH program or grants management staff, or instructions found in the funding opportunity announcement or [application guide](#).

Before You Start Writing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find a Funding Opportunity Announcement and Related Application Forms• Plan Your Application
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On This Page:

- [Where to Find Instructions for Writing Your Application](#)
- [What Peer Reviewers Look For](#)
- [Research Resources, Institutional Support and Available Expertise](#)
- [Cover Letter & Assignment Request Form](#)
- [Are You a New or Early Stage Investigator](#)
- [Foreign Involvement: Institution and/or Investigator](#)
- [Develop Your Budget](#)
- [Your Research Plan](#)
- [Additional Elements Required in a Grant Application](#)
- [Important Writing Tips](#)
- [First Level of Review - Scientific Review Groups](#)

⚠ Avoid Grant Scams

RELATED RESOURCES

- 🎧 [All About Grants Podcasts](#)
- [Communicating Research Intent & Value](#)
- [Resource on Research Methods](#)
- [NIAID Advice on Preparing Your Application](#)
- [Samples: Applications, Attachments, and other Documents](#)
- [NIH Grants YouTube Channel](#)
- [NIH Tips for Applicants - YouTube](#)
- [Peer Review Videos](#)

NIA Mission

NIA's mission is to:

- Support and conduct genetic, biological, clinical, behavioral, social, and economic research on aging.
- Foster the development of research and clinician scientists in aging.
- Provide research resources.
- Disseminate information about aging and advances in research to the public, health care professionals, and the scientific community, among a variety of audiences.

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/about/mission>



[Download a PDF](#) of The

Write a Strong Biosketch

- General advice
 - **Make it personal**
 - Only opportunity to **tell the reviewers about you**, your career, and expertise
 - Seek advice and examples from peers and senior colleagues about what a biosketch looks like
 - **Help the reviewers!**
 - Demonstrate that you are the most qualified investigator to do the work
 - Reviewers instructed that publication track record for early career investigators will not match more senior investigators
 - **Favor clarity over detail and jargon**
 - **Provide a URL to publications via a federal (.gov) website**
- Questions about the biosketch?

Forms, instructions, and samples available at:
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

GEMSSTAR Goal/Impact: The K



Division of Biomedical Research Workforce

SEARCH [FAQs](#)
[Contact Us](#)

About DBRW	Career Path	Programs	Institute/Program Matrix	Resources
Training	Fellowships	Career Development	Other Training-Related	

Research Career Development Awards

RTCD Home > Programs

To provide individual and institutional research training opportunities (including international) to trainees at the undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral levels.

1. Select Role

Awardee Appointee

2. Select Career Level

Select

APPLY FILTER

RESET FILTER

K01

Mentored Research Scientist Career Development Award

For support of a postdoctoral or early career research scientists committed to research, in need of both advanced research training and additional experience.

FAQs

- When submitting a K99/R00 application which involves human subjects, do I need a study record for each phase?
- Who do I contact for questions about my specific application?
- If there are problems with eRA Commons registration or with the grants.gov submission process, where can one get help?
- Who do I contact for questions about my specific institutional training application or grant?
- Do Training Grants have pre-award cost authority?
- NIH uses a formula to calculate what would be awarded for tuition/fees and training related expenses on institutional training

Strategies for success



- Pose a clear research question
- Convince the reviewer your study is worth doing
- Sell your research plan—highlight the strengths
- Identify weaknesses and explain how you will deal with them
- Tailor your application to the funding agency
- Obtain feedback from your collaborators, consultants, and others

Clin-STAR
Clinician - Scientists Transdisciplinary
Aging Research Coordinating Center

ABOUT ▾ DATABASE FUNDING ▾ RESOURCES ▾ **NEWS & EVENTS ▾**

Career Resources

- 2020 Office Hours Schedule & Sign-Up
- Journey Stories
- NIH Diversity Supplements Webinar (University of California, Global Health Institute)
- BMJ Author Hub: Get your research published, discovered and cited
- Writing an Effective "K" Application (video guide)
- Guidance on Applying to NIH Grants
- Do-It-Yourself Dissemination Toolkit (Johns Hopkins University)
- Edge for Scholars
- National Research Mentoring Network (Unconscious Bias Course)

Research Resources

- COVID-19 Research Resources
- Research Tools & Resources
- Diagnostic and Treatment Tools
- Biospecimens & Data Sharing
- NIA & VA Center Programs
- Repository of IRB and DSMB Materials for Deprescribing Studies
- NIH All About Grants Podcasts
- Reframing Aging Initiative Research Resources
- Other funding opportunities
- Archived webinars

Clin-STAR Webinars
Events
Interviews
News

<https://clin-star.org/news-and-events>

Further Information

- Marcel Salive, MD, MPH
 - 301/496-5278
 - Marcel.Salive@nih.gov



Get weekly updates on NIA funding policies and research priorities.

Subscribe

www.nia.nih.gov/research/blog

Take Home Points

- NIA is happy to help you – please contact NIAGEMSSTAR@mail.nih.gov
- Ponder your research and career trajectories
- Clear, Concise, Passionate Writing
- Follow ALL Instructions
- Please pack LOTS of PATIENCE for this journey
- START EARLY, seek lots of feedback

BEST WISHES!!!

NIAGEMSSTAR@MAIL.NIH.GOV

Q&A Session

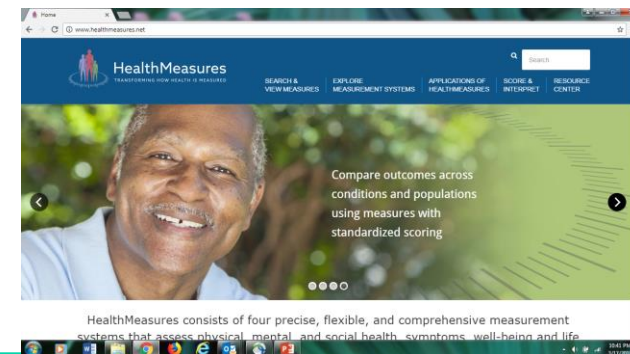




Measurement in Clinical Studies

- Importance of common measures across studies
- Importance of valid, psychometrically sound measures that are brief, easy to use, have low subject burden
- Address needs of NIH researchers via NIH Common Fund and Blueprint for Neuroscience Research initiatives

<https://www.healthmeasures.net/>



Q&A Session

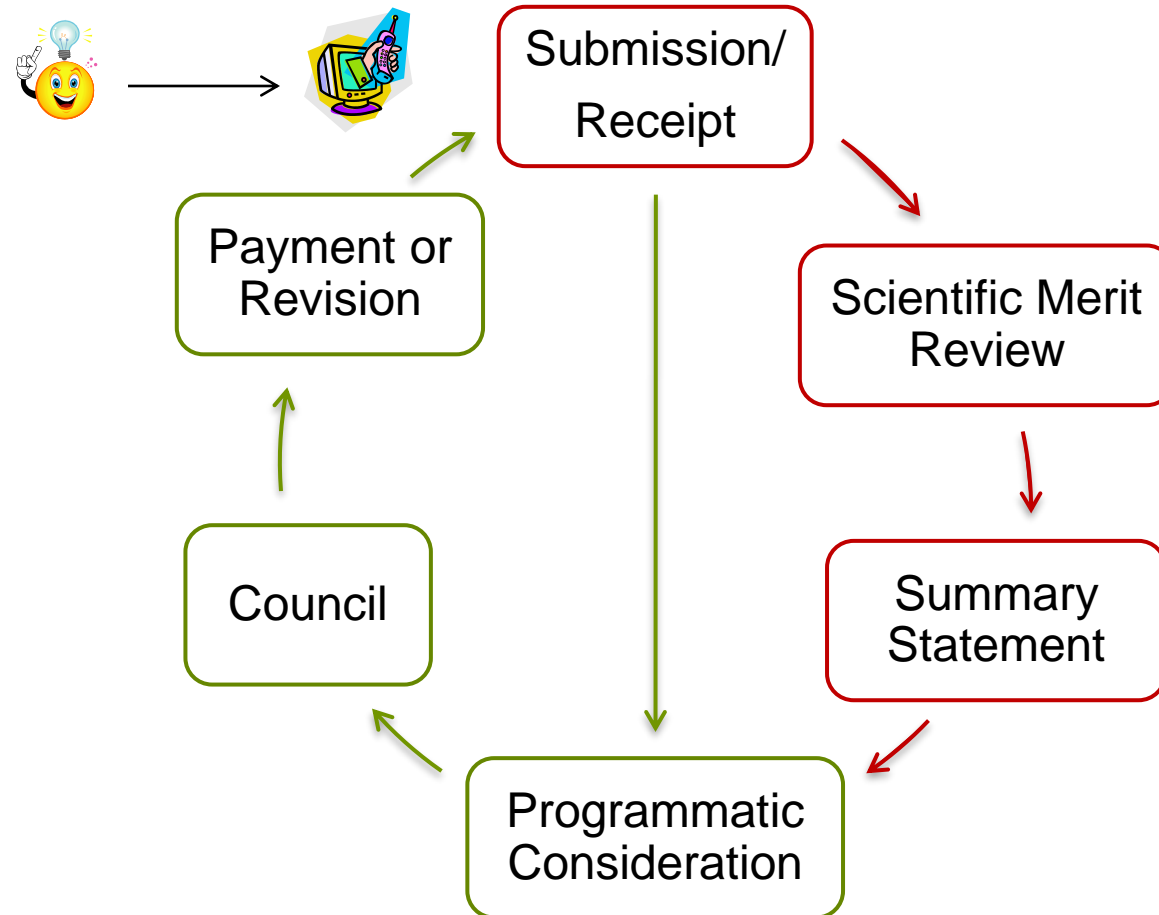


Ponder Your Current Situation and Your Ideal Journey Ahead.....

- Ideal Day
- Research Trajectory
 - Significance of each part
- Skill, Training Trajectory
- Mentoring
- Resources
- Know academic currency
- Know how to say yes and no
- Reexamine journey frequently and adjust
- Training, mentorship
- Protected Time
- Resources (lab, infrastructure)
- Realistic Budget/time to perform the RIGHT Study
- Don't try to play the system, let the system work for you
 - Don't fit your research into an FOA, find the FOA to fund your research
- Look for synergy w clinical career, collaboration, leverage resources, multiple funding
- **Discuss with your mentor, and PO**



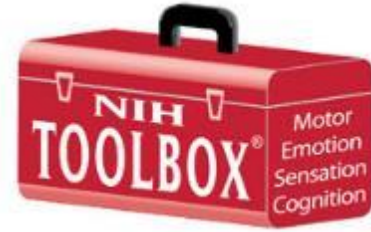
With Whom do I Communicate When?





NIH Toolbox[®] for Assessment of Neurological and Behavioral Function

- Performance measures of cognitive, motor and sensory function; self-report measures of emotional function
- Ages 3 – 85 years
- English & Spanish versions – available in other select languages
- For use on iPad



www.nihtoolbox.org

https://www.healthmeasures.net/images/nihtoolbox/NIH_Toolbox_brochure_June_2017.pdf

Communicating with Program Officers

- We are a limited commodity but here to help!!
- Email query rather than call (we telework and attend meetings)- use GEMSSTAR Email (NIAGEMSSTAR@mail.nih.gov)
- Send draft of specific aims and questions with initial contact
- The earlier the contact, the more beneficial the advice.
- We will help to connect you with the most appropriate PO(s)
- The more you prepare, the better the information you'll get!
- Mentors, collaborators welcome on calls.
- We talk amongst each other and have the same information. Please avoid searching for additional info from multiple POs.
- *We do not participate in peer review process.*



Clinical Resources

- Health and Retirement Study (HRS)
- National Alzheimer's Coordinating Center (NACC)
- Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative (ADNI)
- NIA Genetics of Alzheimer's Disease Data Storage Site (NIAGADS)
- Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging (<https://www.blsa.nih.gov/>) – NIA Intramural Research Program

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/resources>

MEASURES

Patient Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System PROMIS[®]

- Self-report measures
- Assessments of global, physical, social health
- Adults and children in the general population and those living with a chronic condition
- English & Spanish versions – available in other select languages



<https://www.healthmeasures.net/explore-measurement-systems/promis/>



Still in the test kitchen!

- **Advancing Reliable Measurement in Alzheimer's Disease and Cognitive Aging (ARMADA)**
 - Validation of NIH Toolbox measures in aMCI, early stage AD; extend age range beyond 85
- **Mobile Toolbox**
 - Cognitive measures for self-administration on Android and iOS platforms
- **MyCog**
 - Brief cognitive impairment screening battery
- **ToolboxDetect**
 - Validation study of cognitive screening instruments for use in clinical setting and incorporation into EHR