



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

K Scholars Career Development Award Program Competition

Eligibility

I am planning to submit/resubmit a mentored K award or independent R-award application should I apply for the K Scholars Program this cycle?

- Faculty who are planning to submit a K- or R- level award prior to the start of the next award cycle should consider whether the K Scholars program is a needed step in your trajectory. Per our NIH program announcement (see PAR-25-196) consistent with the type of mentoring and career development being provided by this mechanism, a scholar candidate who is already in the process of applying for an individual mentored career development grant, Program Project Grants/Center Grants or equivalent grant is likely “too senior” for this award. Please consult with the [K Scholars Program Directors](#) before applying if you are unsure.
- Please know you will be asked to submit your Other Support, which includes all pending submissions, at each step achieved within the application process (LOI, Full application, Interview). Pending K or R applications that duplicate work proposed in the K Scholars program application will mean you are no longer eligible.
 - Developmental (R21) or SBIR, STTR (R43, R44 grants) are allowed if they do not duplicate any of the aims of the proposed K Scholars application.

Mentorship

My Primary Mentor is not on your list. How do I get my Primary Mentor approved?

- To qualify, have your Primary Mentor send an email or compose a letter to the K Scholar Directors stating their interests. An NIH Biosketch and CV should be attached which must include history of mentoring and current / past funding with direct costs. Mentors must also participate in Mentor Training. This information is outlined in the [RFA](#).

Do I need to get my Primary Mentor approved before I submit my letter of intent?

- Yes.

Documents

Are signatures required on the Face Page?

- Signatures are **NOT** required for the letter of intent (LOI) but **ARE REQUIRED** for the full application.

Budget

Facepage:

Are direct costs (box 10) required on the Face Page for the letter of intent?

- Yes

Do I put direct costs (box 10) for 2 years (the length of the award)?

- Yes, include your salary support, fringe and research-related expenses for 2 years. *Please be sure to consider the max salary support that can be requested per year (\$113,500) and the max research related expenses (\$26,700) per year.*

Budget Forms & Justification:

Do I include indirects/ F&A?

- Yes. Fill out year 1 & 2 of the budget forms as well as the budget justification and include indirects/ F & A in the section at the bottom of the document that says facilities and administrative costs. Facilities and Admin (F&A) rate should be no more than 8% of direct costs for KL2 scholars.

Biosketches

What form should be used for my biosketch?

- Please see <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

Should all mentors provide a biosketch or just my Primary Mentor?

- All mentors should provide a biosketch.

Where are completed LOIs / applications uploaded? Does this require account registration first?

- Applications must be submitted through the [CCTST Competition and Awards Program Site \(CCAPS\)](#). Log in using your UC ("6+2") or CCHMC username and password. If you do not have a UC or CCHMC username and password, please contact [Krista Metz](#) to obtain one.

Competition

Will I receive any comments on my LOI?

- Yes you will. Program Directors are also willing to meet with any applicant to discuss these comments.

Can I apply again in the future if my initial LOI is not accepted?

- Yes you can.

How long will it take before I have a decision on my LOI?

- You will receive notification the week of week of December 15, 2025

What are career development objectives and why are they important for this award?

- The K Scholars program is a unique funding mechanism for early career faculty with the intent to support continued training/skill-building that will foster further readiness to apply for individual mentored K

awards (e.g., K07, K08, K22, K23) and independent awards (R01, R03, R21, R34, or equivalent application from another Federal agency). The need for additional training must be clearly outlined. Examples may include coursework & training, mentoring/experiential learning with experts outside of the institution (i.e., externship), clinical shadowing, or meeting with industry or community stakeholders to inform your work.

Do CT2 and K12 applications get reviewed differently?

- No, all applications are reviewed the same. The only difference is the funding source.

What scoring criteria do you consider when reviewing full applications?

- We use criteria consistent with current guidance for K-level career development awards and NIH scoring metrics (1-9)
 - Candidate, Career Development Plan, Research Plan, Mentoring Team, Environment and Institutional Commitment to the Candidate, and a separate Overall Impact Score
 - All applications are also reviewed by a Community Reviewer, who is a PhD or MD with expertise in community advocacy. Their score reflects “the potential of this application to drive improvements in health in the Cincinnati community and beyond.”

Do I need IRB/IACUC approval before applying?

- No, you do not. However, it is highly suggested that you begin this process prior to being awarded. You will be expected to submit prior approval paperwork for submission/approval by the NIH before you can begin your study. This approval can take 30 days or more.