

# TIPSHEET FOR SPONSOR(S) COMMITMENT

FOR NRSA APPLICATION INCLUDING F30, F31 & F32

## DO's and DON'Ts:



**Convey confidence and commitment to the applicant from the sponsor and institution**



**Emphasize accomplishments and research productivity over the efforts of the applicant**



**Include strong, positive, enthusiastic language**



**Avoid doubt raiser statements including negative language, faint praise, hesitancy, irrelevancy, hedging, etc.**

## TIPS FOR WRITING A STRONG LETTER

- **Grasp the funding opportunity's goals and address the review criteria.**

Take the time to craft and tailor the letter for the award.

- **Use titles and surnames consistently for the applicant in the letter.**

Keep it professional.

- **Be mindful of your word choices**

1) Women and minorities are more frequently described by communal traits.

(eg: compassionate, caring, honest, helpful, etc.) than agentic traits ( eg: independent, assertive, competent, confident, etc.) which are generally used for men. Be cognitive of this to avoid unconscious bias in your letter.

2) Use standout adjectives like outstanding, exceptional, etc. rather than grindstone adjectives like tireless, hardworking, etc. to emphasize achievements.

3) Letters written for men applicants are often longer and thus perceived as more enthusiastic. So, maintain a level of high enthusiasm to fill the allowable 6 pages for all applicants.

4) Use the [gender bias calculator](#) to evaluate your word choices.

5) Other useful resources: [Racial Bias](#) [Gender bias](#)

Adjectives to include	Adjectives to avoid
Excellent, Trailblazer, Independent, Self-driven, Accomplished, Skilled, Resourceful, Outstanding, Spearheaded, Insightful, Successful, Confident, Ambitious, Proactive, Logical, Pioneered, Inventive, Robust	Caring, Compassionate, Hard-working, Conscientious, Dependable, Diligent, Tactful, Interpersonal, Warm, Helpful, Honest, Tireless, Stable, Nice, Easy to get along

Adapted this table from: 1), and 2).

## FORMATTING TIPS:



- Create a header titled "Sponsor(s) Commitment" at the top of the first page
- Use at least 0.5 margins, 1.0 line spacing, and 11-point font with an approved font type: Arial (preferred font), Georgia, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype.
- Up to 6 pages in length is allowed for the "Sponsor(s) Commitment"

## If a co-sponsor is proposed in addition to a primary sponsor,



- Explicitly describe the primary sponsor's and co-sponsors' respective areas of expertise, the responsibility of each, and the nature of the involvement with the applicant.
- Describe clearly how co-sponsor(s) will coordinate with the primary sponsor and the applicant to provide an integrated sponsoring effort.
- Letters can be co-signed with the primary sponsor or submitted as a separate letter.

**OUTLINE FOR SPONSOR(S) COMMITMENT**  **FOR NRSA APPLICATION**  
including F30, F31 & F32

ORGANIZE THE STATEMENT UNDER THE FOLLOWING SECTION HEADINGS (A-E)

**A. MENTORING APPROACH AND CANDIDATE MENTORING PLAN**

- Describe sponsor’s mentoring approach to ensure career advancement of the candidate in the biomedical research workforce.
- Describe a specific mentoring plan aligned with the candidate’s training and career goals.

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICS:**

- ✓ Enhancing the candidate’s understanding of scientific research.
- ✓ Promoting and fostering the candidate’s professional development and independence.
- ✓ Maintaining effective communication with the candidate.
- ✓ Aligning expectations with the candidate

**B. PRIOR COMMITMENT TO TRAINING AND MENTORING**

- Provide evidence of sponsor’s commitment to training, mentoring, and career development.
- Early stage sponsors can describe relevant informal training and prior mentoring experiences as a student or postdoc.

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICS:**

- ✓ Examples of no more than 2-5 recent trainees at the same level as the candidate and describe the individualized training, mentoring, and career development offered.

**C. COMMITMENT TO THE CANDIDATE’S RESEARCH TRAINING PLAN**

- Confirm sponsor’s commitment to the candidate’s training plan.
- Provide details about sponsor’s availability

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICS:**

- ✓ Frequency, duration, and nature of meetings with the candidate
- ✓ How the candidate will receive consistent, individualized attention.
- ✓ Number of other scientists that the Sponsor will supervise

**D. RESEARCH TRAINING ENVIRONMENT**

- Describe the research training environment and how it will support the candidate’s development and meet candidate’s need to achieve the outlined goals.
- This section should be coordinated with information provided in the Research Training Plan, Facilities and Other Resources, or other sections so the material is not duplicated.
- The co-sponsor may include information if different from the sponsor’s description.

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICS:**

- ✓ Sponsor’s research training environment, e.g., day-to-day efforts to create a safe, supportive, accessible research environment
- ✓ Organizational research training environments, e.g., available centralized research facilities or equipment needed for the proposed research
- ✓ Organizational research training program(s) related to the candidate
- ✓ Professional development and intellectual interactions, e.g., scientific meetings, journal clubs, seminars, opportunities to present
- ✓ How the sponsor will work with the candidate to develop and publish rigorous scientific products, e.g., publications, presentations

**E. CANDIDATE’S POTENTIAL**

- Describe candidate’s areas for development as well as their potential to benefit from the proposed training and improve candidate’s career transition
- Describe candidate’s preparedness for success and likelihood of achieving training goals

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICS:**

- ✓ Areas for development: technical (new methods or approaches), operational (practicing rigorous, reproducible, responsible research), professional (management, leadership, communication, teamwork)
- ✓ How the proposed training plan will address areas for development and contribute to candidate’s career transition

**CLINICAL TRIAL TRAINING (IF APPLICABLE)**

- ✓ Confirm Sponsor will be responsible for the clinical trial
- ✓ Describe: Source of funding, ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier, Expertise available to guide the candidate in clinical trial research, Sponsor has responsibility for leading and overseeing the trial, Role/ responsibilities of the Candidate