

U.S.–Mexico Drug Abuse Prevention Research Fellowship

Prevention Research Fellowship

Annual Application Deadline: April 1

Application Instructions

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute of Psychiatry Ramón de la Fuente Muñiz (NIP), along with the participation of the National Commission Against Addictions (CONADIC) and the Society for Prevention Research (SPR), have established the United States (U.S.)–Mexico Drug Abuse Prevention Research Fellowship (Prevention Research Fellowship), an exchange program of scientific collaboration and training. The fellowship is part of the ongoing collaborative efforts between the United States and Mexico to prevent drug use initiation, progression to abuse and dependence, and drug-related HIV transmission.

The Prevention Research Fellowship provides a unique opportunity for Mexican researchers to obtain postdoctoral training with a U.S. mentor whose NIDA-funded grant will be active throughout the proposed fellowship period. Prevention Research Fellows benefit from an intensive research training experience designed to enhance the fellows' ability to conduct independent research upon return to Mexico. Applicants and their U.S. mentor may propose to conduct their research in any area of drug abuse prevention research, such as prevention intervention research, prevention services research, prevention methodology, or drug abuse prevention as HIV/AIDS prevention.

Prevention Research Fellowships are awarded for 1 year. During the fellowship, the fellow receives training in drug abuse research methods, develops and conducts a research project with the U.S. mentor, and participates in professional development activities. Fellows also learn about the National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant application process from their U.S. mentor who has successfully sought NIDA support.

The fellow receives a stipend of \$39,000US to cover living expenses. The fellowship also provides round-trip travel for the fellow only and a \$6,000US allowance to cover the cost of health insurance and professional development activities.

Prevention Research Fellows and their U.S. mentors join a network of international scientists who exchange information and collaborate on drug abuse research nationally, regionally, and globally.

Eligibility

Requirements for Prevention Research Fellowship *applicants* include:

- An earned doctoral degree in medicine, public health, or biomedical, behavioral, or social science.
- A *minimum* of 2 years of postdoctoral research experience including a demonstrated ability to engage in independent research.

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- Written letter provided by applicant’s current employer which provides assurance of the applicant’s future position and that prevention research will be part of his or her future duties.
- Proficiency in written and spoken English.
- Citizenship or permanent residency in Mexico.
- Living and working outside the United States at the time the application is submitted.
- Eligibility for a J-1 visa to enter the United States.

Requirements for Prevention Research Fellowship *mentors* include:

- Must be a NIDA-funded grantee whose grant will be active throughout the proposed fellowship period.
- Mentor’s institution must be a sponsor for the U.S. Department of State “J” Exchange Visitor Program, and the mentor’s institution must be eligible to prepare and issue the requisite Form DS-2019 for the Prevention Research Fellowship applicant and his/her dependents.

Application Overview

NIDA encourages outstanding early-career scientists to apply for the competitive Prevention Research Fellowship. Interested persons should:

1. Contact a NIDA-supported researcher in the United States who is willing to serve as a mentor and develop a joint research plan for the fellowship application. For assistance in locating a potential mentor:
 - Examine the NIH public database RePORTER (listing research supported by NIH) at <http://projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm>.
 - Review journals online at PubMed at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>.
 - Read about the John E. Fogarty International Center international research programs at <http://www.fic.nih.gov/>.
 - Review the NIDA International Program Web listing of past fellows and mentors at <http://international.drugabuse.gov/index.html> .

For additional assistance, please email the NIDA International Program at ip@nih.nida.gov or Jacqueline Lloyd at lloydj2@nida.nih.gov.
2. Write a detailed plan for working with the U.S. mentor (a NIDA grantee) to conduct drug abuse prevention research in such areas as prevention intervention research, prevention services research, prevention methodology, or drug abuse prevention as HIV/AIDS prevention. Follow the detailed application instructions below.
3. Complete the application, which requires contributions from the applicant, the applicant’s current employer, the applicant’s references, the mentor, and the mentor’s institution.

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Application Deadline: April 1

Notification of Award: December 1

- Fellowships awarded in April must begin by December 31 of the same year.

Application Instructions

1. Incomplete applications will **NOT** be reviewed.
2. Applications must be type-written, single-spaced and single-sided, in black ink. Applications must be written in English language only.
3. Applicant must complete page 1, Part I, items 1–12 and Part III, items 1 and 2. Applicant also must complete page 2, Applicant section, along with pages 3–8 and page 13, Part I.
4. Applicant should attach all supporting documents listed on the Application Checklist, page 2. Applicant should ensure he/she has signed the application on page 1, Part III, items 1 and 2.
5. Applicant should forward his/her section of the application to the NIDA grantee who has agreed to be his/her U.S. mentor, and also ensure that the ORIGINAL of page 1 has been sent to the mentor to obtain his/her original signature.
6. The mentor will then complete page 1, Part II, items 1–5 and Part III, items 3 and 4. The mentor also must complete page 2, Mentor section, along with pages 9–12.

On page 12, Part XI – Sponsoring Institution Certifications and Assurances, signatures are required from the mentor, **the department head**, and **an official signing for the sponsoring institution**. The *sponsoring institution* official must be a separate individual from the mentor.

Once all signatures are secured, the mentor should submit the completed application to the NIDA International Program.

7. The mentor will obtain, from his or her institution, a letter confirming the institution as a sponsor for the U.S. State Department “J” Exchange Visitor Program and the institution’s eligibility to prepare and issue the requisite Form DS-2019 for the Prevention Research Fellowship applicant and his/her accompanying dependents.

Professional References

On page 13, Reference Report, the applicant must complete Part I of the form. The applicant should provide a copy of the Reference Report form to each of the three professional references (preferably one from the home country supervisor and two from research colleagues).

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

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reference must submit the completed Reference Report and letter of reference directly to the NIDA International Program.

Application and Reference Submission

Submit the completed application by the April 1 deadline to:

U.S.–Mexico Drug Abuse Prevention Research Fellowship Program
NIDA International Program
c/o IQ Solutions, Inc.
11300 Rockville Pike, Suite 901
Rockville, Maryland 20852 USA
Telephone: +1-301-984-1471 | Fax: +1-301-984-1473
Email: ip@nida.nih.gov

For More Information

- <http://www.international.drugabuse.gov>
- Email: ip@nida.nih.gov or Jacqueline Lloyd at lloydj2@nida.nih.gov

Preparing Your Prevention Research Fellowship Research Proposal

The Research Proposal (Application form pages 5–7) 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 U.S. mentor while preparing the Research Proposal. The U.S. mentor's collaboration is important, but the **applicant** must write the Research Proposal. Be specific and informative, and avoid redundancy. Brevity and clarity in the description of the Research Proposal are considered indicative of an applicant's approach to the research objective and ability to conduct a superior project. The Research Proposal **should not exceed 10 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 Proposal. This is an important consideration in the initial review of the application. Concisely state the importance of the Research Proposal by relating specific aims to broad, long-term objectives.
- 3. Research Design and Methods.** Discuss in detail the following:
 - Research design and procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims

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- Sampling design, if conducting primary data collection
- Analytic plan detailing the statistical approach to addressing the hypotheses
- Any precautions necessary for procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and project participants
- Potential limitations of the proposed project
- Timeline for completion of the proposed investigation
- Contributions that this project will make to the field of drug abuse research.

4. NIH Regulations on the Conduct of Research. Research conducted as part of a Prevention Research Fellowship is subject to the same U.S. Federal regulations, policies, guidelines, and review considerations as are all 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>.

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 drug abuse and NIDA's research mission, adequacy of the applicant's education and experience to conduct the proposed research, likelihood that the proposed research can be completed within 1 year, 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.

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Research Plan

- Describes how the proposed study is unique, how it will expand or advance the field of drug abuse prevention 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 advance the applicant's research capacity when he/she returns home.
- Includes a realistic timeline for completing the proposed study within the 1-year fellowship.

Research Resources and Environment

- Mentor has significant expertise in the research area.
- Mentor has a NIDA grant that will remain active throughout the fellowship period.
- 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 regulations regarding the conduct of research.