

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

PATHWAYS



**NIH
PATHWAYS
PROGRAMS**

INTERNSHIP

RECENT GRADUATE

PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOW

National Institutes of Health | Pathways Programs

Introduction

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the nation's medical research agency — making important discoveries that improve health and save lives.

History

For over a century, NIH scientists have paved the way for important discoveries that improve health and save lives. In fact, 148 Nobel Prize winners have received support from NIH. Their studies have led to the development of MRI, understanding of how viruses can cause cancer, insights into cholesterol control, and knowledge of how our brain processes visual information, among dozens of other advances.

Organization

The National Institutes of Health is made up of 27 different components called Institutes and Centers. Each has its own specific research agenda, often focusing on particular diseases or body systems. All but three of these components receive their funding directly from Congress, and administer their own budgets. NIH leadership plays an active role in shaping the agency's research planning, activities, and outlook.

Mission and Goals

NIH's mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability.

The goals of the agency are:

- to foster fundamental creative discoveries, innovative research strategies, and their applications as a basis for ultimately protecting and improving health;
- to develop, maintain, and renew scientific human and physical resources that will ensure the Nation's capability to prevent disease;
- to expand the knowledge base in medical and associated sciences in order to enhance the Nation's economic well-being and ensure a continued high return on the public investment in research; and
- to exemplify and promote the highest level of scientific integrity, public accountability, and social responsibility in the conduct of science.



Photo Credit: National Institutes of Health

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Pathways Programs

Types of Pathways Opportunities

- Internship Program
- Recent Graduates Program
- Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF)

Eligibility for the Pathways Program

You are eligible to apply if you meet the following criteria and program requirements:

- Are a U.S. Citizen or non-U.S. citizen, national or legal permanent resident
- Are at least 16 years old
- Able to obtain and maintain a security clearance

REGULATIONS

The Pathways Programs requirements are found in part 362 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The appointing authorities for the Pathways Programs are found in 5 CFR 213.3402 (a), (b), and (c).

Internship Requirements

- Accepted for enrollment or enrolled and seeking a degree (diploma, certificate, etc.) in a qualifying accredited educational institution on a full-time or half-time basis
- Obtain and maintain a minimum unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- Be in good academic standing in an accredited institution
- Must maintain student eligibility for the duration of the internship*

Recent Graduate Requirements

- Possess a qualifying degree from a qualifying institution received within the previous two years. Exceptions include veterans, who due to their military service obligation have up to six years after degree completion to apply
- Acquire a minimum unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale

PMF Requirements

- Possess an advanced degree (Masters or above) from a qualifying educational institution within the previous two years
- Acquire a minimum unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale

* A student means that you have been accepted for enrollment or are enrolled as a degree-seeking student in an accredited college or university at least half-time. You may also be currently enrolled in high school for some positions. Your degree does not have to be related to the position/series you apply for.

National Institutes of Health | Internships

The NIH Internship Program

The NIH Internship Program is designed to attract a diverse pool of talented students. Students are enrolled in a wide variety of educational institutions such as high school, vocational, technical, undergraduate, or graduate. Students may be placed in one of the 27 Institutes and Centers at the NIH. The practical experience gained through the internship allows students to explore Federal civil service careers at the beginning of their employment journeys before their career paths are fully established.

Temporary Positions

The flexible nature of this Program accommodates the NIH's need to hire students to complete temporary work or projects, perform labor-intensive tasks not requiring subject matter expertise, or to work traditional "summer jobs." These internships are delineated as Student Trainee appointments with a Not-to- Exceed Date (NTE). Intern NTE appointments may be extended in increments up to one year.

Indefinite Positions

The indefinite internship program at the NIH does not have a time limited appointment and students are assigned meaningful work that supports the Institute's or Center's needs. Students work full- or part-time and are able to explore career paths related to their academic fields of study or career interests.

Compensation and Benefits

While the government uses at least six different pay scales, the majority of Civil Service employees are paid using the GS (General Schedule) pay scale. The General

Schedule pay scale for Civil Service employees features 15 pay grades, GS-1 (lowest) through GS-15 (highest) with 10 steps within each grade. You can visit the GS pay scale here: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages>.

You can review our benefits at: <https://hr.od.nih.gov/benefits/default.htm>.

Employees hired under the Pathways Programs on temporary appointments for 90 days or more are eligible to earn annual and sick leave. Interns hired under the Temporary Internship Program are considered temporary employees and are generally eligible to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program if they are expected to work 130 hours per month or more for at least 90 days, in accordance with 5 CFR 890.102. Those who meet the criteria laid out in these provisions will receive the same government contribution as full-time permanent employees. There is no provision for temporary employees to be eligible for life insurance or retirement coverage.

National Institutes of Health | Internships

Employees hired under as a Pathways Indefinite Intern are eligible to earn annual and sick leave and are also eligible for Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), Dental and Vision, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), Thrift Savings Program (TSP), and Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).

Intern Conversion Opportunities

Some internship assignments, at the completion of the Pathways Program, result in a non-competitive conversion into a term (temporary position lasting between one and four years) or permanent position in the civil service. If appointed to a term position, the employee may subsequently be non-competitively converted into a permanent competitive service position.

Once the Intern has completed his or her academic requirements and the Pathways Internship Program, conversion may be an option, but is not guaranteed. If conversion does not occur, participation in the Pathways Program counts towards career tenure.

Possible conversion tracks may include Human Resources Assistant/Specialist, Program Support Assistant, Program Specialist, Ethics Program Assistant/Specialist, IT Specialist, Administrative Officer, Budget Analyst, Program/Management Analyst, etc.

Eligibility for Conversion

To be eligible for conversion, an Intern must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Select a mentor within 45 days of hire and attend regularly scheduled meetings with the mentor
- Complete the required number of hours of work experience (generally, at least 640 hours) while enrolled as a full-time or half-time degree-seeking student
- Complete his or her educational requirements from a qualifying institution
- Receive a favorable recommendation by an official of the Agency and be rated as “Achieved Expected Results” on a performance plan rating
- Meet the qualification requirements for the position to which the Intern will be converted (position may be within the Agency or other Federal agencies)

The conversion must occur within 120 days of completing all academic requirements.



Photo Credit: National Institutes of Health

The NIH Recent Graduates Program

The NIH Recent Graduates Program is a one-year career development program (requires 40 hours of training) that provides federal employment opportunities for recent graduates and individuals who have obtained an associates, bachelors, masters, professional, doctorate, vocational or technical degree or certificate from a qualifying educational institution. The Recent Graduates Program enables individuals who lack experience to explore Federal civil service employment at the beginning of their careers. The Program engages them at the beginning of their work lives before their career paths are fully established.

Compensation and Benefits

While the government uses at least six different pay scales, the majority of Civil Service employees are paid using the GS (General Schedule) pay scale. The General Schedule pay scale for Civil Service employees features 15 pay grades, GS-1 (lowest) through GS-15 (highest) with 10 steps within each grade. You can visit the GS pay scale here: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages>.

Employees hired under the Pathways Recent Graduates Program are eligible to earn annual and sick leave and are also eligible for Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), Dental and Vision, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FGLI), Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), Thrift Savings Program (TSP), and Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).

You can review our benefits at: <https://hr.od.nih.gov/benefits/default.htm>.

Conversion

The goal of the program is to convert Recent Graduates into a term or permanent position in the Federal civil service. Recent Graduates must meet the following program requirements:

- Complete all the requirements of the Program successfully.
- Have a formal training and development plan that includes 40 hours of interactive training.
- Select a mentor within 45 days of hire and attend regularly scheduled meetings with the mentor.
- Demonstrate successful job performance consistent with the applicable performance appraisal program.
- Meet the OPM qualification standards for the position to which the Recent Graduate will be converted.

Possible conversion tracks may include Human Resources Specialist, Program Specialist, Ethics Specialist, IT Specialist, Administrative Officer, Budget Analyst, Program/Management Analyst, etc.

National Institutes of Health | PMFs

The NIH Presidential Management Fellows Program

The NIH Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program is the Federal Government's flagship leadership and development program for individuals with advanced degrees. This two year career development program, managed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), is designed to attract to the Federal service talented men and women who demonstrate academic excellence, possess management and leadership potential, and have a clear interest and commitment to public service. By developing a cadre of future Government leaders, the program helps Federal agencies meet their workforce planning and succession needs.

Application Process

The PMF Program accepts applications annually and has its own deadlines. When the application window opens, it is announced on www.USAJOBS.gov. For more information, regarding the application deadline, please visit www.pmf.gov.

Applying to the Program is only the first step in becoming a PMF. During the application process, you must take an on-line assessment, submit a resume and transcripts, and complete the on-line essays. Applicants with qualifying scores will be identified as Semi-Finalists and invited to participate in the in-person assessment. Top performing Semi-Finalists will be named as Finalists. Finalists are eligible for appointment as a Fellow.

Once OPM announces the official list of PMF Finalists, NIH is able to list available PMF opportunities on USAJOBS. At that point PMF Finalists are eligible to apply for NIH PMF opportunities.

Compensation and Benefits

While the government uses at least six different pay scales, the majority of Civil Service employees are paid using the GS (General Schedule) pay scale. The General Schedule pay scale for Civil Service employees features 15 pay grades, GS-1 (lowest) through GS-15 (highest) with 10 steps within each grade. You can visit the GS pay scale here: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages>.

Employees hired under the Pathways Presidential Management Fellows Program are eligible to earn annual and sick leave and are also eligible for Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), Dental and Vision, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), Thrift Savings Program (TSP), and Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).

You can review our benefits at: <https://hr.od.nih.gov/benefits/default.htm>.

National Institutes of Health | PMFs

Conversion

The goal of the program is to convert PMFs into a term or permanent position in the Federal civil service. PMFs must meet the following program requirements:

- Participate in the OPM-sponsored orientation program.
- Create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) within 45 days of appointment.
- Undertake at least 80 hours of interactive training each year.
- Select a mentor within 45 days of hire and attend regularly scheduled meetings with the mentor.
- Demonstrate successful job performance consistent with the applicable performance appraisal program.
- Participate in at least one, four-to-six month rotational or developmental assignment consistent with the employee's IDP.

PMFs at NIH

At-Large PMFs are hired by the NIH Office of Human Resources and rotate throughout the entire NIH, creating their own schedule of 3-4 month rotations. These rotational opportunities provide on-the-job training with exposure to senior leadership. A core business rotation requirement applies.

Designated PMFs are hired by a specific office or manager within an IC (e.g. NCI, NIAID, etc.) and rotate through the IC with up to one developmental rotation outside of the designated IC. As a Designated Fellow, the focus is on learning the organization and culture of the designated IC.



Photo Credit: National Institutes of Health

How to Apply

Applications for the NIH's Pathways Programs must be submitted online using www.USAJOBS.gov.



The Application Process

You must create a new user account on USAJOBS to apply for any Federal job. You will create your applicant profile by providing biographic and prior employment information. This section will determine if you meet application eligibility requirements. You must answer all required fields in order to proceed through the application process.

Submission of your resume and academic transcripts are required. Both official and unofficial transcripts are acceptable as a part of the application process. However, if you are selected, you will be required to provide official transcripts before you receive a final offer letter with NIH.

Submitting Your Application

When you have completed the online questionnaire and uploaded your resume

and transcript you will be ready to complete your application. You should check USAJOBS to ensure you receive an application confirmation. If you do not receive a confirmation, you must assume your application was not complete.

Candidates have until 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time on the closing date on the announcement to complete the application process. This includes submitting the online application as well as any required documents as defined in the Required Documents section in the listed announcement. Candidates are encouraged to complete their applications well before the application deadline to ensure they receive consideration. Should candidates be missing any of the required documents or submit their application late, they will be disqualified for consideration of employment.

There is typically a maximum number of applications for each vacancy announcement. The vacancy will close on the closing date listed in the announcement or when the maximum number of applications is received. The vacancy will close when the first of these conditions are met. If the application limit is reached on the same day the announcement opened, the open and close date will be the same day.

How to Apply—continued

Required Documents

All required documents listed below that are applicable to you, must be submitted to the automated system USAJOBS by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on the closing date of the announcement. The following documents must be submitted for your application package to be considered complete. It is your responsibility to ensure all required documents are received within the required time frame. Our office cannot be responsible for incompatible software, illegible transmissions, delays in service, system failure or downtime, etc. Failure to submit required, legible documents may result in loss of consideration.

Please submit a resume that includes the following information:

- contact information;
- completed course work (unit/credit hours);
- academic standing/GPA;
- work/volunteer experience including the work schedule and hours worked per week as well as dates or employment; and title, series, and grade, if applicable; supervisors name, phone number and email address for each work period listed and whether or not we may contact them; and
- references.

INITIAL APPOINTMENT

The initial appointment for the Intern, officially titled Student Trainee, Recent Graduate, or PMF is at the grade level for which the applicant qualifies in accordance with the criteria below:

Grade — Level of Education

GS-1: Enrollment is a high school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED) program

GS-2: High school diploma or equivalent

GS-3: Completion of one full academic year of post-high school study

GS-4: Completion of two full academic years of post-high school study or associate's degree

GS-5: Completion of all requirements for a bachelor's degree or equivalent degree

GS-7: Completion of one full academic year of graduate level education

GS-9: Completion of all requirements for a master's degree or equivalent degree

GS-11: For research positions, completion of all requirements for a master's or equivalent degree

GS-11: For non-research positions, completion of all requirements for a PhD or equivalent degree

How to Apply—continued

Current Transcripts

An unofficial copy is sufficient with the application; however, if selected, an official college transcript will be required. Transcripts **MUST** include the student's name, name of the school, current GPA/academic standing, past and current coursework, and degree program.

Proof of Enrollment

Proof of Enrollment or Class Registration and documentation must be included in your application. Proof of Enrollment may include a screen shot of the semester class schedule, an official letter of enrollment, or be listed on official transcripts. The document should show the academic institution where the student is enrolled in courses, the degree or certificate program, and enrollment in at least a half-time status (as defined by the academic institution).

How Selections Are Made

The USAJOBS website links to our system for screening applications to make sure they are complete and that applicants meet the eligibility criteria. NIH selecting officials will review the applications and will call you directly if they are interested in an interview. If you are selected, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) will contact you with a tentative verbal offer. The offer will not be official until OHR receives your official transcript and you have completed the background investigation and security clearance process.

VETERANS PREFERENCE

For 5-point veteran's preference (TP), you must provide a copy of your DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (Member Copy 4 is preferable) which must show the type of discharge and dates of active duty. If you are currently on active duty, you must provide a certification on letterhead from your military branch which contains your military service date, expected date of discharge or release, and the character of service to show that your military service was performed under honorable conditions. The expected date of discharge or release must be within 120 days of the date the certification is submitted for consideration for the vacancy announcement. If the appropriate information is not submitted to confirm your current or expected discharge status, dates of service, etc., you will not receive credit for the claimed active duty military service.

For 10-point veteran's preference (CPS, CP, XP), you must submit a current version of the SF-15 (Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference), dated October 2013, and any documentation required by this form to support your claim. Previous editions of the SF-15 will not be accepted. If we cannot verify your 10-point preference status, you will receive 5-point preference if veterans' preference requirements have been met.

For Sole Survivorship Preference (SSP), you must provide a copy of your DD-214 (Member Copy 4 is preferable) or another form of official documentation which shows your discharge or release from active duty occurred on or after August 29, 2008, and was based on a sole survivorship discharge.

For more information on Veterans Preference, please visit the Vet Guide: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/veterans-services/vet-guide-for-hr-professionals/>

The National Institutes of Health

NIH is made up of the Office of the Director and 27 Institutes and Centers (listed below), each with a specific research agenda, often focusing on particular diseases or body systems. NIH leadership plays an active role in shaping the agency's activities and outlook.

NIH Office of the Director

National Cancer Institute (NCI) – Est. 1937

National Eye Institute (NEI) – Est. 1968

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) – Est. 1948

National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) – Est. 1989

National Institute on Aging (NIA) – Est. 1974

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) – Est. 1970

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) – Est. 1948

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) – Est. 1986

National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) – Est. 2000

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) – Est. 1962

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) – Est. 1988

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) – Est. 1948

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) – Est. 1950

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) – Est. 1974

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) – Est. 1969

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) – Est. 1962

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) – Est. 1949

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) – Est. 1993

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) – Est. 1950

National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) – Est. 1986

National Library of Medicine (NLM) – Est. 1956

NIH Clinical Center (CC) – Est. 1953

Center for Information Technology (CIT) – Est. 1964

Center for Scientific Review (CSR) – Est. 1946

Fogarty International Center (FIC) – Est. 1968

National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) – Est. 2011

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) – Est. 1999