K99/R00 NIH Pathway to Independence Award Applications  
(updated Jan. 2015)

This document is intended to summarize some of the guidelines for K99 applications.

Always start by reviewing the following:

- latest Parent K99/R00 program announcement (PA)
- latest version of the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide, including Supplemental Instructions to the SF424 (R&R) for Preparing an Individual Research Career Development Award (CDA) Application ("K" Series), except where instructed to do otherwise (in the K99/R00 PA or in a Notice from the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts).

Important note: Because of the differences in individual Institute and Center (IC) program requirements for this FOA, prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the Table of IC-Specific Information, Requirements and Staff Contacts, to make sure that their application is responsive to the requirements of one of the participating NIH ICs. See also Frequently Asked Questions.

Overview of K99/R00 Award

The award provides up to 5 years support in 2 phases:

1. Mentored (1-2 yrs) – K99
2. Independent (up to 3 yrs) – R00

Candidate requirements:

- No more than 4 years postdoc training at time of application (see NOT-OD-15-013 for specifics, including exceptions to the 4-year eligibility limit)
- No citizenship requirement

GMAS request entry notes:

- For Project Type select “Basic research and all other”
- For OMB A21 functional code select “Instruction & Training (A01)”
- The project period length should encompass both the K99 and R00 phases

Application Instructions Specific to the K99/R00

Other Project Information

- Project Summary/Abstract (1 page max.): Include a description of the research proposed for the mentored and independent phases.
- Other Attachments: Include a list of Referees here. The list should include the name of the referee, departmental affiliation and institution. This same list must also be provided in the Cover Letter.

Senior/Key Person Profile(s)

All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide, including Supplemental Instructions to the SF424 (R&R) for Preparing an Individual Research Career Development Award (CDA) Application (“K” Series), must be followed.

Adding the mentor to the Research Team in GMAS: select the role “Other” from the drop-down menu, then enter “Mentor” in the text field.
Environment and Institutional Commitment to the Candidate

Description of Institutional Environment (1 page):

- The sponsoring institution must document a strong, well-established research and career development program related to the candidate’s area of interest, including a high-quality research environment with key faculty members and other investigators capable of productive collaboration with the candidate.
- Describe the sponsoring institution’s scientific environment including the resources and facilities that will be available to the candidate.
- Describe how the institutional research environment is particularly suited for the development of the candidate’s research career and the pursuit of the proposed research plan and progression to the R00 phase.

Institutional Commitment to Candidate’s Research Career Development (1 page, usually in the form of a letter signed by the Department Chair):

- The sponsoring institution must provide a statement of commitment to the candidate’s development into a productive, independent investigator and to meeting the requirements of this award. It should be clear that the institutional commitment to the candidate is not contingent upon receipt of the K99/R00 award.
- Provide assurances that the candidate will be able to devote a minimum of 75% effort to the development of their research program. The remaining effort should be devoted to activities related to the development of the candidate’s career as an independent scientist.
- Provide assurance that the research facilities, resources, and training opportunities, including faculty capable of productive collaboration with the candidate, will be available for the candidate’s planned career development and research programs.
- Provide appropriate time and support for any proposed mentor(s) and/or other staff consistent with the career development plan.
- If the candidate is not a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident, the sponsoring institution must include information about their visa status and an assurance that the candidate’s visa provide sufficient time to complete both phases of the K99/R00 award at a U.S. Institution.

Budget

All instructions in the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide, including Supplemental Instructions to the SF424 (R&R) for Preparing an Individual Research Career Development Award (CDA) Application ("K" Series), must be followed, with the following additional instructions:

- Provide itemized budget information for each budget period covered under the K99 phase.
  - Include salary and fringe benefit information for the applicant only.
  - The applicant should indicate a minimum of 9 person months effort for him/herself for the K99 phase.
- Itemized budget information is not required for the R00 phase; a total requested amount for each period is acceptable. However, some basic information must be completed in order for NIH to successfully process the budget form. For each budget period of the R00 phase:
  - In Senior/Key Persons section, provide an entry for the PD/PI, including the appropriate level of effort, $0 for Requested Salary and $0 for Fringe Benefits
  - Under Other Direct Costs add a line item titled 'R00 Independent Phase' and provide the total request for that period (up to $249,000).
At the time of transition to the R00 phase, the R00 applicant institution will submit a detailed budget for each budget period of the R00 project period that reflects the direct and indirect costs at the R00 applicant institution.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to consult the following table for IC-specific programmatic and budgetary information (see Table of IC-Specific Information, Requirements and Staff Contacts), particularly for limits on K99 phase total costs and research support costs, as they vary by institute.

**Indirect Costs entry in GMAS:**
- Select “Edit indirect costs” in the budget and click on “Select rate”.
- Select “Use 1 rate for all periods and fiscal years (%)”.
- Enter the rate of 8%.
- For Indirect Cost Type select “MTDC Training Grant/Career Development”