How to Win an NIH/Kirschstein/F30-F31 Predoctoral Fellowship -Nuts and Bolts-

James M. Slauch
Dept of Microbiology
Medical Scholars Program

October 9, 2012
What are we talking about?

• Individual fellowships from the National Institutes of Health

• Who’s eligible?
  – Must be a US citizen or permanent resident

• Fund up to 5-6 years of predoctoral training. For MD/PhDs – might pay for some Med school after PhD.
  – Years funded by other NIH training grants are subtracted
  – Up to 5 for straight PhDs; 6 for MD/PhDs
How to Start

• Give yourself plenty of time ~6 weeks
  – More if you project involves animals or humans

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<th>Submission</th>
<th>F30</th>
<th>F31</th>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>August 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>F30</td>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Dec 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scientific Merit</td>
<td>June - July</td>
<td>Oct - Nov</td>
<td>Feb - March</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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<td>Advisory Council</td>
<td>Sept - Oct</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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<td>Earliest Project</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start Date</td>
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Program Announcements

grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/search_results.htm?year=active&scope=pa

• Can be confusing

• F31s
  – PA-11-111  Individual PhD Fellowships
  – PA-11-112  PhD or MD/ PhD Fellowships for under represented minority or disabled students
  – PAR-11-127  NINDS MD/PhD Fellowships

• F30s
  – PA-11-110  MD/PhD Fellowships
  – PA-11-125  NHLBI MD/PhD Fellowships
How to Start

• Read the Program Announcement CAREFULLY

• Why different PAs?
  – Not all Institutes participate in each PA
  – “Spin” your research to fit the Institute

• Download the Application Instructions
  – grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm
  – Individual Fellowship Application Guide SF424 (R&R)
  – Read it carefully – you don’t need to read it all
How to Start

• Other useful documents – on the Grad College Web site
  – Power points from today
  – Guidance for Preparing and Submitting NIH Kirschstein Fellowship Applications through Grants.gov – prepared by OSPRA
  – NRSA Fellowship Application Checklist – prepared by Slauch
How to Start

• Contact your “Grants Administrator” in your Dept
  – Talk to your thesis advisor – who do they go to when filling out an NIH grant?

• The Grants Administrator should download the application package and fill out all the detailed stuff
  – www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp
Register in the ERA Commons

• All PIs need to interact with the NIH via the “Commons”

• Go to the OSPRA website and click on “Contact OSPRA”
  – Choose “Proposal-Submitting” from the subject picklist. In the text box – say:
  – Please register me as a PI in the ERA Commons
    • UIN
    • First & Last Name
    • Date of birth
    • Email
The Application

- The application is a fancy PDF file
The Application

• The application is a fancy PDF file

There are lots of directions for each item
The Application

- Some info is entered directly – the important stuff is uploaded

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**RESEARCH & RELATED Other Project Information**

1. * Are Human Subjects Involved?  
   - Yes  
   - No

   1.a. If YES to Human Subjects
   - Is the Project Exempt from Federal regulations?  
     - Yes  
     - No
   - If yes, check appropriate exemption number.  
     - 1  
     - 2  
     - 3  
     - 4  
     - 5  
     - 6
   - If no, is the IRB review Pending?  
     - Yes  
     - No
   - IRB Approval Date: 
   - Human Subject Assurance Number:

2. * Are Vertebrate Animals Used?  
   - Yes  
   - No

   2.a. If YES to Vertebrate Animals
   - Is the IACUC review Pending?  
     - Yes  
     - No
   - IACUC Approval Date: 
   - Animal Welfare Assurance Number:

3. * Is proprietary/privileged information included in the application?  
   - Yes  
   - No

4. a. * Does this project have an actual or potential impact on the environment?  
   - Yes  
   - No

   4.b. If yes, please explain:

4.c. If this project has an actual or potential impact on the environment, has an exemption been authorized or an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) been performed?  
   - Yes  
   - No

   4.d. If yes, please explain:

5. * Is the research performance site designated, or eligible to be designated, as a historic place?  
   - Yes  
   - No

      5.a. If yes, please explain:

6. * Does this project involve activities outside of the United States or partnerships with international collaborators?  
   - Yes  
   - No
The Application
• Some info is entered directly – the important stuff is uploaded

Do NOT put page numbers on the PDFs you create, but do put titles
Letters of Recommendation

• Ask for your letters at least three weeks in advance (a month’s notice is better).
• Provide your letter writers with a resume as well as a summary of your research interests. They don’t need to see the proposal per se.
• The LORs are submitted electronically. Follow the instruction in section 5.4 of the “Application Guide”.
• You are allowed 3-5 LORs – NOT your advisor.
• You must list the referees BOTH in Item 12 AND in the cover letter.
Letters of Recommendation

• Send an email to each letter writer. **Don’t forget to attach the reference form.**

• Thank you for agreeing to write me a letter of recommendation for my NRSA application. The due date for my application is [August 8]. The letter must be submitted via the eRA Commons at: https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/reference/submitRefereeInformation.jsp

• Please note that you must create a single PDF file that includes the Fellowship Reference Form that is attached. The additional information you need is:
  – PI Commons User ID: [Your Commons ID]
  – PI Last Name: [Your last name]
  – Funding Opportunity Announcement Number: [The appropriate PA number, eg, PA-10-107]

• Full instructions are pasted below: **Part B. Instructions for Referees:**
Stipend and Tuition Projection

• Your grant administrator will provide a projection of tuition and fees for the next six years. This will differ depending on your graduate program.

• You will also need to show this table to the Graduate College Fellowship Office. Note that this projection is your best estimate and you are not limited by what you say here. The Univ actually bills the NIH later based on real costs.
# Choose a Study Section

- [www.csr.nih.gov/Roster_proto/Fellowship_section.asp](http://www.csr.nih.gov/Roster_proto/Fellowship_section.asp)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Scientific Review Officer (SRO)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F01-F (20)</td>
<td>Brain Disorders and Related Neuroscience</td>
<td>VILEN MOVSESYAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>F02A-J (20)</td>
<td>Behavioral Neuroscience</td>
<td>KRISTIN KRAMER</td>
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<tr>
<td>F02B-M (20)</td>
<td>Sensory, Motor, and Cognitive Neuroscience</td>
<td>YUAN LUO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F03A-N (20)</td>
<td>Neurodevelopment, Synaptic Plasticity and Neurodegeneration</td>
<td>MARY SCHUELER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F03B-G (20)</td>
<td>Biophysical and Physiological Neuroscience</td>
<td>PAEK-GYU LEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F04-A (20)</td>
<td>Chemistry, Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Bioengineering</td>
<td>ROSS SHONAT</td>
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<td>Etc........</td>
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</table>
Get Feedback

• Your advisor!
• Others: Fellow students, post-docs, committee members...
• After your advisor has signed off on it:
  – Ken Vickery – Grad College
Application Sign-Off

• Several university officials must sign off on your application
• You must allow sufficient time for each of these entities to act.
• These individuals are not competent to judge the actual proposal. So although you need a “complete” application to get signatures, you can continue to make minor edits to the proposal and upload new PDF files into the master PDF UNTIL it is time to send it to OSPRA.
• The Grants Administrator should fill out a “Transmittal Form”
• For fellowship applications, the Grad College Fellowship Office also needs to sign off. This is not explicitly listed on the transmittal form; rather this is an “other signature if required.”
• Submit completed application that has been reviewed by the appropriate offices (with help from your Grants Administrator) to OSPRA (at least 48 hours in advance).
Application title:

Really cool stuff that you should fund

Funding Opportunity:

PA-11-111  Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Predoctoral Fellows (Parent F31)

Please assign this application to the following:

Institutes/Centers

    National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism – NIAAA
    National Institute on Drug Abuse – NIDA

Scientific Review Groups

    Behavioral Neuroscience - F02A-J (20)

Explain why you asked for this Institute and study section. This could include a statement that you spoke to the Program Officer or SRO and agreed that this was the best fit. Simple example “The proposal is focused on the bacterial pathogen *Salmonella*, specifically related to the genetic and biochemical mechanisms of virulence regulation.”

Letters of recommendation will be sent from:

Lori Raetzman
Dept of Molecular and Integrative Physiology
University of Illinois

Albert Einstein
Institute for Advanced Study
Princeton University

Thank you,

Jane Doe, PI
Other Important Points

• This is a “training grant”. The NIH training record of your thesis advisor matters.

• Ideally, your advisor is:
  – Tenured
  – NIH Funded
  – Has successful PhDs out in the world doing good

• If not, fear not
  – Seek out a “co-advisor” that meets the above criteria
Good Luck!