

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR NIH GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. **Read the funding opportunities announcement:** (FOA) thoroughly and understand all the requirements and the special instructions (section IV of the FOA) for the specific call. Check your eligibility before you meet with Research Grant Management Office (RGMO). Read the document **“Responsibility of Principal Investigators (PI’s)”**
2. **Start early to submit early:** Before the submission due date you have 2 days to review your application online for correctness. See the **Regulation of Timelines** document.
3. **Contact RGMO ASAP:** Please be advised that you must contact the Research Grants Management Office (RGMO) **ASAP but not later 30 days before** the submission date, Mr Eugene Baugaard (eugeneb@sun.ac.za), or as soon as you commit to apply for an NIH grant. Ask him to assign a project manager to assist with the budget.
4. **The grant is submitted institutionally:** i.e. only the RGMO can submit the grant.
5. **Due Dates:** Please note that all your final documents must be ready for submission **at least 7 workdays before** the submission due date. The **submission date is 2 days before the NIH application due date.**
6. **The researcher MUST be available** when submitting to deal with error messages.
7. **Identify the USA or other collaborator(s) early.** SA PI is the contact PI and SU FMHS is the contact institution if we submit the grant. If it is a Multi-Pi program you have to write a Multi-PI leadership plan
8. **Assemble the team:** Think carefully about Key Personnel (KP) too many KP’s will create an administrative burden later.
9. **Contact the Program Officer** –Scientific /Research Contact to discuss the scope of work. See list of Institutes and Offices involved in the FOA and read about their vision, mission and strategy on their webpages. Make sure your application fits in with their vision.
10. All PIs needs **eRA commons registration** names. The RGMO will register the PI.
11. **Letters of support (LOS):** e.g. from institutions, department of health, collaborators and FMHS leadership. No page limitation but letter from FMHS must state the PIs eligibility to apply. The letters of support must be very specific in terms of the support that will make the application a success. E.g. laboratory equipment only available in the supporter’s lab, mentor because of relevant experience etc.
12. **Award goes to the SA institution** (not a person) and US Collaborator will be paid back from \$ Account
13. **Spell Check:** Use American /US English Spelling.
14. **All Key Personnel must be on the budget,** complete a **5 page biosketch** (Use SciENCv to create the NIH biosketch: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>) , KP Profile and the Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) forms.
15. **Formats for ALL documents:**
 - i. *Letter format with margins of 1.27cm.*
 - ii. *Font Arial 11,*
 - iii. *Single spacing*
 - iv. *No headers and footers, not even page numbers*
 - v. *Use bold for Headings. E.g. “RESEARCH PLAN”, “Innovation”*

16. **Long title of the project** is limited to 200 characters including letters, numbers, spaces and punctuation
17. **Project start date and end date**
18. **Research Strategy:** R21 = 6 pages; RO1 = 12 Pages; UO1 =12 Pages. Make this pleasing for the reviewer to make his job easier! The timeline and the budget must match the scope of the research. It must be clear and concise. Add visuals: tables and figures must be well labelled, be very organised. Anticipate questions and address them. You can discuss opposing literature but do not include statements that are well-known facts! **Significance and Innovation:** long-term plan, preliminary data, roadblocks, how to move the research field further, must be unique. **Approach:** enough detail, anticipated results, alternative methods, give enough to value. Literature citations are not part of the page limits.
19. **Specific Aims:** 1 page. Do not make aims dependent on each other. Add paragraph if it does not work what then. Do not be over ambitious or open-ended. Write the aims in 2 sections) the rationale and significance of the planned research. Include sentence that states the project goals
20. **Leadership Plan:** Max 5 pages. If it is a multi-PI application, it is mandatory to write this plan. What is the rationale for choosing multi-PI? Describe the governance, organization structure of the leadership team, include communication plans, decision-making process for scientific work, publications etc., resolving conflict, Roles and responsibilities, working relationship. *See NIH Website for examples.* **Collaboration Plan:** this is a multi-PI application and it is mandatory to write this plan. It is attached in "other attachments". Define interaction. **Communication Plan:** if it is a multi-PI application and it is mandatory to write this plan. It is attached in "other attachments". Define who you will communicate.
21. **Salaries and effort of all Key Personnel.** Must include effort even if salary is 100% paid already. Provide effort, e.g. for a UO1 the NIH PI will not receive a salary. Fill in 0.00.
22. **Budget Justifications** are very important. Roles of all staff must be explained.
23. **Subcontract Documents** – these documents must **reach RGMO 7 days before the internal submission** dates
 - i. Biosketches for all Key Personnel – 5 page format <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>
 - ii. Budget of Subcontract collaborator for all periods of the application
 - iii. Budget justifications for all periods
 - iv. R&R budget form
 - v. Letter(s) of Support from the PI and head of the department or faculty and state exactly how will the subcontractor support this study
 - vi. Checklist form to show indirect cost
 - vii. Face Page PHS398 signed by the signing official of the institution
 - viii. Institutional Letter of Support/Intent – this differs from the normal letter of support. This is the contract document. It include budget amounts and is signed off by the signing official of the institution. The letter must include PI name, Institutional DUNS number, budget amount, period of award, scope of work (what will the collaborator do. It must relate to th personal statements of the KP's) – see template.
 - ix. Profile of Key Personnel
 - x. Project Performance site location
 - xi. Financial Conflict of Interest forms – complete appendix 2