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Supporting NIH Training Grants After Award

Roles, Responsibilities, and Post-Award Management

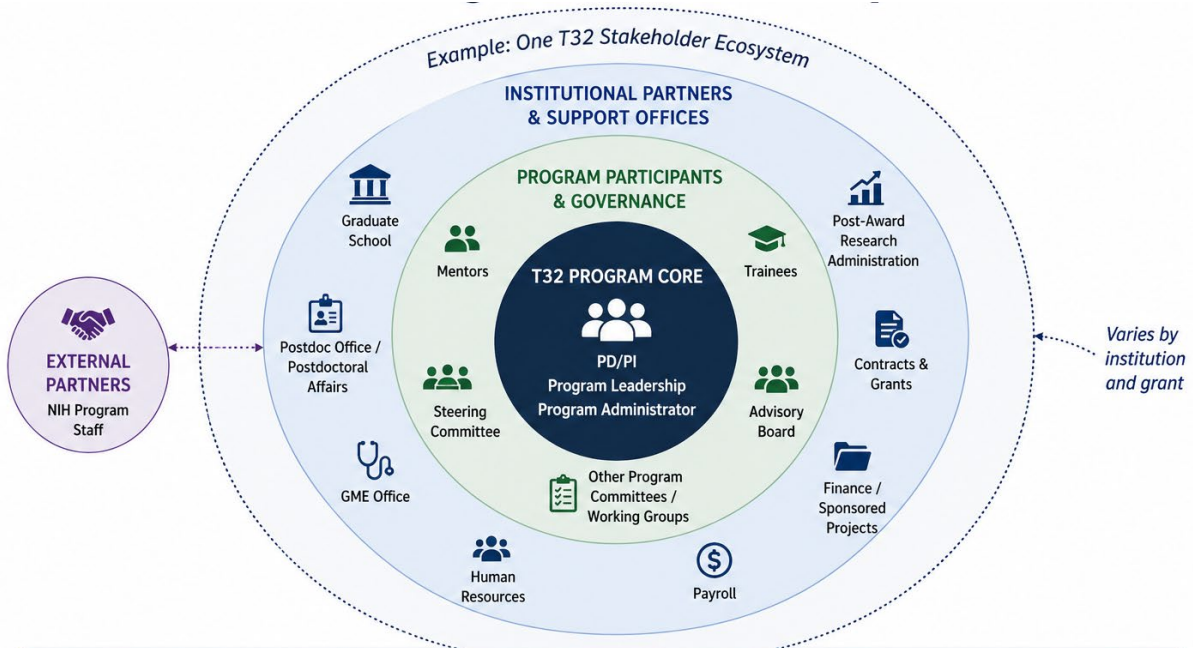
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Congratulations!

**Your institution has been awarded an NIH
NRSA T32.**

Where do you start?

Who Manages a T32? It Depends



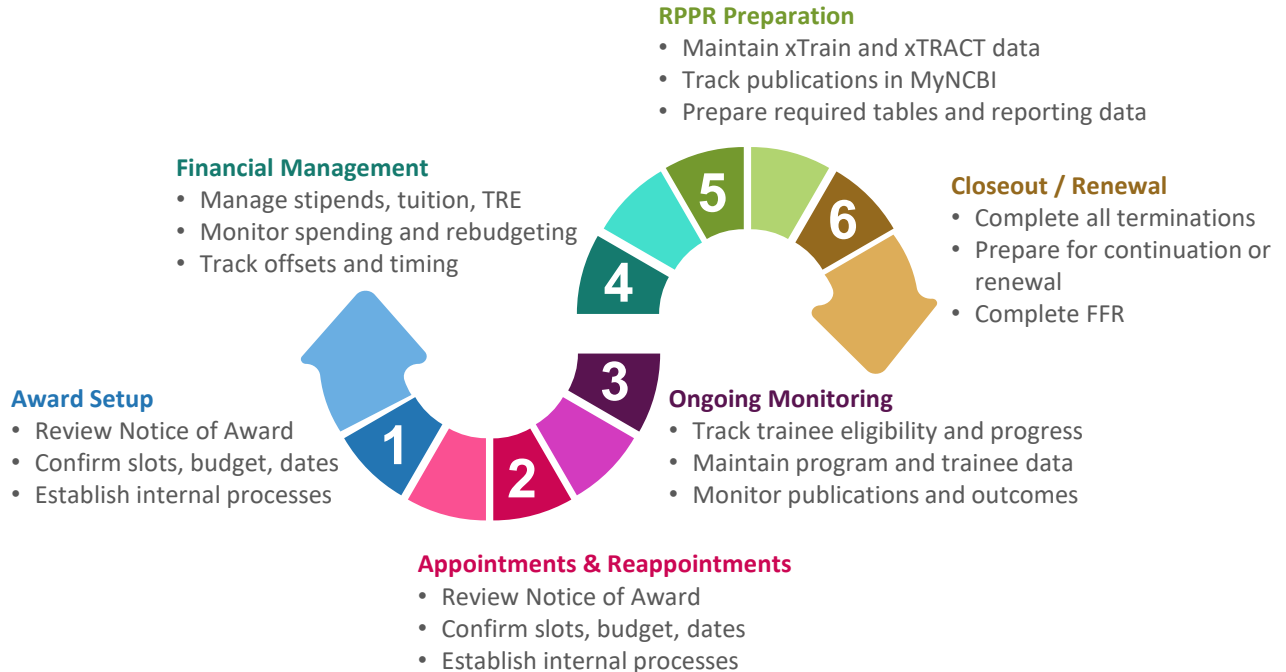
EVERY T32 OPERATES WITHIN A DIFFERENT ECOSYSTEM



MAP YOUR STAKEHOLDERS FOR EACH NEW GRANT

- STAKEHOLDER MAPPING HELPS YOU:**
- ✓ Clarify roles and responsibilities
 - ✓ Identify key partners and dependencies
 - ✓ Build strong, effective collaborations

The Post-Award Lifecycle of a T32



Program Administration vs Grant Administration

Program Administration

(driven by PD/PI and program leadership)

- Design and deliver training activities (seminars, workshops, curriculum)
- Trainee recruitment and selection
- Mentor recruitment and oversight
- Oversight of trainee progress (IDPs, milestones, mentoring experience)
- Program evaluation and continuous improvement
- Community building and trainee engagement
- Ensuring alignment with training goals and NIH expectations

Grant Administration

(shared across admin, research offices, and partners)

- Trainee appointments and terminations (xTrain)
- Stipend, tuition, and benefits coordination
- Financial management and allowable cost monitoring
- Effort tracking and salary allocations (if applicable)
- RPPR preparation and submission
- Data tracking and reporting (trainee outcomes, tables, records)
- Compliance and documentation (payback agreements, eligibility, audit readiness)

Responsibility is shared and varies by institution
Clear ownership must be defined for each function

Best Practices for Defining Roles and Responsibilities

Assign Clear Ownership

- Every task should have a primary owner
- Identify where responsibilities are shared



Align Across Stakeholders

- Confirm roles with PD/PI, program staff, and administrative partners
- Include offices outside your program (HR, payroll, research admin, etc.)

Map Functions, Not Titles

- Focus on what needs to be done, not job titles
- Roles may be filled by different people across programs



Start Early

- Define roles during proposal development or at award setup
- Don't wait until issues arise



Document & Centralize

- Create a simple, shared reference (not buried in email)
- Keep it accessible to all key stakeholders



Revisit & Adjust

- Update roles as the program evolves or staff change
- Reassess at renewal, leadership transitions, or process changes



If ownership isn't clear, the work doesn't get done—or gets done twice

Technical Components of Managing a Training Grant

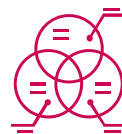
eRA Commons xTrain and xTRACT



xTrain

- Start and end trainee appointments
 - Process amendments when appointment details change
 - Submit termination notices
- Route actions for required approvals
 - Track trainee status in real time

Used when: A trainee is starting, changing status, or ending support



xTRACT

- Build and manage NIH training tables
 - Organize trainee and alumni data
 - Support RPPRs, renewals, and new applications
- Standardize data for NIH submission

Important: Tables for new and renewal applications are optional
Table 8 for RPPR is required

Used when: Preparing progress reports or applications

Who Does What in xTrain (Roles)

Program Director /

Principal Investigator (PD/PI)

- Responsible for the training program and trainee appointments
- Initiates appointment forms (PHS 2271)
- Reviews completed forms and submits them to NIH



PI Delegate (ASST)

- Assist the PD/PI with preparing appointment forms
- Can initiate and edit appointments on behalf of the PD/PI
- Cannot submit appointment forms to NIH

Trainee

- Completes required personal profile and demographic information
- Electronically signs the appointment form before submission

Business Official (BO)

- Institutional official responsible for administrative oversight
- Not involved in appointment submission for training grants (primarily involved in terminations)

The Appointment Form (PHS 2271)

The **PHS 2271 Appointment Form** is used to officially appoint trainees to NIH institutional training programs in eRA Commons.

Used for

- Training (T) grants
- Career Development (K) programs with trainee appointments
- Research Education (R) programs
- Not used for Fellowships (F awards)

Appointment process

- Initiated by PD/PI or PI Delegate
- Trainee completes profile and electronically signs
- PD/PI submits appointment to NIH
- Appointment becomes official only after NIH acceptance

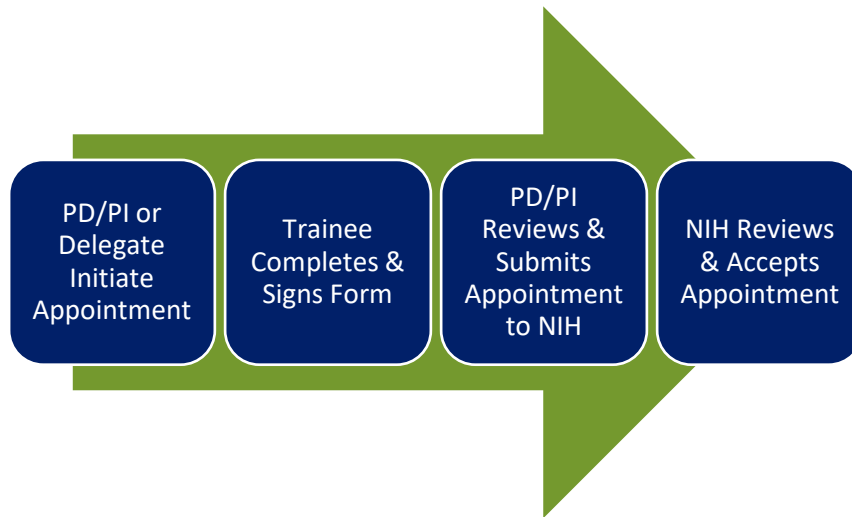
Administrative reminders

- Confirm the correct stipend level before submission
- Postdoctoral payback agreement required for the first 12 months of NRSA postdoctoral support
- Appointments should be processed before the start date whenever possible

Appointment Workflow in xTrain

Trainee appointments progress through several steps before being finalized in eRA Commons.

A trainee is not officially appointed until NIH accepts the appointment form.



Reappointments, Amendments, and Common Issues

Reappointment

Use when a trainee continues in the program for another year.

- Initiated from the trainee roster
- Select re-appoint
- Update the new appointment period

Amendment

Use when changes are needed to an existing appointment.

Examples:

- Change to appointment dates
- Change to stipend level
- Correcting appointment information

Common causes of appointment delays

- Incorrect stipend level
- Incomplete trainee Commons profile
- Trainee has not signed the appointment form
- Postdoctoral payback agreement not received by NIH (snail mail!)
- Overlapping appointment dates

Important: Amendments are not used to update termination dates when a trainee leaves early

The Termination Form

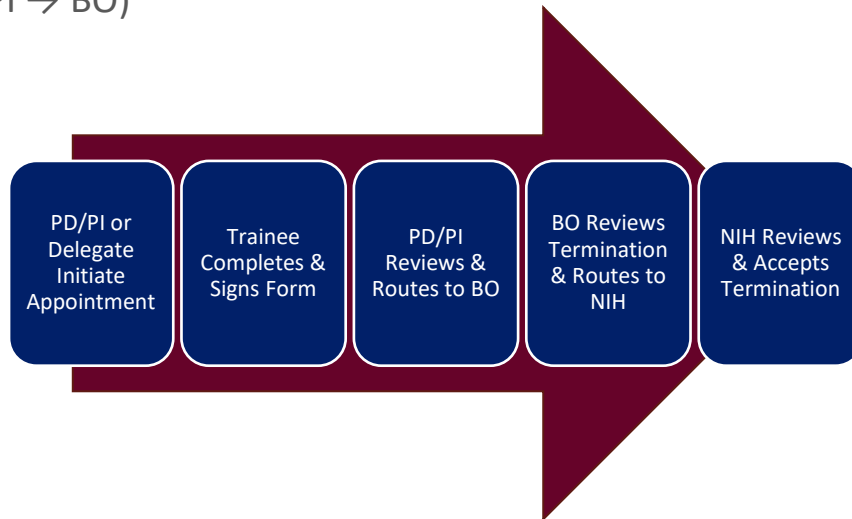
Key Elements of Termination Notice

- **Demographic Info:** Name of trainee/fellow, Grant #, Institution, etc.
- **Dates of Support/Termination Date:** Date the appointment starts & ends
- **Summary of Training/Research:** A detailed description of the training and research activities undertaken
 - **Reason for Early Termination (if applicable):** Explanation for why the appointment ended before the scheduled end date
 - **Publications and Awards:** A list of publications resulting from the research and any awards received during the appointment
- **Post-training Activities:** Information about the recipient's plans for post-NRSA training or service
- **Contact Information:** Address, phone number & email of trainee/fellow
- **Signatures:** Electronic certification in xTrain by fellow/trainee, PI & BO

Termination Workflow in xTrain

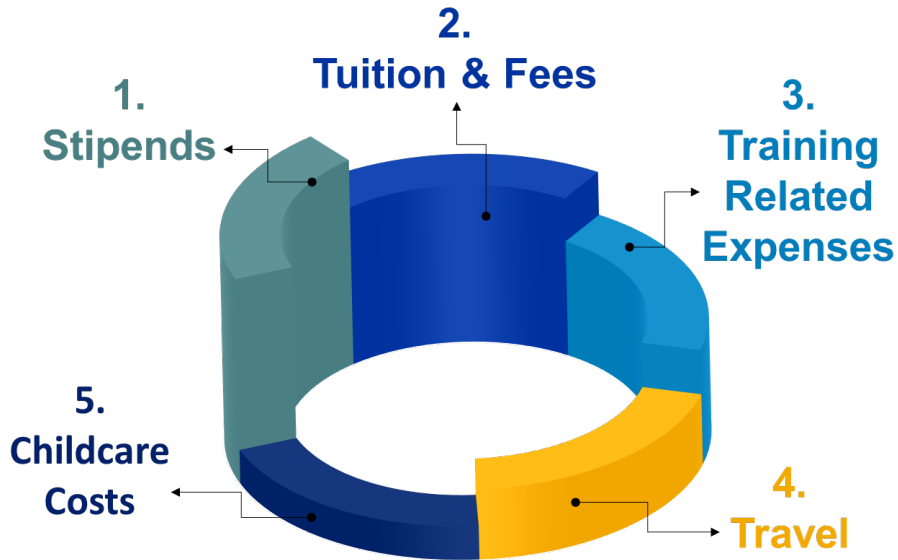
Training award TNs require two certifications. Trainee and PI must review/e-sign before submission to BO

xTrain system will auto-forward initiated TNs after 14 days of inaction by role (trainee → PI → BO)

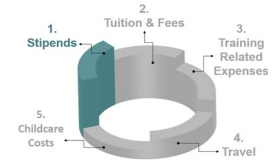


Training Grant Budgets

Budget Components of an NRSA Training Grant



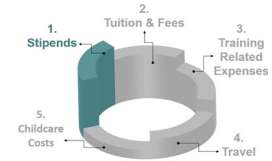
NRSA Stipends



- A stipend is **not salary** and is **not tied to employment** with either the Federal government or the recipient organization.
- NIH policy **does not prohibit** institutions from hiring NRSA trainees or offering benefits similar to those provided to other employees at comparable career stages.
- **Taxation:** Subject to federal and state income taxes, but not Social Security or Medicare (FICA).
 - Institutions may handle tax reporting differently; typically, **taxes are not withheld**.
 - Trainees are often responsible for paying taxes directly and may need to **file quarterly estimated tax payments**.

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.8_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm#Stipends

NRSA Stipends



Stipends must be paid in accordance with established NIH stipend levels. These levels are updated every fiscal year.

Career Level	Years of Experience	Stipend for FY26	Monthly Stipend
Undergraduate	All	\$14,916	\$1,243
Predoctoral	All	\$29,364	\$2,447
Postdoctoral	0	\$63,480	\$5,290
Postdoctoral	1	\$63,900	\$5,325
Postdoctoral	2	\$64,380	\$5,365
Postdoctoral	3	\$66,948	\$5,579
Postdoctoral	4	\$69,180	\$5,765
Postdoctoral	5	\$71,748	\$5,979
Postdoctoral	6	\$74,424	\$6,202
Postdoctoral	7 or More	\$77,076	\$6,423

Experience Calculation for Postdoctoral Stipends

Years of experience are calculated from the date of the terminal degree (MD, PhD, or equivalent).

Example:

PhD awarded in December 2024

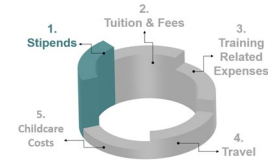
Years of Experience = 1 Year

Important Note:

For MDs, years of experience do not equal PGY year. Typically, experience is one year less than PGY. Always calculate based on the degree conferral date, not the training year.

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.8_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm#Stipends

NRSA Stipends Levels and Raises



- NRSA stipend levels are set each year once a federal budget has been approved.
- The fiscal year in which the T32 funding is awarded determines the NRSA stipend levels that apply.
 - NIH fiscal year runs from October to September. Most training grants receive funding between February and August.

Common trainee questions:

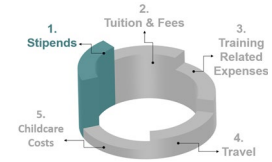
“I see that NIH released new NRSA stipend levels—do I get a raise?”

Answer: No. Raises only occur if you are reappointed, based on the NRSA levels for the fiscal year of the reappointment funds.

“Next week is the anniversary of receiving my degree—do I get a raise?”

Answer: No. Postdoctoral experience level changes do not occur mid-appointment. Raises happen only at reappointment.

NRSA Stipend Supplementation



- **Limited additional work allowed**

- Trainees may do up to about 25 percent effort (around 10 hours per week) in part-time research, teaching, or clinical duties. These activities cannot interfere with or extend their NRSA training.

- **No double-paying for the same research**

- Supplemental pay cannot come from a research grant that funds the same project the trainee is working on as part of their NRSA training plan.

- **Must not impact training**

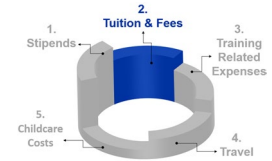
- Any supplemental work or pay must not detract from or lengthen the NRSA training program. The Program Director or PI must review and approve all supplemental employment to confirm it will not affect training progress.

- **No overlapping fellowships**

- A trainee cannot hold an NRSA training slot at the same time as another fellowship or award that also provides a stipend or similar support.

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.10_stipend_supplementation_compensation__and_other_income.htm

NRSA Tuition & Fees



Overview

- NIH contributes toward the combined cost of tuition and fees.
- Uses the rate in place at the time of award.
- Funds are provided as a lump sum and can be allocated as needed.

NIH Maximum Contribution

- NIH pays 60% of the institutional amount, up to the following caps:
- Predoctoral: \$16,000 per year for single degree
 \$21,000 per year for dual degree
- Postdoctoral: \$4,500 per year for non-degree
 \$16,000 per year for degree-seeking

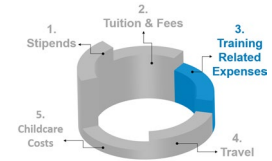
Always request the full amount.

Do not apply the NIH caps yourself.

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.8_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm#Trainee



NRSA Training Related Expenses



- Funds are awarded as a lump sum based on a fixed amount per approved trainee:
 - Predoctoral: \$4,750
 - Postdoctoral: \$12,400
- This category is a finite pool of funds intended to cover a variety of allowable costs (e.g., health insurance, supplies, program expenses).
- Institutions must apply **core cost principles**—ensure allocation is reasonable, consistent, and compliant.

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.8_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm#Training

Trainee Specific Expenses



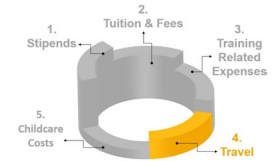
- Health Insurance (self and family)
- Research Supplies
- Equipment
- Medical Liability and Other Special Insurance

Program Specific Expenses



- Staff Salaries
- Staff Travel
- Consultant Costs
- Speaker Fees
- Meals

NRSA Trainee Travel

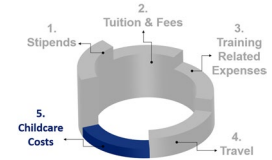


- Funds to cover the costs of trainee travel, including attendance at scientific meetings, which the organization determines is necessary to the individual's training.
- Trainees must be appointed to the training grant at the time of travel for this to be an allowable cost.
- Amount is Institute/Center specific. These can be found in the NOFO.
 - Typically range from \$300-\$1,500 per trainee per year.



https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.8_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm#Trainee2

NRSA Childcare Costs



Who is eligible: Full-time NRSA predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees on training grants.

What counts as childcare: Care for dependent children (birth to under age 13, or under 18 if disabled) provided by a licensed provider.

Allowable amount: Up to \$3,000 per trainee per budget period.

How funds are awarded: NIH provides childcare funds equal to 25% of full-time trainee slots at the time of each new, renewal, or continuation award. Programs needing additional funds for childcare may request an administrative supplement.

How payments work: Reimbursements require documentation of licensed provider status and receipts. Institutions must retain documentation.

Reporting requirements: Report the number of trainees who used childcare funds in the RPPR (Section G.1). Unused funds appear as unobligated and cannot be carried over for other purposes.

https://grants.nih.gov/faqs#/funding_programs_childcare_costs.htm

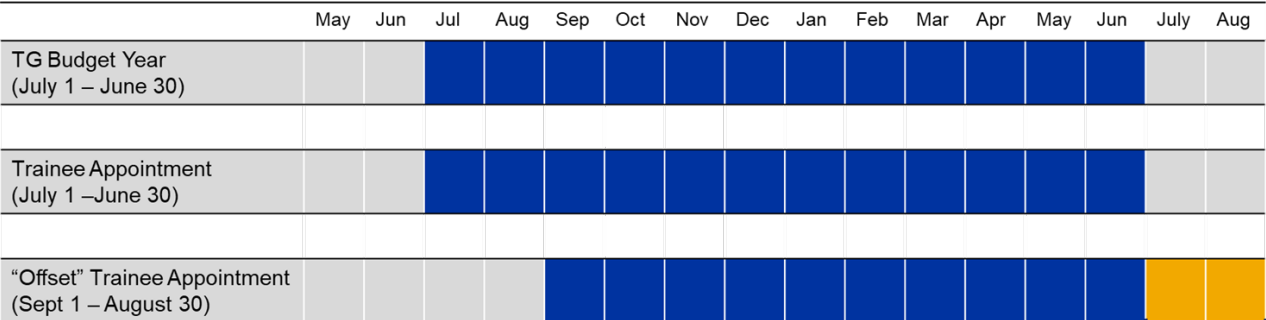
Rebudgeting of Funds for an NRSA

		MOVE TO				
		Stipend	Tuition & Fees	Training Related Expenses	Travel	Childcare Costs
MOVE FROM	Stipend	-	Yes	No	No	No
	Tuition & Fees	Yes	-	No	No	No
	Training Related Expenses	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	No
	Travel	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	No
	Childcare Costs	No	No	No	No	-

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.9_rebudgeting_of_funds.htm

Offset Appointments and Unliquidated Obligations

- Trainee appointments may follow the budget year or be “offset”.
- Offset can range from 1 day to 9 months. Offsets longer than 9 months may result in a future reduction of trainee slots based on the Notice of Award.



Unliquidated Obligations

Unliquidated Obligations

- Expenses considered obligations that are allowed to be unliquidated.
 - Stipend
 - Tuition & Fees
- Expenses that are not considered obligations are not allowed to be unliquidated.
 - Training Related Expenses (TREs)
 - Trainee Travel



https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.3.13_reporting_requirements.htm?Highlight=unliquidated%20obligations#Federal

Training Grant Progress Reports (RPPRs)

Training Grant RPPRs Are Different



- Similar structure to research RPPRs—but different emphasis
- Focus on people, training, and outcomes, not just research progress
- Requires coordination across program, admin, and data sources
- Draws from multiple systems (xTrain, xTRACT, MyNCBI, internal tracking)

T32 RPPRs: Where to Focus

Participants (Section D)

- Accurate trainee appointments and termination data
- Alignment with xTrain records
- Complete and consistent participant information

Publications (Section C.1)

- Maintained in MyNCBI MyBibliography
- Correct grant attribution required
- Must meet NIH public access compliance

Program Outcomes (Section E/Table 8)

- Longitudinal tracking of trainee outcomes
- Requires complete trainee and alumni data
 - Built and maintained outside the RPPR (xTRACT)

Special Reporting Requirements (Section G)

- Training-specific data elements (e.g., childcare reporting)
- Requires accurate program-level tracking

Trainee Reporting (Section D)

- **Participant Data Must Be Complete and Accurate**
 - All trainees supported during the reporting period must be included
 - Appointment and termination dates must be accurate
 - Participant details must be consistent across records
- **Alignment with xTrain Is Critical**
 - RPPR participant data should match xTrain records
 - Missing or incomplete terminations create discrepancies
 - Appointment timing impacts reporting accuracy
- **Track Trainee Outcomes**
 - Current status and positions should be up to date
 - Programs are expected to report trainee progression over time
- **Common Issues at RPPR Time**
 - Missing or late termination notices
 - Inconsistent trainee records across systems
 - Gaps in outcome data for former trainees

Publications (Section C.1)

Publications must be properly attributed

T32-appointed trainees must acknowledge their NRSA training grant support in all publications that result from work conducted during their appointment.

Publications must be maintained in MyNCBI

MyNCBI MyBibliography populates Section C.1 of the RPPR.

To ensure publications appear in the RPPR:

- Add trainee publications to MyBibliography as soon as they are available.
- Select “Award Compliance” and assign each publication to the correct T32 grant number.
- Confirm each publication includes the required NIH acknowledgment.
- Check that the publication is compliant with the NIH public access policy. If it is out of compliance, you will not be able to submit the RPPR.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK53595/>

https://grants.nih.gov/grants/rppr/rppr_instruction_guide.pdf

Program Outcomes (xTRACT)

What Table 8 Captures

- Career outcomes of trainees
- Positions following completion of training
- Longitudinal tracking of trainee progression

Required for RPPR

- Table 8 is required as part of T32 RPPR reporting
- Unlike application tables, it must be maintained for each reporting period

Built and Maintained in xTRACT

- Data must be entered and updated outside the RPPR
- Requires complete trainee appointment history
- Depends on accurate outcome data

RA Role

- Maintain and update trainee and alumni records
- Ensure data completeness before RPPR preparation
- Coordinate with program leadership to verify outcomes

Common Challenges

- Missing or outdated alumni outcomes
- Incomplete trainee records
- Attempting to build Table 8 at RPPR time

Table 8 must be built and maintained over time—not at the RPPR deadline

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Questions?