

## FAQs for RFA-RM-16-012: H3Africa Global Health Bioinformatics Research Training Program (U2R)

### Eligibility

#### 1. Who's eligible to apply to RFA-RM-16-012?

Only public or private institutions of higher education in African low or middle income countries (LMICs) are eligible to apply.

#### 2. How do I find out what African countries are classified as LMIC?

LMICs are defined by the World Bank classification system (according to Gross National Income (GNI) per capita as "low-income," "lower-middle-income," and "upper-middle-income" (<http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups>).

#### 3. Are U.S. institutions eligible to apply to H3Africa funding announcements?

No. Only eligible African institutions may apply. However, U.S. institutions may participate as collaborators.

#### 4. I'm planning to apply to another H3Africa funding announcement, can I still apply to RFA-RM-16-012?

Yes. PIs may lead applications to multiple H3Africa funding opportunities.

#### 5. Can an applicant organization submit more than one application?

No. Only one application per institution (normally identified by having a unique DUNS number or NIH IPF number) is allowed for RFA-RM-16-012.

#### 6. I'm not currently part of the H3Africa consortium. Can I still apply to RFA-RM-16-012?

Yes. Both current H3Africa grantees and first time H3Africa applicants are encouraged to apply.

#### 7. I've never applied for an NIH grant. Can I still apply to RFA-RM-012?

Any individual(s) with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research training program as the PI is invited to work with his/her organization to develop an application for support. First time applicants should make sure that their institution has the registrations required to submit an NIH application, as outlined in the funding opportunity announcement: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-16-012.html#\\_Section\\_III\\_Eligibility](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-16-012.html#_Section_III_Eligibility).

### Program Features

#### 8. Where can I find more information about this funding opportunity?

Program information for RFA-RM-16-012 is provided in detail in the funding opportunity announcement:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-16-012.html>

All potential applicants should read this document and follow the instructions in Section IV (which supplement the instructions in the SF424 application guide).

**9. What type of training is supported by this funding opportunity?**

This funding opportunity solicits applications that propose bioinformatics research training programs at African institutions that will address the need for advanced bioinformatics and data science research expertise in the H3Africa Consortium. Programs should provide long-term, full-time research training that contributes to the development of advanced bioinformatics research leadership at African institutions (partnerships with non-African institutions are allowed, see Questions 14 and 15).

**10. Can applicants propose to create degree programs in their applications?**

Yes. Applications can propose to develop master's or doctoral degree programs. Post-doctoral programs that provide full-time, long-term research training, but do not offer a degree, are also acceptable.

**11. Can this funding opportunity be used to support bioinformatics workshops?**

No. Short-term bioinformatics training is not supported by this funding opportunity.

**12. Can applicants propose to transform an existing degree program?**

Yes; however, proposed programs should support the development of new bioinformatics research training capacity at African LMIC institutions. This can include significant transformation of an existing degree program, but awards should not propose to support training slots in unmodified existing programs.

**13. What does it mean for an institution to have 'significant genomics research capacity'?**

While a specific research grant or publication threshold is not specified, the applicant institution and any relevant partners should have documented genomics research funding and publications. Program faculty should have strong records as researchers, including recent publications and successful competition for research support in genomics, bioinformatics, or other relevant research areas.

**14. Can applicants partner with other African or Non-African institutions in the proposed program?**

Applicants may propose to provide training through a partnership structure with other Africa, U.S. or other high income country institutions. Partnerships should be well justified to enhance the specific objectives of the training program.

**15. Can proposed training programs include training in non-African institutions?**

Yes; however, if a partnership structure is proposed, the African applicant should also propose how additional faculty from their institution will be trained to fill these existing gaps in expertise to eventually establish a sustainable bioinformatics research training program.

**16. Are multiple PI applications allowed?**

Yes. Multiple PIs with bioinformatics or relevant genomic expertise from partner institutions in Africa, U.S. or other high income country (HIC) institutions may be proposed. Multiple PIs should have a documented history of collaboration relevant to the proposed research training program.

## **Budget**

### **17. Can the proposed program include budget for infrastructure?**

Support from this award should not be used to acquire major infrastructure (purchase of capital equipment costing more than \$5,000 is not allowed). Software and platform subscription or license costs may be included, as well as internet or cellular connectivity costs that are necessary for establishing the proposed training program.

### **18. Can part of the budget be allocated to trainee research projects?**

Yes, applicants may include costs to support mentored research projects for trainees. One-time advanced in-country research training support of up to \$20,000 direct costs per trainee for mentored research to be undertaken by a long-term trainee in his/her country may be included. It is expected that trainees will have opportunities for support through faculty mentors who have existing research grants at the institution (or other H3Africa funded projects).

## **How to apply**

### **19. Where can I find instructions and guidance for submitting an application?**

It is critical that applicants follow the instructions in the funding opportunity announcement and the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide. Applications that do not comply with these instructions may be delayed or not accepted for review. Be aware that the instructions in the FOA supersede those found in the SF424 application guide.

### **20. What is the timeframe for submission of applications?**

The application can be submitted any time between the "Open Date" and the "Application Due Date" noted in the FOA. Applicants and their institutions should familiarize themselves with the requirements of electronic submission through grants.gov, including registration of the applicant and the institution through NIH Commons. The registration process can take several weeks and applications cannot be submitted before all registrations are completed.

It is strongly suggested that you submit your application electronically at least a few days BEFORE the actual deadline. Remember, you must check for error messages to your email address after submission to Grants.gov AND subsequently when the application is transferred automatically to eRA Commons (error messages go to your eRA Commons Account). You must correct any Grants.gov and eRA-identified errors BEFORE the submission deadline or your application will NOT be accepted by NIH. Verify that your application is viewable in your eRA Commons account. If you cannot view the application in eRA Commons, NIH has not yet accepted it! Do not wait until the last day. Late applications will not be accepted for review.

**21. Will NIH accept paper applications for this FOA?**

No. The NIH requires electronic applications in response to this FOA and it is critical that applicants complete all required registrations well in advance of the application deadline as the registration process can take several weeks or longer.

**22. Do I need to have an eRA Commons ID?**

Yes. Failure to register in the Commons and to include a valid PD/PI Commons ID in the credential field will prevent the successful submission of an electronic application to NIH. For additional information, see the eRA Commons Registration FAQs.

**23. The FOA states that applicants must have and maintain a System for Award Management (SAM) registration. Where can I find more information about this?**

The submitting institution and the PI are required to register in order to submit an application using the online systems. Applicants must have a valid Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in order to begin each of the following registrations:

- System for Award Management (SAM) – Applicants must complete and maintain an active entity registration (formerly CCR registration), which requires renewal at least annually. The renewal process may require as much time as the initial registration. Use the Sam.gov "Manage Entity" function to manage your entity registrations. See the Grants Registration User Guide at SAM.gov for additional information.
- Grants.gov
- eRA Commons - Organizations can register with the eRA Commons as they are working through their SAM or Grants.gov registration. eRA Commons requires organizations to identify at least one Signing Official (SO) and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application.

[Find detailed instructions about this multiple step registration process.](#)