NIH FORMS VERSION I
RESEARCH PROPOSAL CHECKLIST
Updated June 10, 2026

The following checklist is designed for most National Institutes of Health research (e.g., R01, R21, etc.) proposals. The checklist is designed to assist PIs in responding to a NIH funding opportunity announcement (FOA). Kindly note that particular FOAs (Fellowships, STTR/SBIR, Training, etc.) have specific requirements that may not be included in this checklist. ***This document is designed only to serve as a project management tool. It does NOT replace the detailed information available within the FOA, and the funding agency's forms, instructions, and review criteria.*** **For any questions, please refer to the FOA, contact your program officer, or contact your ORA Contract Administrator.**

When submitting NIH proposals, complete in ASSIST

FORMATTING BASICS

- Font Size: 11 pt or larger
- Recommended Fonts: Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype
- No headers or footers
- No page numbers
- Use section headings
- File names are 50 characters or less (no special characters: "&", "*", "%", "#", or "/" in file name)
- Margins: Minimum of ½ inch margins on all sides
- Hyperlinks: Typically limited to citing relevant publications in biosketches and publication lists only. See NOT-OD-20-174 and the NIH Format Attachments page.

****This list is not exhaustive.** **All formatting requirements are here:**
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/format-attachments.htm

RESOURCES

SF424 Application Guide | Standard Due Dates
Page Limits | UMD Standard Institutional Information

✔	Proposal Component	Notes	SF424 Guide Reference
	SF424 (R&R) Form	**Title**: limited to 200 characters, including spaces and punctuation **EIN**: 1520710851-A1 If you check the "Changed/Corrected Application' box, then "Field 4.c Previous Grants.gov Tracking ID" is required	G.200
	PHS 398 Cover Page Supplement		G.210
	RR Other Project Information	▪ **Human Subject Assurance Number:** IRB FWA: 00005856 ▪ **Need help determining whether your application includes human subjects?** Check out the NIH Human Subjects Research website for information, including a Decision Tool to help make the determination. ▪ **Justification Requirement:** If your application proposes using human specimens or data but you mark **"No"** to the "Are Human Subjects Involved?" question, you **must provide a clear justification** explaining why this does not constitute human subjects research ▪ **Animal Welfare Assurance Number:** IACUC OLAW: D16-00172 ▪ **International Collaborators:** Include a "Foreign Justification" attachment in Field 12 - Other Attachments. ▪ **Project Summary/Abstract:** 30 lines of text ▪ **Project Narrative:** limited to three (3) sentences ▪ **Bibliography/Reference Cited:** Must include PubMed Central or NIHMS reference #, if applicable (when applicant (PI) is the author or co-author of the article)If a PMCID is not yet available because the journal is submitting articles directly to PMC, you should indicate **"PMC Journal - In Process"**	G.220 G.220.7 G.220.8 G.220.9 G.220.10 G.220.11 G.220.12

		▪ **Facilities and Other Resources:** The following categories should be addressed: Laboratory | Clinical | Animal | Computer | Office | Other Resources Requires description of scientific environment, and how it will contribute to the success of the project. ▪ **Equipment:** List major items of equipment already available for this project and, if appropriate, identify location and pertinent capabilities. ▪ **Other Attachments**: Use only in accordance with the FOA and/or agency-specific instructions. Upload foreign justification for international collaborators.	
	RR Performance Sites Form	Include primary and all other applicable performance sites (e.g., subaward locations, fieldwork sites)	G.230
	RR Key Personnel Form	▪ **Key Personnel Form**: Complete for PI/PD and all other Senior/Key personnel (as outlined in the FOA). Enter the highest degree/credentials and year obtained for each personnel listed. Key personnel must have an eRA Commons ID. ▪ **Biosketch:** Complete for PI/PD, all other Senior/Key personnel, and other significant contributors. ▫ **UPDATED!** Per NOT-26-079: As of May 8, 2026, applicants are now required to use Science Experts Network Curriculum Vitae (SciENcv) to complete the Biographical Sketch Common Form and the NIH Biographical Sketch Supplement. The digitally certified PDF(s) must be included in applications. **Do not flatten this PDF attachment.** ▫ Complete biosketch instructions can be found here. FAQs can be found here. ▫ Applicants are required to have an ORCID ID. **This must be linked with their eRA Commons profiles.** ▫ **Citations & URLs:** ▫ The only citations allowed on the Biographical Sketch Common Form are in the 5 Products Most Closely Related to the Proposed Project and the 5 Other Significant Products. These may include URLs, but no other URLs or hyperlinks are allowed. ▫ **Do not** provide full bibliographic citations or include hyperlinked references in the NIH Biographical Sketch Supplement. **Follow the hyperlink guidance in NOT-OD-20-174** and the **NIH Format Attachments page** ▪ **Current & Pending Support:** Not applicable unless required by the FOA.	G.240
	Budget	▪ **R&R (Detailed) Budget:** Used when applying for more than $250,000 per budget period in direct costs. ▪ **R&R Subaward Budget:** Required when the prime grantee is submitting an R&R Budget Form and has subaward/consortium budget(s). **NEW! Foreign Subawards:** **Applications submitted after the issuance of NOT-OD-25-104 that propose foreign subawards will not be accepted. Per NOT-OD_25-155** Monetary foreign collaborations are now restricted to applications responding to a **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)** specifically designated for funded foreign collaborations (e.g., PF5 or UF5 structures). In these designated NOFOs, the foreign component must be supported as a **distinct multi-project component** Unfunded collaborations and use of equipment at a foreign site are not affected by this new policy. This policy also does not apply to funds provided to support foreign consultants or purchasing unique equipment or supplies from foreign vendors.	G.300 G.310

		▪ **PHS 398 Modular Budget:** Used when applying for less than $250,000 per budget period in direct costs. Direct costs are requested in modules of $25,000.	G.320
Special Budget Protocols		▪ NOT-OD-26-019, eliminates the $500,000 Prior Approval Requirement. The requirement to seek prior approval for unsolicited applications requesting $500,000 or more in direct costs in any single budget period has been removed. It is longer required to contact a funding Institute or Center (IC) before submitting a high-budget application and no need to include a cover letter identifying a Program Official or documenting that an IC has agreed to accept the application. ▪ Budget adheres to all NIH and FOA requirements - including the salary cap ▪ **If a Data Management and Sharing (DMS) Plan is required in the proposed application,** costs to support these activities may be requested in the appropriate cost category. Details regarding Data Management and Sharing costs must be specified in the Budget Justification attachment (L), pursuant to the instructions.	
	Budget Justification	▪ **R&R (Detailed Budget):** Budget Justification should explain detailed categorical information and any exclusions applied to the F&A base calculation. ▫ **UPDATED! If a DMS Plan is required in the proposed application**, include a brief justification of the proposed activities that will incur costs. The Data Management and Sharing justification must be clearly labeled as "Data Management and Sharing Justification" within the budget justification attachment followed by the estimated dollar amount (total direct costs). Provide a brief summary of type and amount of scientific data to be preserved and shared and the name of the established repository(ies) where they will be preserved and shared. Indicate general cost categories such as curating data and developing supporting documentation, local data management activities, preserving and sharing data through established repositories, etc., including an amount for each category and a brief explanation. Specify in the justification if no costs will be incurred for Data Management and Sharing, if applicable. The recommended length of the justification should be no more than half a page. For more information, see Budgeting for Data Management & Sharing on the NIH Scientific Data Sharing website and additional details to help Develop Your Budget. ▪ **PHS 398 Modular Budget:** Detailed categorical information is not to be submitted with the application, but include the following (if applicable): ▫ Personnel Justification: List all personnel, including names, percent effort (use the Person Months metric), and roles on the project. Do not include salaries or information on other costs. ▫ Consortium Justification: Provide estimate of total consortium/subaward costs for each budget period, rounded to the nearest $1,000. ▪ List the individuals/organizations with whom consortium or contractual arrangements have been made and indicate whether the collaborating institution is foreign or domestic. Used for any proposed subaward/consortium partners. Provide personnel justification for each. ▫ Additional Narrative Justification: **Required**. If the requested budget requires any additional justification (e.g., variations in the number of modules requested annually, applications submitting a DMS plan, direct costs that were excluded from the total direct costs, off site work, or off-site F&A rate, quotes), include that information in the Additional Narrative Justification attachment. ▪ **Note:** Additional explanation for variations in the number of modules requested annually is not needed in applications to NOFOs with direct cost limits that do not spread evenly across budget periods. ▪ **UPDATED!** If a Data Management and Sharing Plan is required in the proposed application, the Data Management and Sharing justification must be clearly labeled as "Data Management and Sharing Justification" followed by the estimated dollar amount (total direct costs). If no cost will be incurred, enter "0" for the estimated dollar amount. Also include a brief justification of the proposed activities that will incur costs. Provide a brief summary of the type and amount of scientific data to be preserved and shared and the name of the established repository(ies) where they will be preserved and shared. Indicate general cost categories such as curating data and developing supporting documentation, local data management considerations, preserving and sharing data	G.300 G.310 G.320

		through established repositories, etc., including an amount for each category and a brief explanation. The recommended length of the justification should be no more than half a page.	
	PHS 398 Research Plan	▪ **Introduction:** For resubmission or revision applications only, unless otherwise specified in the NOFO. Limit one page. ▪ **Specific Aims:** 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 have on the research field(s) involved. Limit one page (check NIH Table of Page Limits), unless otherwise specified in the NOFO. ▪ **Research Strategy:** Page limit varies by project type. Consult the NIH Table of Page Limits. Unless otherwise specified in the NOFO, start each section with the appropriate headings in the following order: Significance, Innovation, and Approach (includes Preliminary Studies for New Applications and Progress Report for Renewal/Revision Applications). ▪ **Progress Report Publication List**: Only for renewal applications. ▪ **Vertebrate Animals:** Required if vertebrate animals are involved, or if you answered "Yes" to the question #2 "Are Vertebrate Animals Used?" on the Other Project Information Form. See Section G.400.5 for additional guidance. ▪ **Select Agent Research:** Required if select agents are involved. See section G.400.6 for additional guidance. ▪ **Multiple PI/PD Leadership Plan:** Required for multi-PD/PI projects. For background information, see the NIH Multiple Principal Investigators page. See G.400.7 for Renewal and Resubmission applications. ▪ **Consortium/Contractual Arrangement:** Required if subrecipients are included. ▪ **Letters of Support:** Attach all appropriate letters of support, including any letters necessary to demonstrate the support of consortium participants and collaborators such as Senior/Key Personnel and Other Significant Contributors included in the grant application. ▪ **Resource Sharing Plan:** This section should include the following. The Data Management and Sharing and Genomic Data sharing Plans are now included in Other Plans (see below). ▪ Sharing Model Organisms – Required when proposing to develop model organisms regardless of amount requested. ▪ Research Tools: Required when Research Tools / resources have been developed with NIH funds. See also NIH GPS 8.2.3. ▪ **Other Plans: (Data Management and Sharing Plan)** Recommended not to exceed two pages. Sample format available on Data Management and Sharing Plan Format Page. Refer to the list of NIH activity codes subject to the DMS Policy and your NOFO to determine if your application is required to provide an attachment and address a Data Management and Sharing (DMS) Plan. Applicants proposing to conduct research that will generate scientific data are subject to the NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy and must attach a DMS Plan. ▪ Genomic Data Sharing – Include as a part of the DMS Plan when seeking funding for research that generates large-scale human or non-human genomic data. See more information on the NIH Genomic Data Sharing (GDS) Policy and applicability of the GDS policy. ▪ **Authentication of Key Biological and/or Chemical Resources:** Suggested maximum 1 page; briefly describe methods to ensure the identity and validity of key biological and/or chemical resources used in the proposed studies. ▪ **Appendix:** Include if applicable; check NOFO for specific instructions. Do not use to circumvent page limits. See NOT-OD-17-098 and G.400.13 regarding allowable appendix materials. Max 10 PDF attachments allowed; if more than 10 are needed, combine	G.400.1 G.400.2 G.400.3 G.400.4 G.400.5 G.400.6 G.400.7 G.400.8 G.400.9 G.400.10 G.400.11 G.400.12 G.400.13

		remaining info into attachment #10.	
	PHS Human Subjects and Clinical Trials Information Form	▪ For detailed information, visit the NIH Human Subjects Research website. ▪ **Use of Human Specimens and/or Data:** Required regardless of response to question #1 "Are Human Subjects Involved?" on the **RR Other Project Information Form**. ▪ **Delayed Onset Study**: Required only when human subjects research is anticipated within the period of award but definite plans cannot be described in the application. ▪ **Study Record and Attachments:** Required for any project involving Human Subjects and/or Clinical Trials.	G.500
	PHS Assignment Request Form	Optional.	G.600