

### **When Should I use the Multiple PI Option?**

- Science drives the decision to have [multiple PIs](#). Use the option for collaborative research; it does not have to be multidisciplinary research.
- NIH allows multiple PIs for most applications, including [R01s](#). For other [initiatives](#), check each announcement to confirm.
- The investigators determine the number of [principal investigators](#); there is no maximum. However, having more PIs than you can justify can hurt your application.
- If you are considering multiple PIs you should contact your program officer at the earliest possible date to discuss the appropriateness of the approach.
- All PIs must be registered as PIs in the [NIH Commons](#) and have a [principal investigator signature assurance](#) on file with their institutions.
- You can request more than one PI for a [renewal](#) or [amended application](#) even if the original application had only one PI. You cannot do so for a [noncompeting](#) application.
- All PIs will appear in the [Notice of Grant Award](#), [summary statement](#), and [CRISP](#).

### **PI Roles**

- Each PI must have a leadership role. The application should state which PIs are responsible for which research aims.
- The science determines the level of effort for the PIs; there is no minimum level.
- One PI serves as [contact PI](#), coordinating communication between all PIs and NIH and coordinating the progress report.
  - He or she must be affiliated with (not necessarily employed by) the applicant institution.
  - On large studies, other PIs may perform other coordination activities
- All PIs have the same status and are equally responsible for their projects.

### **New Investigators**

- Do not check the new PI check box unless all PIs meet NIH's definition of [new investigator](#).
- If the multi-PI award is funded, the PIs will no longer be considered new.
- Scientists who would not qualify as a single PI would not qualify as a PI on a multi-PI application.

### **Leadership Plan**

- Your [Research Plan](#) must include a [Multiple PI Leadership Plan](#) that addresses these items:
  - Rationale and justification for choosing the multiple PI approach.
  - Administrative and scientific responsibilities for each PI, including who will be the contact PI. As in the [Research Plan](#), state which PI is responsible for which aims.

### **Leadership Plan, cont'd.**

- Governance and organizational structure of the team.
- Procedures for resolving conflicts.
- Policies for communication, data sharing, publication, and intellectual property.
- Budget issues.
  - Describe the process for making decisions on scientific direction and allocating resources and funds.
  - If they wish, the PIs may request that a budget allocation is included in the [Notice of Grant Award](#).
  - If each PI will have a budget, state how resources will be distributed.
  - If the PIs are in different institutions, NIH is using a [subaward](#) arrangement. This approach may change later.
  - Having more than one PI should not increase the cost of the application, except for items such as travel to scientific meetings.
  - If requesting money for administrative activities, put it in the leadership plan.
- The leadership plan will affect your [priority score](#). [Peer reviewers](#) judge its quality and whether it promotes enough coordination and communication among PIs.
- Be thorough. The leadership plan has no page limit and does not count toward the page limit for the Research Plan.
- [NIH Commons](#) will reject the application if the plan is missing.
- For more on what to include and how to present the information, see [Examples of Project Leadership Plans for Multiple PI Grant Applications](#).

### **Filling Out the Forms**

- NIH does not have co-PIs. Do NOT check that box on the SF 424.
- Include the Commons ID for each PI in the "Credential, e.g. agency login" field on the [Research and Related Senior/Key Person Profile](#) form.
- Put only the contact PI's name and Commons ID on the SF 424 cover page. He or she must be affiliated with the applicant institution.

Read the [Grant Application Guide](#) for additional instructions.

### **Additional Resources**

- [PHS 398 Research Plan](#) form in the [Grant Application Package](#)
- [Grant Application Guide](#) for your [Grant Application Package](#)
- [NIH Multiple Principal Investigators Web site](#)