
Welcome to the *Foundation for Physical Therapy's (FPT) online submission system!*

<https://foundation4pt.aibs.org/>

To start the application submission process, register by clicking on “create a login.” At the registration screen, submit your first and last name, and email address (which is your username for the site) and create a password. Please record these details, as you can log into the system in the future with your email and password.

Once you have registered, return to the main page by clicking “Home.” “Home” is located at the top of the screen. On the Home page, you can log into the site using your details.

After logging in, you will be brought to a list of all open solicitations. Access the application you would like by clicking on “begin submission.” The application page involves some general project information and a series of application component uploads. To submit an application you also need to add People Records for all relevant key project personnel and an institutional administrative official authorized to approve your application.

To return to the list of submitted and/or pending applications, click on “Home,” located at the top of the screen. When working on an application, you are able to save and return to it an unlimited number of times until you submit it (clicking “SAVE AND FINALIZE”). Once submitted, no changes can be made.

Important Points:

- Review this solicitation’s corresponding Guidelines document before preparing an application.
- To ensure that you do not lose any information, save your work often. The “SAVE AND FINISH LATER” button is to be used when you want to exit the system. You can return to your submission by clicking “continue submission” under the mechanism on the Home page.
- No exceptions to the submission deadline will be made. **FPT will not be responsible for late applications or materials under ANY circumstances.** It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is ready for submission in a timely manner. Plan to allow adequate time for technical assistance to resolve issues if needed. **DO NOT WAIT TO SUBMIT!**
- Read all instructions carefully and follow them closely.
- Regarding Attachments:
 - **Please submit all attachments in Adobe PDF format.** If a specific form is provided, margins should be set at ½ inch and font should only be Ariel, size 11 or 12. Free software to convert files to PDF is available at www.cutepdf.com/. Adobe has an inexpensive online conversion service at <http://www.adobe.com/products/catalog.html>. **FPT** does not recommend or endorse either product. Remember to save your application before you access either of these sites to download software as you will need to re-boot your machine once download is complete.
 - Note that, where applicable, the template or form to be used is located above the link where each attachment file is to be uploaded. These files contain prompts for the information and also have formatting (font style, font size, margin settings, etc.) for each section. **Label the start of each section with the appropriate heading title.** We strongly recommend that you download and use the form when completing your application. Word files should then be converted to Adobe PDF for uploading.
 - **Please note** that page limits defined in each section are for a Adobe PDF file, not the Microsoft Word document prior to conversion to Adobe PDF. When creating Adobe PDF files, do not alter default font and margins. Once you have uploaded Adobe PDF files, make certain that the information has uploaded correctly and files are not corrupted.

Filling out the *New Investigator Fellowship Training Initiative (NIFTI) Application*

The **NIFTI** Application consists of five (5) sections: **Project Information, People, Attachments, Recommendations, and Approval**. Each section needs to be completed before your application is considered finished and officially submitted for consideration.

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

Title of Project: Provide a title for your research training project.

Sponsoring Institution: Provide the name of the institution in which you will complete your fellowship training experience.

Area(s) of Research: Select area(s) of study for your research training project. You must select one area but no more than three. You may insert an unlisted sub-specialty in the field labeled "Other."

II. PEOPLE

A Person Record must be created for all key personnel, including you, as "Applicant", your "Advisor/Mentor", and any other individual ("Supporter") you would like to submit a Letter of Recommendation on your behalf. At least three (3) Letters of Recommendation must be submitted on your behalf, one (1) of which should be from your Advisor/Mentor. You may submit more than three (3) Letters of Recommendation, but they must be from individuals that will be substantially involved in your research project and contribute in a mentor role to your development as an independent scientist. You will also need to create a Person Record for the Institutional Official who is authorized to approve your application. **For each Person Record created, you will need to include a biosketch in the Attachments section (except the Institutional Official)**

For each person create a record including:

Role: Select the person's role

First Name: Enter first name

Middle Initial: Enter middle initial

Last Name: Enter last name

Degrees Obtained: List all degrees, including PT or PTA, currently held. List PT degree first, followed by other degrees. (Example: Jane Doe, PT, MPT, DPT, CSC)

Position/Title: Enter current position/title

Organization: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Department: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Address One (Street): Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Address Two (Rm, Bldg, etc.): Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

City: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

State: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Region: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Zip Code: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Country: Enter current organizational affiliation/current employer

Phone Number: Enter daytime phone number (format xxx-xxx-xxxx)

Fax Number: Enter fax number (format xxx-xxx-xxxx) or N/A

Primary Email: Enter email address used for contact

PT License Number or PTA License Number(s): Provide your PT or PTA license number with state of issue (or enter N/A). If you have more than one license, include each one. If you are a PTA who has graduated from a fully accredited PTA program and reside in a state or jurisdiction that does not require licensure (Hawaii, Colorado, and Michigan), indicate that you have attached copy of certificate of completion of studies in ATTACHMENTS.

For Applicants only:

APTA MEMBERSHIP: Are you currently a member of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)? Select either YES/NO. Please note that APTA membership is not required to apply.

If applicable, please select from the following the Sections in which you are a member:

- Acute Care
- Aquatics
- Cardiovascular and Pulmonary
- Clinical Electrophysiology & Wound Management
- Education
- Federal
- Geriatrics
- Hand Rehabilitation
- Health Policy & Administration
- Home Health
- Neurology
- Oncology
- Orthopaedics
- Pediatrics
- Private Practice
- Research
- Sports
- Women's Health

***Optional PI/Applicant Data:**

Race: Please check the race you most strongly identify with from the selections listed: African-American or Black (not of Hispanic origin), American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian-American or Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, Caucasian or White (not of Hispanic origin), Other.

Gender: Please select the gender you most strongly identify with: Female/Male

* Information requested by **FPT** is for statistical tracking only. Completion of this section is optional.

III. ATTACHMENTS

In this section, you will upload documents describing the details of your postdoctoral studies. The **ATTACHMENTS** Section is divided into five (5) sub-sections:

- NIFTI** Details;
- NIFTI** Narrative;
- NIFTI** Training Plan/Support;
- NIFTI** Approvals/Exemptions/Certifications;
- NIFTI** Biosketches.

A. NIFTI Details Form

Click to download the **NIFTI** Details form and save. You will answer questions regarding your eligibility and proposed research details.

AWARD ELIGIBILITY:

Review and complete applicable eligibility information (e.g., regarding physical therapy license, time at institution; dedicated time for project, etc.).

Specific **NIFTI** eligibility options:

- A) Completed post-professional doctorate no earlier than five years prior to the year of application. Enter year post-professional doctorate received.
- B) Possess a post-professional doctorate and have completed physical therapist professional education or graduated from an accredited physical therapist assistant program in the last five years. Enter year physical therapist professional education completed.
- C) Will complete the required post-professional doctoral degree no later than by the end of June in the year of application, and will provide evidence of receipt of degree by no later than July 15th in the year of application. Enter year physical therapist professional education will be completed.

Include the specific year for the selected eligibility (A, B, or C).

- Review and complete applicable Sponsoring Organization/Institution eligibility.

HUMAN SUBJECTS/ANIMAL WELFARE:

- **Human Subjects:** Indicate if study includes human subjects data.
- **IRB Approval Conditional Approval, or Exemption:** Indicate if the study has received IRB approval or a waiver. A copy of approval, if received, must be included in the attachments. IRB approval is not required at time of application submission. If award is made, payment will not be issued until IRB approval is received by the Foundation's Scientific Program Administrator.
- **Date of IRB Status:** If selected "Yes" to above, indicate date of Institutional Review Board approval.
- **Human Subjects Protection Training Certificates:** Indicate if certificate(s) of completion of human subjects protection training is/are attached for ALL key personnel. See **Attachments** for more information.
- **Institution Assurance Number:** If research includes human subjects, record institution's assurance number that indicates an assurance agreement guaranteeing compliance with Department of Health and Human Services' regulations governing protection of human subjects is in effect.
- **Assurance Type:** Indicate type of assurance agreement covering project (e.g., Multiple Project Assurance (MPA), Cooperative Project Assurance (CPA), Single Project Assurance (SPA), or Federal-wide Assurance (FWA). If research involves animal subjects, record assurance number, if available, indicating an agreement is on file with NIH's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) to comply with Public Health Service's policy on humane care and treatment of laboratory animals.
- **Vertebrate Animals:** Indicate if study includes vertebrate animals.
- **If "Yes", Describe Animals to be Used:** Provide details on species and numbers.
- **IACUC Approval Conditional Approval, or Exemption:** Indicate if the study has received IACUC approval or a waiver. A copy of approval, if received, must be included in the attachments. IACUC approval is not required at time of application submission. If award is made, payment will not be issued until IRB approval is received by the Foundation's Scientific Program Administrator.
- **Date of IACUC STATUS:** If selected "Yes" to above, indicate date of IACUC approval.

ENVIRONMENT:

- **Practice Settings:** Indicate from provided list, all practice settings from which you will be recruiting patients for study, number of sites within that setting and number of patients to be recruited.
- **Sponsoring Institution Information:** Provide requested details.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

- After having read statement, check box to indicate agreement to terms and conditions for proposal submission.

Once completed, save the form and submit as one (1) Adobe PDF file.

B. NIFTI Narrative

Use the **NIFTI** Narrative Template provided. It has been pre-formatted to the preferences of **FPT** – please do not alter. The **NIFTI** Narrative should have the following sections led by a header for each: Abstract, Fellowship Applicant, Selection of Mentor, Fellowship Environment, Research Project Plan, and Citations. Follow the instructions below as to the contents for each heading within the **NIFTI** Narrative.

1. Abstract: Provide a concise, informative description of the proposed project to permit evaluation of the scientific merit of study. Use headings below to organize the information. **The Abstract is limited to one (1) page in Adobe PDF format.**

Rationale and Objectives: Provide rationale for proposed research and specify its objectives, research question(s) and hypotheses.

Research Design: Identify research design (e.g., randomized controlled trial, case-control study, prospective cohort study, retrospective data analysis, etc.) and principal sources of data (e.g., database, patient survey, medical records, etc.). If an experimental design will be used, describe control group. Describe population to be studied and sampled.

Methods: Describe any intervention(s) to be used in study. How will sample be selected and what steps will be taken to secure and retain needed number of subjects (and controls, if applicable)? Specify independent and dependent variables. How will these be measured? Identify potential confounding factors. How will data be collected and analyzed?

Impact: Clearly specify why this research is important. What impact on profession of physical therapy will this project have when it is completed? What will be its impact on physical therapist practice? On patients with a particular condition? On wellness? On injury prevention? On reimbursement?

Relevance to APTA Research Agenda: Specify RA item(s) project addresses. If results of project will assist researchers in answering a RA item in future, specify which item.

2. Fellowship Applicant: Clearly address each item within this section. **This section is limited to one (1) page in Adobe PDF format.**

Applicant Career Goals: Provide a description of the overall career goals with emphasis on goals pertaining to research.

Previous Research Training and Experience: Describe previous research training received and/or research experience in chronological order, including a concise narrative summary of your post-professional doctoral dissertation.

Fellowship Goals: Outline the goals of the fellowship and how each fellowship goal will allow you to achieve your career goals. Describe the skills, theories, conceptual approaches etc., to be learned or enhanced by the fellowship. If your project is similar to that of your dissertation, explain which aspects of the work related to the dissertation or previous training experience, which are unique to the current application, and why further training is being sought. **Post-professional, post-doctoral training does not typically extend beyond 2 years, which is the maximum period of support for a NIFTI Application.**

Area of Concentration and Research Direction: Describe the proposed area of concentration training that will be achieved by this fellowship. Include in the description the relationship of this project to science supporting physical therapy practice and how it will add to the current body of knowledge regarding the process of disablement. Discuss how this proposed project will relate to the direction of future research.

3. Selection of Mentor: Clearly address each item within this section. **This section should not exceed two (2) page in Adobe PDF format.**

Mentor(s): Describe the skills and expertise of the mentor (and co-mentor if applicable) that make him or her particularly well suited to fill role of Mentor.

Mentor's Previous Doctoral/Post-doctoral Trainees: Give the total number of predoctoral and post-doctoral individuals previously sponsored by the mentor and co-mentor if applicable. Select up to five representative trainees and list their present position title or occupation and employing organizations.

Number of Doctoral/Post-doctoral Trainees that will also be mentored during the Fellowship: List the number of predoctoral and/or post-doctoral trainees that will also be supervised by the mentor and co-mentor during the period of this fellowship.

Research Support Available: In a table, list the mentor and co-mentor's current and pending research and research training support that will be available to your project during the period of this fellowship. Include the following information: funding source, complete identifying number, title of the research or training program,

name of the principal investigator, dates, and amount of the award. Provide the same information for any co-mentor as well.

4. Fellowship Environment: The following items should be addressed in order below. **This section should not exceed two (2) pages in Adobe PDF format.**

a. Research Environment: Describe the research environment including research facilities and equipment that are available for this project. Include support services necessary to facilitate the training experience, other administrative support as needed, sufficient laboratory and office space, equipment, availability of a library for use or access to comparable literature materials, and access to a subject pool or materials. If the proposed training is to take place at a site other than the sponsoring organization, provide an explanation here.

b. Post-professional Doctorate or Current Institution: Since training is expected to broaden a fellow's research skills and perspectives, Applicants who propose training at the same institution at which they earned their post-professional doctorate or at an institution where they have been training for more than one year must explain why further training at that institution would be valuable. If you are employed at the institution, you must provide a similar explanation.

5. Research Project Plan: The Research Project Plan should include sufficient information to allow evaluation of the scientific merit of the project. It should be well formulated and presented in sufficient detail so that it can be evaluated for both its research training potential and scientific merit. **This section should be no more than eight (8) pages in Adobe PDF format.** Please include the following items clearly identified within this document.

a. Specific Aims: Present the problem or issue to be addressed. State concisely the goals of the proposed project and summarize the expected outcome(s). Include the impact that the results of the proposed work will exert on the research field(s) involved. List the specific objectives of the project, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice approach, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop a new technology. This section should be no more than one page in Adobe PDF format and is part of the 8-page limit of the Research Project Plan.

b. Research Strategy: The following subjects should be addressed in order.

Significance: Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the project addresses. Explain how the project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields. Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.

Innovation: Explain the novelty of the research study, how it improves upon current theories or practices and how it advances the science of physical therapy practice and the disablement model.

Approach: Include a review of the relevant literature within this section. Describe the overall research design, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims. Include a description of subjects, if collecting data on human subjects include a recruitment and retention plan. Describe data collection, analysis and interpretation methods including justification for assessment measures and outcomes measures to be used. Include supportive pilot data whenever possible. Describe the resource sharing plans as appropriate. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve aims. If the project is in the early stages of development, describe strategies to establish feasibility, and discuss the management of any high-risk aspects of the proposed work. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised.

6. Citations: Cite published experimental details in the Research Project Plan. Provide full reference in the Bibliography and References cited section. List all references. Each reference must include title, names of all authors, book, or journal, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. References should be limited to relevant and current literature. It is important to be concise and to select only those literature references pertinent to proposed research. **There is no page limit for this section.**

Once completed, save the template and submit the Narrative attachment as one (1) Adobe PDF file.

C. NIFTI Training Plan/Support

These two parts should be scanned together into one Adobe PDF file:

1. Training Plan: Describe in detail, by year (2 years), the specific activities that will comprise the Training Plan. Include items such as classes, seminars, and opportunities for interactions with other groups and scientists. Briefly explain activities other than research that are available and relate them to the proposed training for the project. Formal training in the responsible conduct of research should be included along with a description of the role that the mentor will play in the training. **This section is limited to two (2) pages in Adobe PDF format.**

2. Institution Letter of Support: Provide a statement of support from your institution on official letterhead stating that (at least) 50% release time will be guaranteed for the research training associated with this award. **This letter is limited to one (1) page in Adobe PDF format.**

Once completed, save the template and submit the attachment as one (1) Adobe PDF file.

D. NIFTI Approvals/Exemptions/Certifications

Please review the below regarding:

- Institutional Review Board (IRB) review **and** Human Subjects Research Training Certification.
- **AND/OR** Institutional Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) review, as appropriate.

PLEASE NOTE: IRB/IACUC Approval is not required at time of application submission. If approval or exemption has been received at time of application, include the letter/approval as described below. If an award is made, payment will not be issued until IRB/IACUC approval is received by the FPT Scientific Program Administrator. If approval or exemption has not been received at time of application, include a description of plans for obtaining it.

For Human Subjects research:

Human Subjects: Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval: If data is collected on human subjects or if data used in the project contains identifiable private information that can be linked to human subjects, a copy of IRB Approval or exemption (if already obtained) should be scanned into a PDF file and attached. **If IRB Approval is needed but not currently obtained it must be before the start of the fellowship-funding period in September. Include a description of plans for obtaining approval/exemption if this is the case.** Should an awarded project have IRB approval that will expire in September or later, re-approval must be received by the Foundation 30 days prior to the date of expiration. If the proposed project has more than one site, IRB approval or exemption must be obtained for every site in the project before funding. Finally, the institution sponsoring the project's research must be covered by an assurance agreement indicating compliance with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations governing the protection of human subjects.

Human Subjects: Research Training Certification: ALL project personnel contributing to the execution of the project (i.e., anyone with a Person Record) must provide certificates demonstrating completion of human subject protections training. A certificate from a recognized credentialing agency (e.g., HPPERT, CITI) must be provided for **all individuals with Person Records in II. PEOPLE** (except the Institutional Official) or it will be considered INCOMPLETE, which could result in administrative disqualification. The documentation must also provide the period of validity for the training and the training must be valid according to the dates listed on the certificate. If you do not provide the period of validity for training or the dates on the certificate do not fall within the period of validity, your application will be considered INCOMPLETE, which could result in administrative disqualification. If a letter is submitted rather than a certificate, the application will be subject to administrative disqualification.

For Vertebrate Animal Research:

Vertebrate Animals: Institutional Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) Approval: If vertebrate experimental animals are involved in the study, attach the institution's Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) approval if currently obtained. Projects including animal subjects must follow APTA's Position on Biomedical Research.

Scan relevant approval/exemption/certificate documents together and submit as one (1) Adobe PDF file.

E. NIFTI Biosketches

A biosketch must be provided for all key personnel (all individuals with Person Records in II. PEOPLE – excluding the Institutional Official). You must provide a current biosketch for yourself and each person providing a Letter of Recommendation.

Also, it is highly recommended that you include a biosketch of any individual that is substantially contributing to your education and training program and is named within the Narrative of your application. You may also choose to ask them for a Letter of Recommendation, and hence, add them in **II. PEOPLE**, but this is your option as only three (3) letters of recommendation are required. If this person is contributing to the execution, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the project and its results, you must provide a certificate demonstrating completion of human subject protections training (see Attachment D). A biosketch of individuals such as this is recommended so the Scientific Review Committee can see what skills and knowledge they bring to your program. *For more information regarding additional biosketches, please refer to the Foundation’s website and read Frequently Asked Questions.*

Each biosketch is limited to 5 pages and must use/follow the format in the template provided. Scan all biosketches (ordered together by person) into one (1) Adobe PDF file.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Three (3) Letters of Recommendation are required (including one from your postdoctoral research training mentor, “Advisor/Mentor”, and two from “Supporters”). If you only have one (1) or two (2) Letter(s) of Recommendation, your **NIFTI** Application is subject to disqualification. Conversely, you may have more than three (3) Letters of Recommendation, but they must be from individuals that will be substantially involved the project and contribute in a mentor role to your development as an independent scientist. Letters should include how you are suited for this fellowship based on your academic record and research experience level, including how the proposed studies and the expertise of the Advisor/Mentor will assist in producing an independent researcher. Each Letter of Recommendation is limited to 6,000 characters (approximately equal to two single-space pages).

PLEASE NOTE: A **NIFTI** Application cannot be saved and move to **V. Approval** until all recommendations are submitted from your Advisor/Mentor and other Supporters. Once submitted, recommendations cannot be altered. **Late Recommendation Submissions:** You will not be given an exception to **NIFTI** Application deadline because of late submissions of Letters of Recommendations. That includes last-minute requests requiring technical assistance.

A. Advisor/Mentor: to request a Letter of Recommendation from your advisor/mentor, click “Select an invitee” and for “Recommender,” find your advisor/mentor’s name from the available Person Records that you had entered in “**II. PEOPLE**.” Select “Recommendation” from the “Kind” drop-down menu and then click “Create a Recommendation”, an email will immediately be sent to that individual requesting him or her to submit a Letter of Recommendation. The email will direct him or her to a link with a download for the **specific template form** for a recommendation letter. The template form provided must be used – letters on organization letterhead are not acceptable. When a completed form been uploaded and submitted, you will receive email notification. If you attempt to save and finalize your **NIFTI** Application without your Advisor/Mentor Letter of Recommendation, you will receive an error message.

B. Supporter (Individuals Submitting a Letter of Recommendation on Your Behalf): to request a Letter of Recommendation click “Select an invitee” and for “Recommender,” find your supporter’s name from the available Person Records that you had entered in “**II. PEOPLE**.” Select “Recommendation” from the “Kind” drop-down menu and then click “Create a Recommendation”, an email will immediately be sent to that individual requesting him or her to submit a Letter of Recommendation. The email will direct him or her to a link with a download for the **specific template form** for a recommendation letter. The template form provided must be used – letters on organization letterhead are not acceptable. When a completed form has been uploaded and submitted, you will receive email notification. If you attempt to save and finalize your **NIFTI** Application without all Letters of Recommendation, you will receive an error message.

V. APPROVAL

Institutional Approval and Submission of your Application

An authorized administrative official must approve your **NIFTI** Application. This should be done after all your Letters of Recommendation are submitted. To initiate the institutional approval and submission process, click “Select your approval invitee” and find the individual who is responsible for this approval from the Person Records. **Remember, you must add this official in “II. PEOPLE.”** Click “Create Approval.”

After creating the approval record and clicking “SAVE AND FINALIZE,” this official will be immediately sent an email and asked to review, validate, and submit your **NIFTI** Application. **Only click “SAVE AND FINALIZE” after you have reviewed your submission and are ready to submit your NIFTI Application to FPT. Before clicking, make sure all your attachments are complete, include all requested information, and are in the correct format.** (For example, including human subjects training certificates for each individual with a Person Records/biosketches; or appropriately addressing IRB status or plans to obtain in your submitted content.) **Be sure to check that all attachments are your final versions as well.**

If you are missing any required information, attachments, or Letters of Recommendation, a message will appear with a list of requirements needed. If all components are present/uploaded, the submission will be finalized and content cannot be changed (unless the institutional official declines approval). It is recommended that you locally save all the components of your submission.

When the Institutional Official accesses this link, reviews, attests to its validity, and approves your application by clicking the applicable boxes, your application will then be considered submitted to **FPT**. **It is the Applicant’s responsibility to make sure the Institutional Official has enough time and approves the application before the submission deadline. APPROVAL OF YOUR APPLICATION MUST OCCUR BEFORE THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE (it is not considered fully submitted until approval is received).**

You will receive an email confirming approval once it is done. You can also check the status by logging onto the submission system and going to the mechanism and clicking on your submission link.

QUESTIONS?

For any technical assistance in using the submission site, please contact: foundation4pt@aibs.org
