

The following boilerplate language is for assisting in grant proposal preparation. Faculty members and postdoctoral researchers are advised to tailor boilerplate language to reflect their research project's specific aims. The Office of Postdoctoral Advancement strongly recommends that researchers directly contact the department/office/program in question when seeking a more in-depth resource description, mainly if a specific resource is integral to the research proposal.

Office of Postdoctoral Advancement

Committed to advancing the University's mission to conduct cutting-edge research and advanced training, the university-wide [Office of Postdoctoral Advancement](#) (OPA) supports postdoctoral researchers and their faculty mentors by providing a central hub for career and professional development opportunities, knowledge sharing, and community building. The [OPA staff](#) are dedicated to the growth and success of our postdocs. In addition to guidance from the **Executive Steering Committee**, the office relies on strong partnerships with the Executive Steering Committee, **Postdoctoral Association**, and **several units** across Rutgers.

Each month, the OPA hosts career development workshops and events—all dedicated to helping our growing community of over 800 postdocs make the most of their time at Rutgers and prepare them for the next stage of their careers. The OPA raises awareness of internal and external resources available to postdocs for their training and career success.

At the start of their appointment at Rutgers, postdocs are encouraged to attend a **Welcome and Information Session** hosted by the OPA, which provides information on career development opportunities, and campus resources. Postdocs also receive the OPA's weekly newsletter, which contains a listing of upcoming events, professional opportunities, and valuable resources shared by our campus and external partners.

Career Development

The **Office of Postdoctoral Advancement** hosts professional development seminars, workshops, resources, and programs on topics such as setting **goals, mentoring, individual development plans, career management and planning, time management, career challenges, networking, academic careers, and mental health and wellness**. The OPA staff is experienced at providing career advising sessions suited to STEM, Biomedical, Social Sciences, and Humanities PhDs who want to pursue either an academic or non-academic career.

In addition to the Office of Postdoctoral Advancement, Rutgers University offers non-academic career exploration programs such as [iJOBS Program in the School of Graduate Studies \(SGS\)](#), funded by the National Institutes of Health.

As part of the [Big Ten Academic Alliance](#), postdoctoral researchers at Rutgers have access to resources from the **National Research Mentoring Network-CIC Academic Network (NRMN-CAN)**. The NRMN-CAN is a collaborative Big Ten NIH grant that offers **professional development, grantsmanship coaching, and mentor skills training** to postdocs in the biological, clinical, environmental, and social/behavioral sciences.

The **Office of Postdoctoral Advancement** also offers a career preparation program open to all postdocs. The Proactive, Reflection, Empowered, Planning (**PREP**) program provides the infrastructure, training, and facilitation necessary to increase self-awareness of the pillars of career satisfaction (Strengths, Values, Preferred Skills, Personality) and, as a result, increases the understanding of what a career fit looks like. Postdocs in the **STEM, Biomed, Humanities, and Social Sciences fields**—who need clarity in defining a career fit or path and need guidance on identifying their unique professional value and formulating the next steps for a career plan—are encouraged to apply.

Grant Writing

The Office of Postdoctoral Advancement currently recommends that all postdocs participate in the [New Jersey Alliance for Clinical and Translational Science \(NJACTS\)](#)'s two grant writing training options, NIH F grants for junior postdocs and NIH K and R grants for senior postdocs. Both options are run by Grant Writing Coaches trained by the National Research Mentoring Network.

Additionally, Rutgers Office of Research provides free access to [Pivot database](#), where **postdocs can identify funding opportunities** for all disciplines and project types. It includes federal, non-federal, foundation, and private funding opportunities.

Rutgers offers multiple writing resources that postdocs can take advantage of, including:

- [School of Graduate Studies' Communicating Science Course](#): You will learn for both oral and written communication how to identify the essential message that defines your research, recognize the diverse audiences you speak to about your research, engage your audience and tell them why they should care about what you do, and speak clearly and vividly in the language your audience will understand.

- [Rutgers University Libraries](#): offers research tools and services such as citation management, copyright guidance, research data services, tutorials, and more.
- [The National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#): has members from almost every discipline and represents various colleges and universities. They offer the following writing resources to assist faculty, postdocs, and graduate students.

Individuals interested need to activate their free membership to benefit from these resources:

- Guest Expert Webinar: Writing as Metaphor: Developing a Writing Process That Works for You
- Interested in working with a writing accountability buddy?
- 14-Day Writing Challenge
- WriteNow Access – provides an opportunity to connect with other scholars and utilize the WriteNow software for 12 weeks.

Teaching Skills

Postdoctoral researchers at Rutgers have opportunities to develop their teaching skills and prepare for a faculty job through the INSPIRE fellowship program and Bio Links program. The [INSPIRE Research and Educational Postdoctoral Training Program](#) is one of 20 NIH-funded IRACDA Programs. INSPIRE trains postdoctoral fellows in scientific teaching and enhances the professional development of other trainees at Rutgers who participate in INSPIRE activities such as scientific writing workshops and courses on scientific teaching.

[BIO Links](#) is a teaching K-12 outreach program that allows graduate students and postdocs to volunteer in local public schools. BIO Links volunteers are paired with a science teacher from a local school and commit to visiting one class per week for nine weeks. Some past volunteers have decided to continue visiting the classrooms well beyond the nine-week commitment.

In collaboration with the [Center for Teaching Advancement and Assessment Research](#) (CTAAR), the **Office of Postdoctoral Advancement** also offers workshops tailored for academic career seekers. These workshops cover topics such as teaching portfolios, teaching statements, faculty job applications, and faculty job interviews, etc.

Below is a list of additional internal teaching resources at Rutgers:

- [TRIAD Coalition](#) is a research community within the School of Arts and Sciences' Office of STEM Education that brings together experts in education research across STEM disciplines. The coalition liaises with existing support structures and resources across the university to facilitate course transformations and the related measurement of change.

- [The P3 Collaboratory](#) within Rutgers-Newark is committed to institutional interventions that support faculty development over the lifecycle of an academic career. There is no substitute for individual discussion with a P3 staff member about one's teaching style, classroom goals, and interaction with students.
- [Teaching Excellence Network](#) is a collaborative effort by the School of Arts and Sciences, school of Engineering, and Learning Centers offers programming that takes an assets-based approach to target faculty agency to catalyze lasting institutional and cultural change around teaching.
- [Digital Classroom Services](#) Digital Classroom Services creates and supports instructional technology in the Rutgers-New Brunswick general purpose classrooms and learning spaces of the Office of the Chancellor. Their technology is designed to engage students through computer-based presentation, [high-definition](#) film screening, and projection of camera-captured demonstrations, and helps instructors overcome the challenges of teaching large classes through technologies such as voice amplification and multiple screen projection.
- [The Classroom Inclusivity Series](#): a collaboration between various units across Rutgers, organized and facilitated by The Office of Teaching Evaluation and Assessment Research and the University Equity and Inclusion Office. The program promotes Inclusive Scholarship and Teaching (as identified by the Rutgers University Diversity Priorities) and to support a more well-rounded understanding of Classroom Inclusivity through workshops and training sessions.
- [The Office of Teaching Evaluation and Assessment Research](#) offers several workshops on the improvement of teaching and the use of instructional technologies.
- [The Office of Instructional Design](#) run through Rutgers Continuing Studies, is a sub-unit of Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT). Their mission is to support the Rutgers community in designing and implementing quality face-to-face, fully online, and hybrid courses.
- [myTech@newark](#), a part of Rutgers-Newark, helps faculty and staff learn, teach, and work with technology.
- supports faculty in all pedagogical endeavors, specializing in course design and redesign and the appropriate use of technology to support teaching and learning goals. They assist all instructors with research-driven (or experimental!) pedagogical projects to improve, strengthen, and invigorate the experience of learning and teaching at Rutgers University–Camden.

- [Teaching Assistant Project](#): run through the School of Graduate Studies, the TA Project offers a useful collection of resources for TAs including information on General Teaching Tips, Active Learning, Assessment, and Teaching with Technology.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training

Rutgers University School of Graduate Studies offers an annual [Ethical Scientific Conduct course](#) for Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training that is compliant with NIH requirements. The course duration is for one semester, and participants are required to attend a minimum of eleven, one-hour weekly meetings. The subject matter of the course addresses the following topics: Mentor-Mentee Responsibilities and Relationships; Plagiarism, Academic Rules, and Copyright; Data Acquisition and Laboratory Tools: management, sharing and ownership; Research Misconduct and Policies for Handling Misconduct; Responsible Authorship and Publication; Conflict of Interest - personal, professional, and financial; Scientist as Responsible Member of Society; Collaborative Research in Academia and Industry; Peer Review; Policies for Animal Subjects in Research; Policies for Human Subjects in Research; Contemporary Ethical Issues in Biomedical Research and the Environmental and Societal Impacts of Scientific Research; Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer.

The course format is weekly meetings conducted as a large group lecture for 25 min, followed by a small group (~10 students/group) discussion of cases for 25 min. Faculty participation includes both the large group lecture conducted by an expert in the field who is affiliated with Rutgers University and the small groups facilitated by Rutgers faculty actively conducting research that represent each of our nine joint graduate programs. The large lectures can have assistance as necessary from regulatory experts from the schools and are video captured to allow for review. To allow for additional frequency of instruction, fellows and others are provided with a certificate of completion after attendance at a minimum of eleven meetings. F33 and K award recipients at Rutgers can either take the class themselves and/or lead small group sessions. Initial training is required for all first-year graduate students and postdoctoral fellows on training grants who have not completed a course in RCR in graduate school. RCR training is required at least once per education stage and no less than once every 4 years. To this end, refresher training is required for all fifth-year graduate students and postdoctoral fellows on training grants who have completed a course in RCR in graduate school. Refresher training consists of 8 hours of small group case discussion lead by faculty.

Scientific Rigor and Reproducibility

To address the new NIH requirements concerning scientific rigor and reproducibility (NOT-OD-16-011), Rutgers' School of Graduate Studies has piloted a series of webinars that are funded by an NIH R25 grant (PI: DiCicco-Bloom) and developed in collaboration with the Society for Neuroscience (Promoting Awareness and Knowledge to Enhance Scientific Rigor in Neuroscience). The Rutgers School of Graduate Studies is also offering 3 new biostatistics courses which are available to biomedical PhD students and postdoctoral fellows as of September 2016: "Statistics in Biomedical Science", "Interdisciplinary Biostatistics Research Training for Molecular and Cellular Sciences: Enhancing Rigor and Reproducibility" funded by the supplement to a T32 Biotech Training grant, and "Statistical Theory for Research Workers". These are 3 credit courses and cover the following topics: Determining Power, Defining Endpoints. Randomization, Blinding, Assay Expertise Level, Data Management / Analysis, Data Inclusion / Exclusion, Bias, Reproducibility, Statistical Theory, Statistical Methodology.

Research and Career Mentoring

Research Mentoring

The [National Research Mentoring Network-CIC Academic Network \(NRMN-CAN\)](#) is a collaborative Big Ten NIH grant that offers **mentoring skills training** to postdocs in the biological, clinical, environmental, and social/behavioral sciences. All Rutgers postdocs are eligible to participate in [Big Ten Academic Alliance](#) resources such as NRMN's research mentor and mentee training workshops which are designed to help maximize the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. This evidence-based, interactive approach engages mentors in collective problem solving and connects them with resources to optimize their mentoring practices. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs offers workshops on "Mentoring-up and Mentoring" geared to improve Rutgers postdoctoral researchers' mentoring skills using the NRMN evidence-based mentoring training workshops' materials.

During the spring semester, the **School of Graduate Studies** runs **Mentoring Undergraduate Workshops**. These workshops use techniques and case studies from the National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN) to teach PhD students and Postdoctoral Researchers tools and skills to mentor undergraduate students in a laboratory setting better. Attendees also reflect upon approaches they would use to mentor trainees and employees when running a lab or research group in the future. Topics and interactive case studies led by Drs. Janet Alder, Evelyn Erenrich, and Xenia Morin include *Managing Student Projects, Aligning Expectations, Assessing Understanding, Cultural Sensitivity, Dealing with Anxiety, Promoting Motivation*, among others.

A Badge in Mentoring Undergraduates certification process is available to those who attend these workshops and follow up with online activities and assignments.

Rutgers Individual Development Plan

The individual development plan (IDP) is a mentoring and career development tool that helps postdocs be more intentional and take ownership of their career goals and success. The **Office of Postdoctoral Advancement**, with the support of its Executive Steering Committee leadership, **strongly encourages** postdoctoral researchers to complete an IDP with their faculty mentors once a year. With that in mind, the Office of Postdoctoral Advancement has created a Rutgers IDP form for postdocs and a [website](#) companion with additional mentoring and career management tools that can help advance the postdoc's career in a focused and strategic way.

Every Fall semester, the Office of Postdoctoral Advancement offers a 2-day workshop, “*Your Career on Track*”, where postdocs are introduced to the concept of creating SMART goals, building a mentoring support network to accomplish their goals, and how to complete an IDP.

Mental Health & Wellness

The **Office of Postdoctoral Advancement** staff cares tremendously about the mental health and overall wellbeing of postdoctoral researchers. In March 2020, the OPA launched the [Mental Health & Wellness Webpage](#). This page provides general tips and *internal and external resources available to all postdoctoral researchers at Rutgers*.