

Basic Format for the Plant Biology Qualifying Exam Research Proposal
Excerpts from the instructions for the Individual National Research Service Award
(NRSA) proposal at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/416/phs416.htm>
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1. Introduction

All resubmission applications must include an Introduction of no more than one page that summarizes the substantial additions, deletions, and changes. The Introduction must also include responses to criticisms and issues raised in the summary statement for the previous application. Insert the Introduction just before the very beginning of the Research Training Plan. Application processing may be delayed or the application may be returned if it does not comply with all of these requirements.

2. Specific Aims

List the broad, long-term objectives and the goal of the specific research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology.

3. Background and Significance

Briefly sketch the background leading to the present application, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance and health relevance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to broad, long-term objectives and to the mission of the NIH IC or AHRQ.

4. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report

(a) Preliminary Studies. Use this section to provide an account of preliminary studies, if any, that are pertinent to this application. This information will help reviewers and NIH staff evaluate your PHS 416-1: Part I I-45 experience and determine your competence to pursue the proposed project. It will also help demonstrate the utility of the proposed project as a training experience. When applicable, provide a succinct account of published and unpublished results, indicating progress toward their achievement.

(b) Progress Report for Competing Continuation Applications See Part II, Section 4.3. Competing Continuation applications for individual fellowships are rare. You should consult with your program official before preparing such an application. If you are submitting a Competing Continuation, a Progress Report must be provided. Provide the beginning and ending dates for the period covered since the project was last reviewed competitively. Summarize the previous application's specific aims and the importance of the findings. Include the complete references to appropriate publications and manuscripts accepted for publication (not part of the page limitations). If the competing continuation application involves clinical research, then you must report on the enrollment of research subjects and their distribution by ethnicity/race and sex/gender. Part II, Section 4.3 for more detailed instructions on which Target and Enrollment Report or Table to use.

5. Research Design and Methods

Describe the research design conceptual or clinical framework, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies for the proposed studies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. As part of this section, provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and the precautions to be exercised. For Postdoctoral and Senior Fellowship applications, include any courses that you plan to take to support the research training experience.