

Changes to the NIH Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA)/R15 Program

As announced in guide notice [NOT-OD-19-015](#), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has shifted its approach to how it utilizes the R15 activity code. The current NIH AREA Parent Announcement expired January 8, 2019. The R15 activity code has been rebranded as “NIH Research Enhancement Award” and now includes two programs:

1. **Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA)** limited to Undergraduate-Focused Institutions that do not receive substantial funding from NIH.
2. **Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP)** designed for Health Professional Schools and Graduate Schools.

“*Undergraduate focused*” is defined by NIH as an academic component within an institution that has a greater undergraduate student enrollment than its graduate student enrollment and can include institutions that award advanced degrees.

Although NIH has outlined general program guidelines, each individual Funding Opportunity Announcement may include eligibility information that **supersedes** the general program information included here.

Eligibility Criteria:

Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA):

- The applicant institution must be an accredited public or non-profit private school that grants baccalaureate degrees in biomedical sciences.
- At the time of application submission, the non-health professional components of the institution may not have received support from NIH totaling more than \$6 million per year (in both direct and F&A/indirect costs) in 4 of the last 7 federal fiscal years.
- Qualifying academic component (defined as school, college, or center) within an institution must have an undergraduate student enrollment that is greater than the graduate student enrollment.

Individual Centers or Institutes within Schools or Colleges that grant degrees in health professions are ineligible to apply for funding under the AREA FOA.

Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP):

- The applicant organization must be an accredited public or non-profit private school that grants baccalaureate or advanced degrees in health professions or advanced degrees in biomedical and behavioral sciences.
- At the time of application submission, the applicant institution may not have received support from NIH totaling more than \$6 million per year (in both direct and F&A/indirect costs) in 4 of the last 7 federal fiscal years.

Additional Application Instructions:

A letter signed by the Authorized Official that verifies eligibility of the applicant institution will be required at the time of application submission as part of the letters of support. This letter will be coordinated through the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSPA) and will be signed as required by the specific FOA.

Current Eligibility:

- **SIUC meets the eligibility requirements for both the AREA and REAP programs.**
Specific program announcements/solicitations from NIH institutes/centers may have additional requirements/limitations so it is important that you read these documents carefully.
- **SIUC School of Medicine Faculty are eligible only to apply to the REAP program.**

Please contact OSPA if you have further questions or need additional information regarding eligibility.

Additional Resources:

Notice Number: [NOT-OD-19-015](#)

NIH Extramural Nexus: [Changes to the R15 Academic Research Enhancement Award \(AREA\), and Introducing the R15 Research Enhancement Award Program \(REAP\)](#)

NIH Research Enhancement Award (R15) [Website](#)

Frequently Asked Questions: [Academic Research Enhancement Awards](#)

NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts: [Current R15 Funding Opportunities](#)