National Institute of
General Medical Sciences

NIH Research Enhancement Award (R15)

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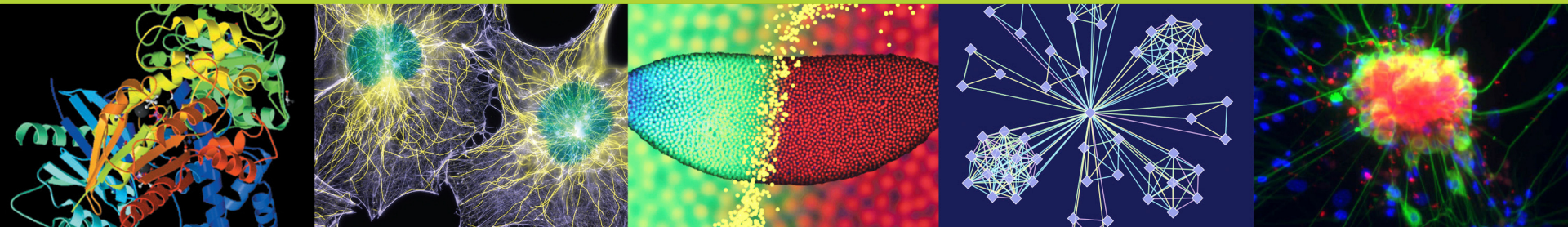
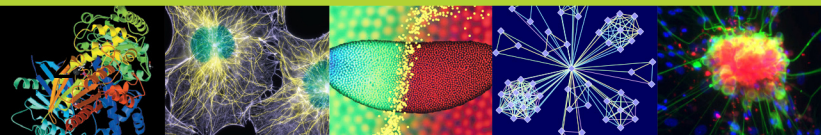# R15 grant mechanism is used to fund…

- Academic Research Enhancement Award (**AREA**) for Undergraduate-Focused Institutions

    [PAR-18-714](#) and [PAR-19-133](#)

- Research Enhancement Award Program (**REAP**) for Health Professional Schools and Graduate Schools

    [PAR-19-134](#) and [PAR-19-135](#)

Is AREA or REAP right for me?

Is the PI's **primary appointment** in a [Health Professional School](#) or [Graduate School](#)?

Yes

No

Has the umbrella institution (**both HPS and non-HPS components**) received NIH funding totaling **no more than** $6M per year (in both direct and F&A/indirect costs) in 4 of the last 7 years? [Need help determining funding level?](#)

Does your School within the parent umbrella institution have a greater undergraduate to graduate student enrollment?

Yes

No

Yes

No

REAP

Ineligible for R15 Program

Has the individual non-Health Professional component of the parent umbrella institution received **no more than** $6M per year (in both direct and F&A/indirect costs) in 4 of the last 7 years? [Need help determining funding level?](#)
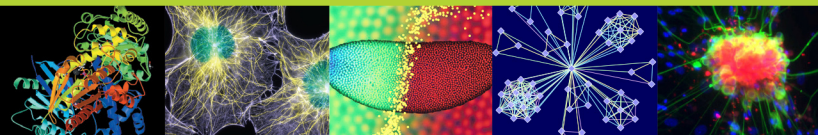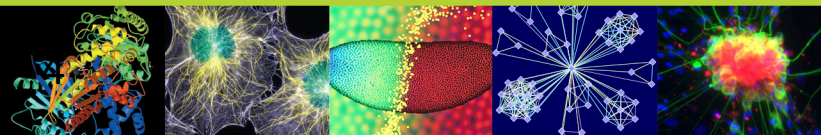
**Yes**

No

AREA

Ineligible for R15 Program

R15 basics

- Research grant mechanism for small scale research projects at under-resourced institutions

- 3-year project period

- Up to $300,000 direct cost over 3 years

- 12-page Research Strategy

- Grants are renewable

# Applications and Awards

- ~1,443 applications are received in FY2020

- ~ 288 awards

- ~ $83,700,000

- No set aside funds

- Each NIH institute decides the number and size of R15 awards they support

  - NCATS and FIC do not participate
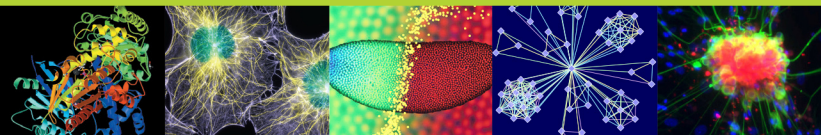
Program goals

1. Support useful, interesting, publishable research

2. Strengthen research environment of institutions that have not been major recipients of NIH funding

3. Expose students in such environments to primary research

   - Goal = consider research careers

   - Metric ≠ students eventually get R01
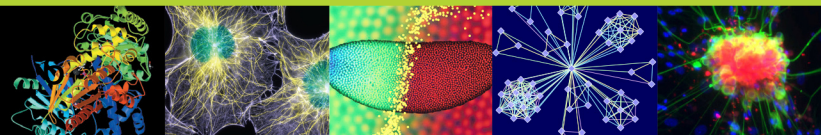
AREA program-specific

- The majority of the research team must be undergraduates

- Allows graduate student support, but emphasis is on undergraduates

- Supports faculty and research at non-health professional schools
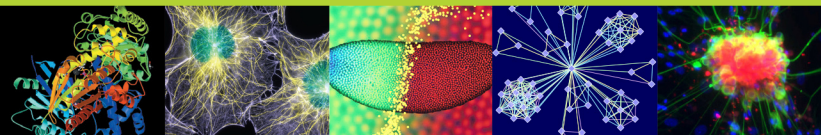
Can I have an ineligible-collaborator?

- **Yes!**

- **However….** Be mindful of the intent and unique goals of the R15

  - Majority of research should be directed by PI at grantee institution

  - Student profile & student inclusion are for applicant/eligible component not collaborator site

- **Collaborators add expertise, but be selective**
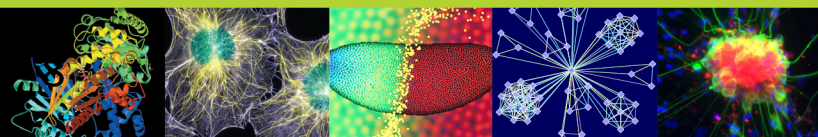
Provost Letter - required

- Both AREA and REAP require a signed letter from the Provost or similar official verifying eligibility as specified in the appropriate FOA

- Applications submitted without this letter will be withdrawn and returned without review.
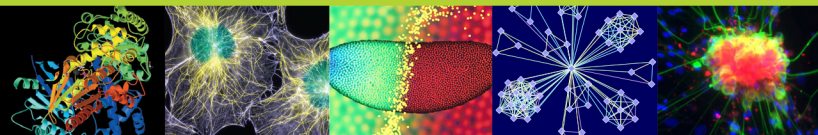
The Art of Crafting a R15

- Pick a compelling research topic

  - Interesting questions & publishable data

- Make the plan feasible with

  - Resources (facility and personnel)

  - Effort

  - Students

- Appropriate scope

- Describe your environment
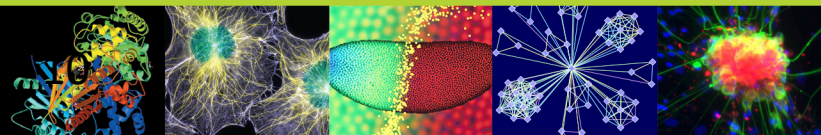
Research Strategy

- **Should touch all review criteria & program goals**

- Preliminary data

  - Ask yourself "would I want to see the data?"

 - Does not including data impact the Significance or Approach?
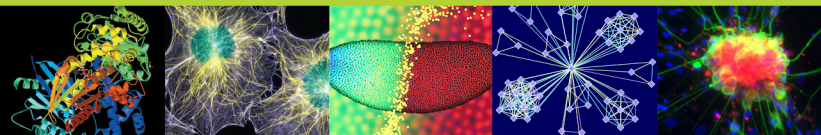
How students will be involved?

- Examples provided in both FOAs

- Describe involvement & supervision of students

  - Think mentoring not didactic training

  - Present at (lab) meetings & (campus) conferences

  - (Help) design experiments

 - Collect & analyze data

  - Draft articles
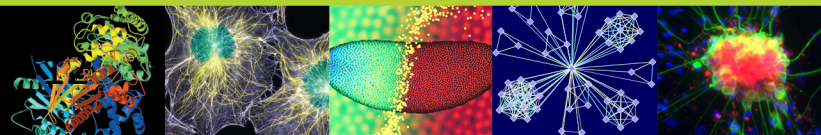
Student involvement should be meaningful

- Include number of students

- Quality of student involvement

  - It is not sufficient to say "there will also be a couple undergrads (with an unspecified or insignificant role)"

  - There should be mention of how students will be recruited to the lab and what type of student (freshman – senior levels).

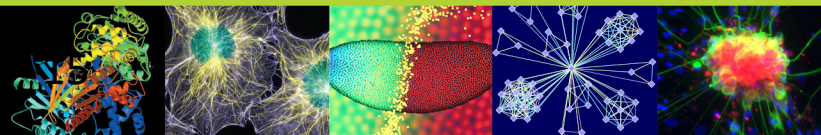- Appropriate compensation = commitment
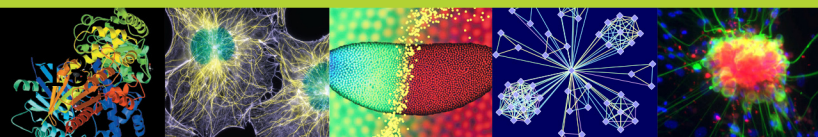
The Budget

- No specific restrictions in any category

- Can support a wide range of expenses

  - Student wages

  - Collaborator salaries (subawards)

  - Travel

- Keep R15 criteria in mind

  - Most funds should remain at the R15 institution
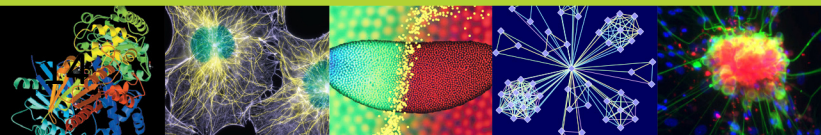
How to identify the right NIH contact ?

- [NIH RePORTER](#) Matchmaker tool searches for funded grants

- Colleagues, friends, other researchers in your field

- [R15 website](#) (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r15.htm)

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Questions?