

NIH Encourages Institutions to Develop Individual Development Plans for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Researchers

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Key Dates

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Purpose

The purpose of this Guide Notice is to announce that NIH encourages institutions to assist graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to achieve their career goals within the biomedical research workforce through the use of Individual Development Plans (IDPs). Institutions are encouraged to report on this in all progress reports submitted on/after October 1, 2014, using the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR).

Background

A Working Group of the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director (ACD) recently completed a study of the future of the biomedical research workforce in the United States (<http://acd.od.nih.gov/bwf.htm>). The Working Group made recommendations to the ACD about funding and training of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to attract and retain the best and most diverse scientists, engineers and physicians from around the world. One goal of the Working Group was also to better prepare biomedical graduate students and postdoctoral scientists to successfully participate in a broad-based and evolving economy. The recommendations included a call for Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for all NIH-supported graduate students and/or postdoctoral researchers.

Implementation

NIH encourages institutions to develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers (including scholars, trainees and fellows, and individuals in other postdoctoral positions) supported by NIH awards by October 2014. The IDPs should be broadly implemented for all graduate students and postdoctoral researchers supported by NIH.

It is important to assist graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to achieve their career goals and become contributing members of the biomedical research workforce. Therefore, NIH encourages grantees to develop institutional policies requiring an IDP be implemented for every

graduate student and postdoctoral researcher supported by any NIH grant by October 1, 2014. At that time, NIH will begin to encourage grantees to report the use of those IDPs on the progress report, regardless of the type of NIH grant that is used for support. NIH does not expect institutions to include the actual IDPs; instead the report would outline current practices that document that IDPs are used to help manage the training for those individuals.

For those institutions that have institutional IDP policies already in place, NIH encourages the grantees to implement the actual reporting of IDPs after October 18, 2013 for those programs that are using the RPPR currently, with the exception of institutional training grants as described below. As additional programs transition to the RPPR, reporting IDPs will also become a part of those submissions. In the RPPR, grantees are encouraged to report the use of IDPs in RPPR *Section B. Accomplishments*, Question B.4 for all graduate students and/or postdoctoral researchers reported in *Section D. Participants* or on a Statement of Appointment Form (PHS2271). For those institutions that have not developed IDPs to date, NIH encourages the grantees to begin the implementation and reporting by October 1, 2014.

Training grant recipients that use the PHS2590 progress report should include information to document that IDPs are used to help manage the training for graduate student and postdoctoral researchers in the progress report under 5.1.6 Progress Report Summary, A. Training Program (see instruction 1 on page 26 of the PHS 2590 instructions at grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/2590/phs2590.pdf). NIH encourages those recipients that have institutional IDP policies in place to begin reporting the information in October 2013. For those training grant recipients that have not developed IDPs to date, NIH encourages the grantees to begin the implementation and reporting by October 2014.

Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries to:

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