

NIDA–Inserm Drug Abuse Research Fellowship

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APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Application Deadline: October 15
Notification of Award: December 1
Begin Fellowship by: March 1

The NIDA–Inserm Postdoctoral Drug Abuse Research Fellowship provides a unique opportunity for U.S. and French scientists to obtain postdoctoral training with French and U.S. mentors, respectively. The binational postdoctoral research fellowships are cosponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) International Program and Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (Inserm).

Each fellow benefits from an intensive research training experience designed to enhance the fellow's ability to conduct independent research upon return to his or her home country.

In fiscal year 2014, NIDA will support up to two awards for French scientists to work in the United States with a current NIDA grantee, and Inserm will support up to two awards for U.S. scientists to work in France with a mentor at an Inserm research unit or center.

NIDA–Inserm Fellowships are awarded for a 6- to 12-month continuous period of time with an option to renew the fellowship once. Successful candidates will be required to agree to complete the full 6- or 12-month fellowship period.

WHAT THE FELLOWSHIPS PROVIDE

French scientists spending their fellowship in the United States will receive an annual stipend of \$39,000USD for living and personal expenses and a \$6,000USD stipend to cover the cost of personal health insurance and professional development activities. NIDA will provide one round-trip, economy class airfare for the fellow only.

U.S. scientists spending their fellowship in France will be employed by Inserm under a temporary contract providing an annual salary between 34,200€ and 45,600€ (depending upon the number of years of postdoctoral experience), including personal health insurance. Inserm will provide one round-trip, economy class airfare for the fellow only.

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REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS

French applicants must:

- Hold an earned doctoral degree in medicine or biomedical sciences.
- Have completed a *minimum* of 2 years of postdoctoral research demonstrating the ability to engage in independent research.
- Be a citizen or permanent resident of France.
- Live and work in France at the time the application is submitted.
- Be eligible for a J-1 visa to enter the United States.
- Be proficient in written and spoken English.

U.S. applicants must:

- Hold an earned doctoral degree in medicine or biomedical sciences.
- Have completed a *minimum* of 2 years of postdoctoral research demonstrating the ability to engage in independent research.
- Be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
- Live and work in the United States at the time the application is submitted.
- Be eligible for a temporary-stay visa to work in France.
- Preference will be given to applicants who are proficient in written and spoken French.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MENTORS

French mentors must:

- Be among those suggested to the U.S. applicant by the Inserm Thematic Institute on Neurosciences, Cognitive Sciences, Neurology and Psychiatry.
- Be conducting research in computational neuroscience, bioinformatics, statistics, genetics, epigenetics, neurobiology, or clinical trials in drug abuse and addiction.

U.S. mentors must:

- Be a current NIDA grantee conducting research in computational neuroscience, bioinformatics, statistics, genetics, or epigenetics whose grant will be active throughout the proposed fellowship period.
- Work at an institution that sponsors the U.S. Department of State “J” Exchange Visitor Program and can prepare and issue the requisite Form DS-2019 for the NIDA–Inserm applicant and his/her dependents.

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APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The NIDA–Inserm Drug Abuse Research Fellowship application requires careful and thorough coordination between the applicant and mentor, but there are different application procedures for French and U.S. applicants.

French applicants wishing to conduct research in the United States must:

- Contact an eligible researcher who is willing to serve as a mentor. Mentors in the United States must be a current NIDA grantee conducting research in computational neuroscience, bioinformatics, statistics, genetics, or epigenetics whose grant will be active throughout the proposed fellowship period.
- Notify the NIDA International Program of your plans to apply.
- Write a three- to five-page Research Plan for working with the mentor to investigate computational neuroscience, bioinformatics, statistics, genetics, or epigenetics, in drug abuse and addiction.
- Have the mentor complete his or her section of the application.
- Have the mentor complete and submit the application to the NIDA International Program.

U.S. applicants wishing to conduct research in France must:

- Notify the NIDA International Program of your plans to apply.
- Submit a CV and cover letter to the Inserm Thematic Institute on Neurosciences, Cognitive Sciences, Neurology and Psychiatry, which will then suggest a few researchers who would be eligible to serve as potential mentors.
- Contact one of the suggested researchers to see if he or she is willing to serve as a mentor.
- Write a three- to five-page Research Plan for working with the mentor to investigate computational neuroscience, bioinformatics, statistics, genetics, epigenetics, neurobiology, or clinical trials in drug abuse and addiction.
- Have the mentor complete his or her section of the application.
- Have the mentor complete and submit the application to the Head of the Inserm Thematic Institute on Neurosciences, Cognitive Sciences, Neurology and Psychiatry.

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APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Incomplete applications will *NOT* be reviewed.**
2. Applications must be typewritten, single-spaced, and single-sided. Applications must be written in English language only.
3. Applicant must complete Part I, items 1–12, Part III, items 1 and 2, and all items listed in Part V, Part VI, and Part VII.
4. Applicant should attach all supporting documents listed on Part IV–Application Checklist. Applicant should ensure he/she has signed the application on page 1, Part III, items 1 and 2.
5. Applicant should forward his/her completed sections of the application to the eligible U.S. or French scientist who has agreed to be his/her mentor.
6. The mentor will then complete Part II, items 13–18 and Part III, items 3 and 4. The mentor also must complete all items listed in Part VIII, Part IX, Part X, and Part XI.
 - ***French applicants:*** On Part XI–Sponsoring Institution Certifications and Assurances, signatures are required from the U.S. **mentor, the department head, and an official signing for the sponsoring institution.** The *sponsoring institution official* must be a separate individual from the mentor.
 - ***U.S. applicants:*** On Part XI–Sponsoring Institution Certifications and Assurances, signatures are required from the French **mentor** (the supervising scientist at the host laboratory), the **director of the host laboratory**, and the **Inserm Regional Delegate**).
7. The mentor should attach all supporting documents listed on Part IV–Application Checklist. The mentor should ensure he/she has signed the application in Part III, items 3 and 4.
8. Once all signatures are secured and supporting documents attached, the mentor should submit the application.
 - ***French applicants:*** The U.S. mentor should submit the application to the NIDA International Program.
 - ***U.S. applicants:*** The French mentor should submit the application to Inserm.

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PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

On the **Reference Report**, the applicant completes Part I of the form. The applicant should provide a copy of the Reference Report form to each of the two professional references.

Each reference will complete Part II of the Reference Report including the rating scale. Each reference also must attach a letter of reference as explained in Part III. Each reference must submit the completed Reference Report and letter of reference directly to the NIDA International Program or Inserm **by email**.

APPLICATION AND REFERENCE SUBMISSION

Submit the completed documents **electronically** by the **October 15** deadline to:

French applicants:

NIDA International Program
c/o IQ Solutions, Inc.
11300 Rockville Pike, Suite 901
Rockville, MD 20852 USA
Telephone: +1-301-984-1471
Fax: +1-301-984-1473
Email: ip@nida.nih.gov

U.S. applicants:

Departement of National and Foreign
Affairs
Inserm
101 Rue de Tolbiac - 75013 Paris - France
Telephone: +33 1 44 23 61 80
Email: Agnès Kergus
(agnes.kergus@inserm.fr) **and** Philippe
Arhets (philippe.arhets@inserm.fr)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- www.international.drugabuse.gov
- Email: ip@nida.nih.gov

OR

philippe.arhets@inserm.fr
agnes.kergus@inserm.fr

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PREPARING YOUR NIDA–INSERM FELLOWSHIP RESEARCH PLAN

The Research Plan (Part VI) is the most important part of the application. This section should be well formulated and presented in sufficient detail so that reviewers can evaluate its scientific merit. The applicant should actively seek the advice and cooperation of the mentor while preparing the Research Plan. The mentor's collaboration is important, but the *applicant* must write the Research Plan. Be specific and informative, and avoid redundancy. Brevity and clarity in the description of the Research Plan are considered indicative of an applicant's approach to the research objective and ability to conduct a superior project. The Research Plan *should not exceed five pages* in addition to the face page. Literature citations are not included in the page limit. The applicant should use the following format:

1. **Specific Aims.** State the specific purposes of the research and the hypotheses to be tested.
2. **Background and Significance.** Briefly describe the background of the Research Plan. This is an important consideration in the initial review of your application. Concisely state the importance of the Research Plan by relating specific aims to broad, long-term objectives.
3. **Research Design and Methods.** Discuss in detail the following:
 - a. The research design and procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims
 - b. Sampling design, if conducting primary data collection
 - c. The analytic plan detailing the statistical approach to addressing the hypotheses
 - d. Any precautions necessary for procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel
 - e. Potential limitations of the proposed project
 - f. The timeline for completion of the proposed investigation
 - g. The contributions that this project will make to the field of drug abuse research.
4. **NIH Regulations on the Conduct of Research.** Research conducted in the United States as part of a NIDA–Inserm Fellowship is subject to the same U.S. Federal regulations, policies, guidelines, and review considerations as are all National Institutes of Health (NIH) research project grant applications. In this section of the Research Plan, applicants must demonstrate that they understand and have planned to comply with those rules, particularly if the research involves human subjects or vertebrate animals. For a complete discussion of the NIH regulations, consult the NIH Grants Policy Statement at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps_2010/index.htm or Part III, Section 2 of the *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service Grant Application, PHS 398 Instructions*, <http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>.

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5. ***Inserm Regulations on the Conduct of Research.*** Research conducted in France as part of a NIDA–Inserm Fellowship is subject to the same French and European regulations, policies, guidelines and review considerations as are all research projects and activities performed within and/or supported by Inserm. In this section of the Research Plan, applicants must demonstrate that they understand and have planned to comply with those rules, particularly if the research involves human subjects or vertebrate animals. For a complete discussion of the Inserm regulations, consult the Inserm website at:

<http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/recherche>

<http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/recherche-pre-clinique>

<http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/ogm>

<http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/importation-et-exportation-d-elements-issus-du-corps-humain>

<http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/conservation-et-preparation-des-elements-issus-du-corps-humain>

<http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/traitement-des-donnees-personnelles>

6. ***Literature Citations.*** Provide literature citations at the end of the Research Plan. Each citation must include the authors' names, book or journal titles, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.
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REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications are peer-reviewed through a competitive process and assessed according to scientific merit, the proposal's relevance to drug abuse and NIDA's and Inserm's research missions, adequacy of the applicant's education and experience to conduct the proposed research, likelihood that the proposed research can be completed within the proposed timeline, and compatibility of the applicant's and mentor's objectives. Several factors may enhance the rating of an application, even though all of these items are not necessarily required.

APPLICANT

- Previous experience and education are commensurate with the proposed study.
- Although not yet considered a senior scientist, the applicant has demonstrated sufficient research experience to successfully complete the proposed study.
- The letters of reference support the applicant's scientific record.
- The applicant has authored a peer-reviewed scientific article in the area of the proposed research.

RESEARCH PLAN

- Describes how the proposed study is unique, how it will expand or advance the field of drug abuse research, and how it is consistent with the applicant's career goals.
- Clearly and concisely states proposed aims, goals, and objectives appropriate to the stated hypotheses, conveying scientific sophistication and strong analytical skills.
- Thoroughly reviews the relevant literature.
- Acknowledges any potential regulatory issues or methodological limitations.
- Clearly states the applicant's role in the proposed research and the collaborative plan between the applicant and the mentor.
- Describes what skills and experiences will be gained in the process of working with the mentor, why that proposed training would not otherwise be available to the applicant, and how those skills will be utilized when the applicant returns home.
- Includes a realistic timeline for completing the proposed study within the fellowship period.

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RESEARCH RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

- Mentor has significant expertise in the research area.
- U.S. mentor has a NIDA grant that will remain active throughout the fellowship period. The French mentor is among those suggested to the U.S. applicant by the Inserm Thematic Institute on Neurosciences, Cognitive Sciences, Neurology and Psychiatry.
- Mentor has experience training fellows or other graduate-level students.
- Mentor’s institution is able to provide the resources necessary for the successful completion of the fellowship.
- Mentor’s research complements the applicant’s proposed study.
- Mentor demonstrates how he/she will ensure that the applicant is knowledgeable about and able to comply with NIH and Inserm regulations regarding the conduct of research.