

# 2025 NIH Navigation Cohort

## Overview

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the nation's medical research agency and a critical source of funding for health-related science, including family planning. However, according to NIH RePORTER, of the over \$331 billion in NIH funding awarded between 2009 and 2018, only 0.3% was related to family planning.

Feedback from Society of Family Planning (the Society) members has highlighted our community's need for guidance in navigating the NIH application process and mentorship from family planning researchers with success in writing NIH proposals. In the face of escalating attacks on science and family planning, the Society remains resolved to advance just and equitable abortion and contraception informed by science, and we will continue to lead with the belief that [our vision](#) is attainable.

To this end, we are offering the fifth iteration of the [NIH Navigation Cohort](#), a proposal development program for Society members actively developing an R or K award application focused on a family planning topic in the US. To avoid pre-compliance with the current presidential administration's attacks on science, it is more important than ever for family planning researchers to continue applying for these awards. The goal of the program is to support Society members in developing NIH proposals and to strengthen the important scientific exchange between family planning researchers and the NIH.



## Program

This writing-intensive program, led by [Vanessa Dalton](#), [Cynthia Gómez](#), and [David Turok](#), is designed to help participants refine and enhance their proposals in a peer-review setting. The program is intended to complement participants' other sources of NIH support, such as institutional grant writing workshops, by providing participants with a unique opportunity to receive feedback on their proposals from subject matter experts. This year's program will also include an opportunity to troubleshoot application language and framing challenges that are unique to the current administration's NIH.

Participants will take part in up to 14 sessions between July 30, 2025 and February 11, 2026 focused on key components of the NIH application. Participants will share drafts of sections of the application in advance of each session and then come together to receive critical feedback from peers and program leaders, with the expectation of submitting their final proposal for NIH funding consideration. The program will culminate in a mock review. The cohort will be capped at eight participants in order to maximize opportunities for feedback and dialogue.

We invite members to [express interest](#) in joining the NIH Navigation Cohort by June 9, 2025 at 8:59 pm PT/ 11:59 pm ET.

**Express interest in joining  
by **June 9, 2025****

## Eligibility and selection process

The program is open to individuals who:

- Are current Society members;
- Are developing an R of K award application focused on a family planning topic in the US (including US territories);
- Have a completed draft of Specific Aims;
- Have the support of their institution to attend; and
- Can commit to full participation in the program as detailed below, including submitting materials for peer review and providing review of peer materials:
  - Session 1: Introductions, navigating your institution under the administration - July 30
  - Session 2: Specific aims, first pass - August 13
  - Session 3: Specific aims, second pass - August 27
  - Session 4: Letters of support, the application, language and framing - September 10
  - Session 5: Approach, first pass - September 24
  - Session 6: Career development activities - K awards - October 8
  - Session 7: Approach, second pass - October 22
  - Session 8: Biosketch and identifying mentors, alternate funding sources - November 5
  - Session 9: Background and career goals - K awards - November 19
  - Session 10: Significance and innovation - December 3
  - Session 11: Budget and dissemination plan - December 17
  - Session 12: Specific aims and Approach, final pass - January 7
  - Session 13: Final session for feedback, pre-mock study - January 14
  - Mock Study: February 11

If you anticipate any challenges with obtaining institutional support to attend these sessions, please reach out to discuss your options.

All sessions will be held via Zoom from 1:00-3:00 pm PT/ 4:00-6:00 pm ET. Multiple absences or missed participation in peer review will initiate a conversation with a faculty member to discuss continued participation in the cohort.



Applicants will be selected by Society staff, in consultation with program leaders, based on the following:

- Applicant's enthusiasm about participating in program;
- Applicant's potential to benefit from program;
- Potential of program to provide support that is distinct from other proposal development support available to applicant;
- Applicant's readiness to participate in program, including prior grant writing experience and having research ideas that are developed enough to allow for proposal writing during the program; and
- Applicant's readiness to lead the proposed project based on background and experience

Those seeking K- and R-series funding are invited to apply; in the 2025 cohort, the Society will prioritize applicants seeking R-series funding.

In addition, as part of the Society's commitment to building and supporting an inclusive, multidisciplinary, and diverse community of family planning scholars, the Society is particularly interested in building a cohort that includes researchers who identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, researchers from across the US, and researchers with diverse disciplinary backgrounds.

**Questions? Contact [Grants@SocietyFP.org](mailto:Grants@SocietyFP.org)**