

The Mentorship Statement

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Previous NIH Study Section member on:

- FO3A (Fellowships: Neurodevelopment, Oxidative Stress and Synaptic Plasticity)
- FO3B (Fellowships: Biophysical, Physiological, Pharmacological and Bioengineering Neuroscience)

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Fatal Flaws

- Too generic - would describe any student in the research group
- Does not align well with applicant's stated training plan and/or career goals
- Insufficient detail provided
- Sponsor does not have appropriate mentoring experience
- Insufficient resources

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Elements

A. Research Training Support Available to Support Applicant

1. Financial Support

- List *ALL* forms of active support for the duration of the proposed training period, including grants, start-up funds, contracts, etc.
- Include award amounts and dates
- Funding usually does not have to be directly related to the proposed research
- Ensure funding is available for the duration of the proposed training period - if not, provide a letter of commitment from Dept. or program

2. Sponsor/Co-Sponsor Roles in Research Training Plan

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Elements

A. Research Training Support Available to Support Applicant

1. Financial Support

2. Sponsor/Co-Sponsor Roles in Research Training Plan

- Short paragraph for each sponsor or co-sponsor explicitly defining the role of each in the applicant's training, including relevant expertise
- Provide evidence of existing scientific or mentoring collaboration if possible
- Co-sponsor(s) must be well-integrated into the rest of the training plan

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Elements

B. Sponsor's and co-sponsor's Previous Fellows/Trainees

- State how many previous graduate students and/or postdocs each sponsor/co-sponsor has trained.
- List, by name, up to five previous trainees and include dates trained and current position
- Sponsors with fewer than five previous trainees should consider recruiting a more experienced co-sponsor

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Elements

C. Training Plan, Environment, Research Facilities

- Longest subsection in Sponsor/Co-Sponsor Statement(s), must perfectly align with applicant's Training Goals & Objectives and Activities Planned Under the Award subsections. Should include:
 - Academic Plan (for grad students) - include directly relevant courses, including non-credit external workshops, etc.
 - Professional Development Plan - tailor to trainee's stated short-term (next steps) and long-term career goals
 - Research Plan - relate proposed research plan to long-term career goals, including specific skills and techniques the applicant will learn, and the facilities, equipment and other resources needed to complete the proposed studies
 - Mentorship Plan - who will the trainee meet with on a regular basis? How often? How are co-sponsor's integrated with each other? What is purpose of each regular meeting?

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Elements

D. Number of Fellows/Trainees to be Supervised During the Fellowship

- For each sponsor/co-sponsor, list other graduate students and postdocs who will be trained for the same period as the applicant
- If a large number, justify how that sponsor/co-sponsor will be able to provide personalized attention to the applicant

Sponsor and Co-Sponsor Statements - Elements

E. Applicant's Qualifications and Potential for a Research Career

- Must align with applicant's Biosktech, Background Statement, Training Goals & Objectives and Activities Planned Under the Award subsections
- This is an opportunity to highlight the strengths of the applicant for this particular training proposal and their career aspirations
- Should highlight the uniqueness of the applicant, the *complete* training plan, and how it is tailored for this particular applicant (the reviewer should get the impression the sponsor knows the applicant well)

Breakout Room Discussion Points

- What are the hardest components of the Mentorship Plan to design and implement?
- What should be the respective contributions of both the applicant and the mentor in writing the Mentorship Plan?
- How do you educate your mentor(s) about to how write a good Mentorship Plan section?
- How can the IDP process be used to inform both the writing of the Fellowship application and educate your mentor(s) about an effective Mentorship Plan?