



NIDA-ANRS Drug Abuse and HIV Research Fellowship Application Instructions

Application Deadline: June 1
Notification Deadline: September 1

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), in partnership with the French National Agency for Research on AIDS and Viral Hepatitis (ANRS), has created a postdoctoral research fellowship to advance scientific understanding of the linkages between drug abuse and HIV while fostering multinational research. This 12-month fellowship provides:

- Rigorous postdoctoral research training with a mentor at a leading research institute who is an expert in HIV-related drug abuse research.
- A stipend of \$42,000US for living and personal expenses, and roundtrip travel, and a \$6,000US allowance to cover the cost of health insurance and professional development activities.

The fellowship stipend may not be supplemented with other funds intended to cover personal expenses, regardless of the source, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or any other U.S. Federal agency. The fellowship funds are not intended to cover direct research expenses, which should be provided for by the host institution, either directly or through grants.

Requirements for Applicants

- Hold an earned doctoral degree in medicine, public health, or biomedical, behavioral, social, or physical sciences. Other fields may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Have a maximum of 8 years of experience beyond the doctoral level.
- Be a citizen or permanent resident of a country other than the United States.
- Live and work outside the United States at the time the application is submitted.
- Be eligible for the required visa and/or work permit in the mentor's country.
- Be able to complete the fellowship continuously for the duration of the award.

If you are unsure if you are eligible to apply for the fellowship, send your questions about eligibility to the NIDA International Program by email at ip@nida.nih.gov.

Requirements for Mentors

- Have a documented record of at least 8 years in research and training in drug abuse and HIV.
- Work and conduct research at an institution different from the applicant.
- Hold an established position at the fellowship host institution for the duration of the awarded fellowship.

- If located in the United States, the mentor's institution must be a sponsor of the U.S. Department of State "J" Exchange Visitor Program and authorized to prepare and issue the requisite Form DS-2019 for the applicant and his/her dependents.

Identifying and Selecting a Mentor

Before contacting a potential mentor, you, the applicant, should:

- Be sure of your eligibility prior to contacting a potential mentor.
- Learn more about the potential mentor you have identified, including scientific discipline and specific research interests, by reviewing the potential mentor's publications, research background, and professional website.
- Write a short summary of your planned research project, defining the scientific discipline (e.g., sociology/anthropology, clinical science, implementation science/operational research) and the country/region of data collection (if applicable). Include information about skills, techniques, and methods you wish to develop during a fellowship.
- Update your resume or curriculum vitae (CV) to ensure your information is current.

When preparing for initial contact with a potential mentor, be prepared to:

- Discuss how your proposed research project is compatible with the mentor's research.
- Provide information about your eligibility, educational and professional background, and the goals of your fellowship and research project.

When contacting potential mentors by email, include a copy of your CV and list of your publications, if applicable. Do not contact more than two or three mentors at the same time.

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. The applicant must complete all applicant sections of the form, ensure he/she has completed the Applicant Certification and Acceptance section, and attach all required supporting documents as listed on the Application Review Checklist.
4. The applicant should forward his/her completed sections of the application to the senior scientist who has agreed to be the fellowship mentor.
5. The mentor must complete all mentor sections of the form, ensure he/she has completed the Mentor Certification and Acceptance section, and attach all required supporting documents as listed on the Application Review Checklist.
6. The applicant's research proposal and the mentor's statement must include assurance that research presented in this application will be conducted in accordance with the protocol approved by the institutional or local committee on ethics in human and animal investigation. Where no such committee exists, the statement is to ensure that the research will be conducted in accordance with the principles of the *Declaration of Helsinki of the World*

Medical Association (WMA) or WMA Statement on Animal Use in Biomedical Research, and the applicant and mentor must read and sign the Acknowledge and Consent Form. When required, the completed form must be included with the application or the application will not be considered.

7. Once the application is completed and all supporting documents are attached, the mentor should submit the application.

Professional References

On the **Reference Report**, the applicant completes the first section of the form. The applicant must then provide a copy of the Reference Report form to each of the two professional references.

Each reference will complete the remaining sections of the form including the rating scale. Each reference also must provide a letter of reference. Completed reference forms and letters are to be sent directly to the NIDA International Program.

Application and Reference Submission

By April 1, the completed documents are to be submitted to the NIDA International Program via email at ip@nida.nih.gov.

Preparing Your Research Plan

The Research Plan is the most important part of the application. The plan 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 three 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 this project will make to the field of HIV-related drug abuse research.

4. **Conduct of Research.**

- a. Research presented in this application must be conducted in accordance with the protocol approved by the institutional or local committee on ethics in human and animal investigation. Where no such committee exists, the research must be conducted in accordance with the principles of the *Declaration of Helsinki of the World Medical Association (WMA)* or *WMA Statement on Animal Use in Biomedical Research*.
- b. Research conducted in the United States as part of a fellowship is subject to the same U.S. Federal regulations, policies, guidelines, and review considerations as are all NIH research project grant applications. 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>.

5. **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.

Review Criteria

Applications are peer-reviewed through a competitive process and assessed according to scientific merit, the proposal's relevance to HIV-related drug abuse, 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.

Research Plan

- Describes how the proposed study is unique, how it will expand or advance the field of HIV-related 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.