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## LIMITED COMPETITION: NIH DIRECTOR'S EARLY INDEPENDENCE AWARD

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Office of Proposal Development <opd\_ovpr@stonybrook.edu>

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To: OPD Announcement <OPD\_Announcements@stonybrook.edu>

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### PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY WIDELY TO YOUR DOCTORAL/MEDICAL SCHOOL STUDENTS, POSTDOCS AND FACULTY

The Office of the Vice President for Research invites applications to the [NIH Director's Early Independence Award](#). This unique program supports exceptional investigators who wish to pursue independent research essentially directly after completion of their terminal doctoral/research degree or end of post-graduate clinical training, thereby forgoing the traditional post-doctoral training period and accelerating their entry into an independent research career. Applications are welcome from individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives and in any topic of relevance to the broad mission of NIH. The NIH Director's Early Independence Award is a component of the [High-Risk, High-Reward Research program](#) of the [NIH Common Fund](#). Each NIH Director's Early Independence Award is limited will be for up to \$250,000 in direct costs per year, plus applicable Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs, the maximum duration of each award is limited to five years, and Stony Brook University may submit 2 applications.

To be considered for this program, the candidate must meet the following eligibility requirements:

**1. Time window for eligibility:** Given the focus on early research independence, the receipt date of the terminal doctoral degree or end of post-graduate clinical training of the PD/PI must be between June 1, 2017 and September 30, 2019. The degree receipt date is that which appears on the official transcript for the degree. The end of post-graduate clinical training includes residency and fellowship periods. At the time of application, the PD/PI must not have served as a post-doctoral fellow following a previous (not the most recent) doctoral degree for more than twelve months.

At the time of award, either 1) the Early Independence investigator must have received a PhD, MD, DO, DC, DDS, DVM, OD, DPM, ScD, EngD, Dr PH, DNSc, ND (Doctor of Naturopathy), PharmD, DSW, PsyD, or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited domestic or foreign institution (it is the responsibility of the sponsoring institution to determine if a foreign doctoral degree is equivalent), or 2) an authorized official of the degree-granting or training institution must certify that all degree requirements have been met and that the receipt date of the degree (as will appear on the transcript) will be before September 30, 2019; in addition, an authorized official of the host institution must certify that the PD/PI will be eligible to conduct independent research at the institution at the time of the project start date.

**2. Level of effort:** Individuals must commit at least 9.6 person-months each year (i.e., 80% effort of a 12-month appointment) during the first two years of the project period to research supported by the Early Independence Award. In the final three years of the project period, awardees may reduce effort toward the Early Independence Award project, but the total effort towards independent research in general must remain at least 9.6 person-months each year (i.e., 80% effort of a 12-month appointment).

**3. Research independence at time of application:** Individuals are eligible only if they, at the time of application submission, do not have research independence. Lack of research independence is defined functionally rather than by position title. Eligible individuals must have all the following characteristics:

- The PD/PI's current research agenda is set through concurrence with mentors.
- The PD/PI's research is funded primarily through support to other investigators (mentored fellowships such as NIH F31 or F32 Fellowships or NSF Graduate Research Fellowships do not preclude eligibility).
- The PD/PI does not have any space assigned directly by the institution for the conduct of his/her research.
- The PD/PI, according to institutional policy, cannot apply for an NIH R01 grant without special waiver or exemption from the institution.

Though the PD/PI must not be functionally independent at the time of application submission, s/he may become functionally independent prior to time of award and still retain eligibility for the award.

Prospective PDs/Pis should contact appropriate institutional leaders to seek an appointment in an independent research position. Alternatively, institutions may actively recruit eligible junior scientists to apply for support through this program. In either event, the institution will be expected to provide substantial support for the junior scientist as detailed below. To foster independence, it may behoove PDs/Pis to be hosted by institutions other than the ones at which they trained.

Interested candidates should carefully review the eligibility requirements and submit the following documents to the Office of the Vice President for Research:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Specific Aims (1 page) - The specific aims page must contain three sections with the following headings: "Research Objectives", "Institutional Support", and "Early Independence Rationale". These three sections should contain the information described below.
  1. Research Objectives: State your research topic and overall approach. Why is this area of research significant? If you have an overarching hypothesis, what is it? What impact will your research have if successful? What are the major conceptual or technical innovations you are introducing into this research area?
  2. Institutional Support: How will the institutional support, including the assurance of research independence, facilitate the accomplishment of your research objectives?
  3. Early Independence Rationale: How will your scientific and technical background, research accomplishments, leadership/mentorship attributes, and scientific vision be leveraged to accomplish the research objectives?

Pre-applications for internal review and selection should be submitted to [Deborah.Mann@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Deborah.Mann@stonybrook.edu) with a cc to [OPD\\_OVPR@stonybrook.edu](mailto:OPD_OVPR@stonybrook.edu), no later than **Monday, June 4, 2018**. A committee decision will be reached by Friday, June 15, 2018.

The NIH deadline for this proposal is **Thursday, September 27, 2018**.

Attached, please find the official guidelines for the NIH Director's Early Independence Award and please direct questions to: [Deborah.Mann@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Deborah.Mann@stonybrook.edu) with a cc to [OPD\\_OVPR@stonybrook.edu](mailto:OPD_OVPR@stonybrook.edu) .

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