

Four pages to fill in as you plan: an eligibility and payback check, a training worksheet, an attachment tracker, and a timeline. Tick a box only once you've checked it against the current notice. This workbook doesn't decide eligibility; NIH does.

Eligibility and submission check

- ### Prior postdoctoral NRSA months

Open eligibility or policy questions

[illegible]

Edition 2026.09.28-f32-2 · CC BY 4.0 · Maintained by Erik Jia, erik@manusights.com

The training delta

What we call the training delta is the change from what you can do now to what you'll need to do at the next career stage. A training activity only helps when it closes a named gap and leaves evidence you can carry forward. This is our own planning method, not an NIH scoring formula.

What you can do now, and the gap	Training activity, who provides it, how often	Milestone and how you'll use it next

A made-up example. Gap: causal inference for longitudinal clinical data. Training: a methods course, monthly co-sponsor meetings, and two protocol critiques. Milestone: preregister an analysis and defend the assumptions at a lab review. Next stage: lead the analytic plan for an independent cohort study.

Three questions for each row

Is it a real gap?

Your track record doesn't already show the capability at the proposed level.

Can it be taught?

The plan names people, access, how often you meet, feedback, and a feasible order.

Can someone see it?

A milestone shows progress beyond attendance or exposure.

Purpose and training plan requirements: [Source A](#) and [Source C](#).

Attachments

For each file, note who drafts it and what's still open. The same training delta should read the same way in every file. Check both the active notice and NIH's current page-limit table before you submit.

Attachment and what it covers	Limit	Drafted by, and open issues
Goals, Preparedness and Potential Overall goals, preparation, a self-assessment with 2 to 4 strengths and 2 to 4 development areas, and a scientific perspective.	3 pages	Candidate
Training Activities and Timeline Activities by year, percent effort totaling 100% in each year, links to development areas, and the transition to the next career stage.	3 pages	Candidate with sponsor
Research Training Project Specific Aims Goals, objectives, expected outcomes, and likely impact of the proposed research training project.	1 page	Candidate with scientific feedback
Research Training Project Strategy Scientific foundation, rationale, approach, feasibility, expected challenges, alternatives, and the candidate's role, in the candidate's own words.	6 pages	Candidate with scientific feedback
Training in Responsible Conduct of Research Format, subject matter, faculty participation, duration, and frequency. Online-only instruction is not sufficient.	1 page	Candidate with program and sponsor
Sponsor(s) Commitment Statement Specific supervision, mentoring, training, resources, and commitments. Sponsor and co-sponsor statements are combined into one PDF.	6 pages	Sponsor team
Letters of Support from Collaborators, Contributors, and Consultants Specific contributions and commitments that are not already covered by the sponsor statement.	6 pages	Named contributors

Written by the candidate. The Research Training Project Strategy must be in the candidate's own words. Scientific feedback is allowed. Current Forms-I instructions also say preliminary data and extensive experimental detail aren't required.

Attachment instructions: [Forms-I fellowship guide](#). Limits: [current NIH page-limit table](#).

Timeline and sources

Adapt this sequence to your institution's deadline. It's our suggested order, not an NIH requirement.

1. 12 weeks before

Confirm the active notice, participating Institute or Center, citizenship status at award, qualifying doctoral degree, prior postdoctoral NRSA months, clinical-trial boundary, internal deadline, and submission owner.

2. 10 weeks before

Write a current-capability inventory. Select 2 to 4 development areas that are consequential, teachable during the award, and not already demonstrated by the candidate's record.

3. 8 weeks before

Turn each development area into a training activity, named mentor or resource, cadence, deliverable, evidence of progress, and next-stage use.

4. 6 weeks before

Lock the research question, aims, feasibility boundary, expected challenges, alternatives, and the candidate's intellectual contribution. Ask for targeted scientific critique.

5. 4 weeks before

Reconcile the candidate narrative, timeline, research plan, sponsor statement, facilities, biosketch materials, and letters. Remove duplicated promises and unsupported commitments.

6. 2 weeks before

Run page-limit, file-format, accessibility, citation, privacy, reference-letter, and NOFO-specific checks. Hand the administrative package to the authorized submitter.

7. After submission

Use eRA Commons to confirm that the assembled application image is complete and viewable before the verification window closes.

\$63,480 to \$77,076

FY2026 annual stipend range by experience

Apr 8, Aug 8, Dec 8

Standard F-series dates

3 years in total

Maximum postdoctoral NRSA support

NIH sources, checked September 28, 2026

A. Parent F32 notice PA-25-423

Purpose, Key Dates, Award Information, Eligibility Information, and Application and Submission Information

[Open source](#)

D. Changes to NIH Fellowship Application Review Criteria

Three scored review criteria

[Open source](#)

G. NIH Grants Policy Statement: Kirschstein-NRSA payback implementation

Postdoctoral payback obligation and Payback Agreement sections

[Open source](#)

J. NIH notice NOT-OD-24-107: changes to fellowship review criteria and application

Notable changes

[Open source](#)

B. FY2026 NRSA stipend and budget levels, NOT-OD-26-044

Postdoctoral Trainees and Fellows, Tuition and Fees, and Institutional Allowance tables

[Open source](#)

E. Standard Due Dates

F Series Fellowships table and deadline policy

[Open source](#)

H. NIH notice NOT-OD-24-086: FORMS-I application packages

Summary and key dates

[Open source](#)

K. FY2025 NRSA stipend levels, NOT-OD-25-105

Stipend levels table

[Open source](#)

C. How to Apply: Fellowship Instructions for NIH and Other PHS Agencies, Forms-I

Fellowship Supplemental Form, sections 6 to 11

[Open source](#)

F. Table of Page Limits

Fellowship application page-limit rows

[Open source](#)

I. Previous parent F32 notice PA-23-262

Notice history; Eligibility Information

[Open source](#)

Reuse. The worksheets and planning method are CC BY 4.0: credit Manusights, the title, the edition and <https://manusights.com/resources/nihf32-guide>, and say what you changed. NIH material keeps its own status. This workbook does not decide eligibility, replace NIH instructions or predict review outcomes, and it is not endorsed by NIH. Corrections: Erik Jia, erik@manusights.com.