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**Graduate Partnerships Program  
Graduate Student Training Program  
Application Directions**

The following information pertains to completing the application for admission into the Graduate Partnerships Program (GPP) for students applying for initial entry into a Ph.D. program (Prospective Graduate Students) and students already enrolled in a PhD program (Current Graduate Students). Please take a moment to review this information before completing the application. Contact the GPP if you have any additional questions or concerns.

**Points to Consider Before Submitting an Electronic Application**

The on-line application stores submitted information in a database that uses a text editor. Unlike word processing programs, text editors have several limitations on formatting options. Please follow these guidelines as you complete the on-line application:

1. DO NOT place a 'hard-return' at the end of each line in a paragraph. The text editor is capable of word wrapping.
2. Designate paragraphs by placing a hard return between paragraphs.
3. Use numbers or upper-case characters of the number keys to highlight lists: ~, -, \*, etc...
4. You will need to write out symbol names, such as: alpha, beta, etc...because the text editor does not accept symbols.
5. Use recommended word limits for each section; extra text may not be viewed on-line or printed in the hardcopy.
6. Some fields may have both a pull-down menu and a text box appearing to the right of, or directly below. Use the pull-down menu if you can. If your information isn't on the list, you may simply type it in the text box. The text box should be used instead of, not in addition to, the pull-down menu.
7. Some fields will scroll to accommodate more text. Use the arrow keys to scroll left, right, up, or down.
8. Do not type in all capital letters.

Provided below is a listing of each component of the application and additional information about submitting the required information for that field.

**Cover letter (Optional)**

This region of the application is available for applicants to provide information not included in the other section of the application, example: lapses in education or explanations of a poor semester. The cover letter should not exceed 250 words.

## Personal Information

The information requested in this section is used to establish methods for contacting you and determine your eligibility for a partnership. A few examples of the fields include: name, date of birth, citizenship, current address, and permanent address. The field “country of citizenship” is required.

## Partnerships for Admission

The GPP has numerous partnerships available to prospective PhD students. A complete list and description of each partnership is available by navigating through the Applicant section of the GPP website. If you have any questions or concerns about identifying which partnership(s) best match your education and career goals, please contact the GPP or any of the partnership directors for assistance.

## Scientific Discipline Interests

Indicate your research interests by selecting up to three of the following research areas (list in order of preference):

- Aging & Related Disorders
- Alcohol & Drug Abuse
- Allergy
- Animal Models & Pathology
- Bioinformatics & Computational Biology
- Biomedical Engineering
- Cancer & Oncological Sciences
- Cardiovascular Sciences
- Dental & Craniofacial
- Developmental Biology / Reproduction
- Digestive / Kidney Diseases
- Endocrinology & Reproduction
- Environmental Sciences / Toxicology
- Epidemiology/Population Studies/Biostatistics
- Gene Therapy & Genetic Diseases
- Genetics and Human Genome
- Health Disparities
- Hematology
- Imaging & Neuroimaging
- Immunology
- Infectious Diseases other than Virology
- Medicinal Chemistry / Radio Chemistry
- Membrane Physical Chemistry
- Molecular & Cellular Biology
- Muscular / Skeletal / Skin Sciences
- Neuroscience & Degenerative Diseases
- Nursing / Biobehavioral Research
- Pharmacology / Physiology
- Psychiatry / Mental Health
- Psychology & Behavioral Sciences
- Pulmonary / Respiratory Diseases
- Sensory Biology & Balance
- Structural Biology
- Virology / Vaccine Development

## **University – Educational Background**

All fields pertaining to undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) education should be completed for each university/college attended even if you did not obtain a degree from the institution. Enter educational information in chronological order with the most recent enrollment first: name of university, dates attended, academic major, academic minor or second major, grade point average, and degree granted/anticipated, if any. Official copies of transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be submitted to the GPP. Please, no staples.

## **Standardized Examinations**

Unofficial copies of standardized examinations scores must be submitted to complete the application. Copies may be submitted by mail or fax.

GRE General Test is required for all partnerships for prospective Ph.D. students. MCAT may be substituted for the GRE General Test for the Karolinska Institutet (Sweden), University of Cambridge (England) and University of Oxford (England) partnerships.

## **References**

Three letters of recommendations from three different individuals are needed to complete the GPP application. Choose references that are familiar with your educational training and especially your prior research experience. The GPP will send an email message to each reference requesting a letter of recommendation be submitted on your behalf. The email message contains directions on submitting the recommendation letter electronically. Periodically contact each of your references to ensure receipt of the request; the GPP does not send reminder messages to your references. Hardcopies of the recommendation letters are not needed if an electronic letter has been sent.

Under the Privacy Act of 1974, you have the right to access the information contained within a recommendation unless you have waived such access. For each reference, your response about waiving access to each letter of recommendation is required. Your references will be given your response to waiving access to the letter of recommendation.

## **Resume Components**

This section of the application contains the following fields: research experience, publications & presentations, awards/honors, extracurricular activities, and personal statement/research proposal. Carefully review each component and adhere to the space limitations.

### ***Research experience***

List current and previous research experience should be included in this section; most current training/research experience first. Use the following format:

Inclusive Dates – Employer/Affiliation  
Mentor/Advisor  
Title for Project

Text should not exceed 1000 words.

***Publications & Presentations***

List of your most relevant publications, presentations, and abstracts. Provide the following information about each publication/presentation:

Publications: Authors, Title, Journal, Volume, and Pages  
Presentations: Authors, Title, Conference/Seminar, and Year

Text should not exceed 500 words.

***Awards / Honors***

List all awards and honors received during undergraduate and/or graduate education. Awards and honors received prior to undergraduate education should not be included. Leadership activities such as student council and similar activities should be listed. Text should not exceed 500 words.

***Extracurricular Activities***

List your major extracurricular activities during undergraduate and/or graduate education. Text should not exceed 1000 words.

**Personal Statement / Research Proposal**

You should use the Personal Statement to provide details about your motivation for pursuing an advanced degree, how you have prepared yourself for graduate school, citing important educational, and research. Also include discussions on your future goals and how the GPP ties in with these goals. Text should not exceed 1500 words.

Current PhD graduate students should use this section to provide details about the dissertation research you plan on performing at NIH. Text should not exceed 1500 words.

**Additional Information**

Although not required, feel free to explain any blemishes on your educational or research history (example: poor semester, GRE scores, etc...). Text should not exceed 500 words.

### **Optional Statistics**

Questions asked in this section are used only for statistical purposes. Only the GPP has access to the responses. Responses are not used during the admission process and reviewers cannot see your responses. Questions include the following:

- Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino; Not Hispanic or Latino
- Race: Native American or Pacific Islander; Asian, Black or African American; White
- Gender: Female; Male
- Marital status: Single; Married; Widowed; Divorced
- Disability – select one or more: None; Deaf; Convulsive Retardation; Blind; Mental/Emotional Illness; Mental Retardation; Missing Extremities; Partial Paralysis; Severe Distortion of Limb/Spine; Complete Paralysis; Not Listed
- Recruiting – How did you learn about the GPP: Email Message; Exhibit at Conference; Friend; Poster/Flier: Professor/Researcher; Teacher/Advisor; other

### **Correspondence**

Questions/concerns and supplemental material for the application should be submitted to the address below. Recommendation letters must be received directly from your references, electronically.

Graduate Partnerships Program  
ATTN: APPLICATION MATERIAL  
National Institutes of Health - DHHS  
2 Center Drive: Building 2 / Room 2E06  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-0234

Fax Number: 301-594-9606  
Main Number: 301-594-9605  
Email: [gpp@nih.gov](mailto:gpp@nih.gov)  
Web: <http://gpp.nih.gov>

You will receive an email message when each required component of your application is uploaded into your application: standardized examination scores, transcripts, and each letter of recommendation. When all components have been received a final email message indicating your application is complete will be sent. You will receive an additional email message containing the NIH-University partnerships selection at the time of submission.

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**Graduate Partnerships Program  
Graduate Student Training Program  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**General Information**

***Am I eligible for admission into the partnerships for prospective PhD students?***

Applicants for admission into the partnerships for prospective PhD students must be US citizens or US permanent residents. Applicants must also have an undergraduate degree by the time of admission. Certain partnerships may have additional degree requirements such as the NCI – Molecular Pathology and NINR – Nursing & Biobehavioral Research partnerships; see the partnership descriptions for details.

Applicants for admission into partnerships for current PhD students may be United States of America (USA) citizens, USA permanent residents or international citizens enrolled in a PhD or equivalent degree program.

***I recently changed my name but my examination scores & transcripts have my previous name, what should I do?*** Provide the GPP a complete list of your aliases so your application can be updated appropriately.

***How will I know that my letters of recommendation and supplemental material have been received?*** You will receive a confirmation email message when each supplemental material is uploaded into your application; one email for each letter of recommendation, one email for each transcript received, one email for the standardized exams, and a final email when your application is complete. Prospective PhD students will receive an additional email containing the list of NIH-University partnerships selected at the time of submission. Allow 5 business days to upload supplemental material and letters of recommendation into your application.

**Submitting an Application for Admission Consideration**

***When should I submit my GPP application?*** Applications for admission by prospective PhD students will be accepted starting around August-September. Early submissions are encouraged to allow time for supplemental material to be delivered and uploaded into your application; 3- letters of recommendation, transcripts, and standardized examination scores. Visit the Application Information webpage for details about the application deadline. Applications for admission by current PhD students are accepted year-round; no application deadline.

***Does the GPP have an application fee?*** There is no application fee for the GPP; however, our partnering universities may have an application fee that must be submitted to the university.

***Can I submit an application after the deadline date?*** Late applications from prospective PhD students will not be considered for admission.

***A webpage/server error happened and my application was lost. Is there a way to retrieve it?***

Try using the [back] button on your web-browser to retrieve the application. Review the application form for completeness and submit. If you do not receive a confirmation message stating your application has been received, contact the GPP. You may need to resubmit your application.

***Do I have to submit an application to the university and to GPP?*** All NIH-University partnerships for prospective PhD students require the GPP application to be submitted to the GPP for admission consideration. In addition, all partnerships require the university application to be submitted to the university, however, the time to submit the university application is dependent upon the specific partnerships being considered for admission. Most NIH-University partnerships require the university application to be submitted simultaneously with the GPP application, by the specified deadline. A few NIH-University partnerships allow applicants to submit the university application after being admitted. Review the Applicants section to determine which NIH-University partnerships require simultaneous submission of the GPP and university applications for admission consideration.

***If I made a mistake or left something out of my application after it has been submitted, can I make changes or do I have to resubmit the application?*** The GPP can make changes to your application. Please send all changes in an email message to [gpp@nih.gov](mailto:gpp@nih.gov).

### **NIH-University Partnership Selection for Prospective PhD Students**

***Which partnerships should I consider for admission?*** Review the partnership descriptions posted within the Applicants section. You should select only those partnerships that best match your graduate education. Careful selection of the partnerships indicates you are making an informed decision about your graduate education. If you need any assistance in identify which of the NIH-University partnerships you should consider for admission please feel free to contact the GPP or any of the partnership directors listed within the GPP WebPages.

***Can I add/delete a NIH-University partnership after I have already submitted my application?***

The GPP staff can make changes to your partnership selection. Please send all modifications to [gpp@nih.gov](mailto:gpp@nih.gov).

***Will the admission committee see my partnership selection?*** Yes, each admission committee will have access to your application, including NIH-University partnership selection.

### **Official Transcripts**

***How long does it take to upload transcripts into my application?*** Allow approximately ~5 business days for the GPP to upload any transcript into your application once it is received. Additional time may be needed during peak submission times.

***Does my transcript need to include my grades from fall semester?*** No, the admission committee will review your transcript based on the classes completed and those being taken. If you wish to send a new transcript with fall or revised grades it will be accepted.

***When can I submit my transcripts to the GPP?*** Submit official copies of all transcripts to the GPP after you submit the GPP application. Sending your transcripts to the GPP before submitting the online application can impede uploading the information into your application due to the processing procedure.

***What if my transcripts are received late to the GPP?*** The admission committee will be able to review your application. However, you may not be selected to interview until the transcripts are received for additional review. We encourage you to submit your application and supplemental material early to prevent any delays.

### **Standardized Examinations**

***What is the ETS code for NIH?*** The NIH doesn't have an ETS code. Send an unofficial copy of your standardized exam scores to the GPP either by mail or fax.

***How can I send my standardized examination scores to the GPP?*** Unofficial copies of your standardized examination scores may be sent to the GPP either by fax or by mail.

***Can I submit my application without knowing my GRE Scores?*** Yes, please add the estimated date of the examination score so the admission committee knows you will be taking or have taken the examination. Once your scores are known, send the GPP a fax with the results; or you can mail an unofficial copy to us.

### ***What standardized examination scores are required for admission?***

All partnerships for prospective PhD students with US universities require the GRE general test. Partnerships with European universities will accept the MCAT as a substitute for the GRE exam.

For current PhD students, NIH Investigators may require the submission of your standardized examination scores, GRE, MCAT, TOEFL, before extending an offer of admission for dissertation research in his/her laboratory.

***What if the GPP doesn't receive my GRE/MCAT scores by the application deadline?*** The admission committees can review your application without the scores. However, you may not be offered an invitation to interview.

***Can I send my scores before submitting the GPP application?*** We discourage submitting supplemental material before the online application is submitted. This is due to the method by which the supplemental material is processed and uploaded into the application.



## **Reference & Recommendation Letters**

***Do my references need to submit two sets of recommendation letters, one to GPP and one to the university partner?*** Yes, your references need to submit letters of recommendation to the GPP and university (as required).

***My reference lost the email containing the recommendation request; can a new email be sent?*** Yes, contact the GPP with the name of the reference.

***How long does it take to upload letters of recommendation?*** Allow approximately 5-business days to upload your letters of recommendation once they are received through the online recommendation form; peak periods may require additional time to upload.

***Must my letters of recommendations be received by the application deadline?*** Letters will be accepted after the deadline but your application will not be reviewed until they are received and uploaded. Application review generally begins on or soon after the deadline.

## **NIH-University Admission Committees**

***Does each partnership have its own admission committee?*** Yes, each NIH-University partnership has its own admission committee to review all application and select applicants for interviews.

***Who are the members of the admission committee?*** The admission committees are comprised of both NIH investigators and University professors. All members review submitted applications and come to agreement on which applicants will be invited to interview for admission.

## **Interviews at the NIH – Applicants Invited by the GPP to Interview for Admission**

***When will I be notified about interviewing?*** Invitations to interview for admission are usually submitted 3-4 weeks after the application deadline and always at least 4 weeks before the interview date; can be later so contact the Partnership Directors or GPP if you have questions about your application.

***Can I interview for more than one partnership?*** Yes, because each partnership considers applicants separately.

***Do I need to make my own travel arrangements?*** Yes, you will need to arrange your own transportation to the NIH for interviews. You will be reimbursed based on the information posted on the “Visiting NIH” website listed under Applicants (<http://gpp.nih.gov>). You must complete and submit the interview confirmation form so we can budget for your reimbursement.

***Do I need to make my own lodging arrangements?*** No, the GPP will make lodging reservations for you. However, you must complete and submit the interview confirmation form so we know your lodging requirements.

***What is the agenda for my visit?*** The typical interview for the GPP follows a two-day format. However, a few partnerships have one-day interviews. Review the tentative agenda posted on the “Visiting NIH” webpage under the Applicants section. Any variations to this schedule will be included in the invitation to interview letter or special correspondence.

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Application Help**

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