NIH Policy on Inclusion of Children

For grant applications submitted on January 24, 2016 and after, or the purposes of inclusion policy, the age of a child will be defined as individuals under 18 years old instead of under 21 years old, the current NIH definition of a child for inclusion policy considerations. For additional information see Inclusion of Children Policy.

Inclusion of Women and Minorities Section

NIH has expanded its instructions for the studies meeting the NIH definition for clinical research, not just clinical trials. A detailed plan of who will be included (and/or excluded) and how the distributions of individuals on the basis of sex/gender, race, and ethnicity are justified in the context of the scientific goals of the application is required.

Simply stating that certain individuals will not be excluded or that individuals of either sex/gender or any race/ethnicity are eligible is not sufficient. Details about why the individuals are the appropriate individuals to accomplish the scientific goals of the study should be provided.

In this section of the Research Plan the following four points must be addressed:

1. Describe the planned distribution of subjects by sex/gender, race, and ethnicity for each proposed study and complete the format in the Planned Enrollment Report
2. Describe the subject selection criteria and rationale for selection of sex/gender, racial, and ethnic group members in terms of the scientific objectives and proposed study design. The description may include, but is not limited to, information on the population characteristics of the disease or condition under study.
3. Provide a compelling rationale for proposed sample specifically addressing exclusion of any sex/gender, racial, or ethnic group that comprises the population under study.
4. Describe proposed outreach programs for recruiting sex/gender, racial, and ethnic group members as subjects. This is particularly important if difficulty recruiting certain groups is anticipated.

Additional Considerations

If the proposed sample is limited by sex/gender, race, and/or ethnicity, it should be addressed as part of the four points detailed above.

- inclusion of certain individuals would be inappropriate with respect to their health;
- the research question addressed is only relevant to certain groups or there is a gap in the research area;
- evidence from prior research strongly demonstrates no difference on the basis of sex/gender, race, and/or ethnicity;
• sufficient data already exist with regard to the outcome of comparable studies in the excluded group(s) and duplication is not needed in this study;

• a certain group or groups is excluded or severely limited because the purpose of the research constrains the applicant's selection of study subjects (e.g., uniquely valuable stored specimens or existing datasets are limited by sex/gender, race, and/or ethnicity; very small numbers of subjects are involved; or overriding factors dictate selection of subjects, such as matching of transplant recipients, or availability of rare surgical specimens); and/or

• representation of specimens or existing datasets cannot be accurately determined (e.g., pooled blood samples, stored specimens, or data-sets with incomplete sex/gender documentation are used), and this does not compromise the scientific objectives of the research.

• In general, the cost of recruiting certain groups and/or geographic location alone are not acceptable reasons for exclusion of particular groups. This should be considered when developing outreach plans. Establishing collaborations or other arrangements to recruit may be necessary.

**Additional guidance for research utilizing existing datasets or resources**

• Inclusion must be addressed when conducting NIH-defined clinical research, even if the samples or data have already been collected as part of a different study. Details about the sex/gender, race, and ethnicity composition of the existing dataset/resource should be provided and justified as appropriate to the scientific goals of the proposed study.

• For the purposes of inclusion policy, an existing dataset may be constructed of different types of data including but not limited to survey data, demographic information, health information, genomic information, etc. Also included would be data to be derived from existing samples of cells, tissues or other types of materials that may have been previously collected for a different purpose or research question but will now be used to answer a new research question. In general these will be studies meeting the NIH definition for clinical research with a prospective plan to analyze existing data and/or derive data from an existing resource and where no ongoing or future contact with participants is anticipated.

• For an existing dataset or specimens, you may use the [Cumulative Inclusion Enrollment Report](#) rather than the Planned Enrollment Report

Please also refer to the revised [Supplemental Instructions](#) for complete descriptions of the changes to the Human Subjects