



THE WERNER H. KIRSTEN
Student Internship Program

Program Year 2024-2025

Program & Application Guidance

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Special Volunteer: Sections 402 and 405 of the PHS Act, as amended. The Director, NIH, and the Directors of the national research institutes and centers may accept voluntary and uncompensated services.



Table of Contents

Privacy Act Notification Statement.....	3
General.....	3
Purposes and Uses	3
Effects of Nondisclosure	3
Paperwork Reduction Act Public Burden Statement	3
Non-Discrimination Policy Statement.....	3
Werner H. Kirsten (WHK) Program Overview	4
Program Guidance	4
What’s New for 2024	5
Key Application Dates	5
Eligibility Requirements	5
Program Requirements.....	7
Program Compliance.....	9
Stipend Information and Tax Implications.....	9
Application Guidance.....	10
Application Deadline.....	10
Diversity and inclusion	10
Completing An Application	10
WHK Program Portal Registration	11
Online Application.....	11
Special Instructions for Home-schooled Students.....	14
Application Review and Selection Process	14
Safety and Risk Assessment.....	15
Program Legal Authorities	16
Cancer Research Training Award	17
Special Volunteer Program	18

Privacy Act Notification Statement

General

This information is provided pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), as amended, for individuals supplying information for inclusion in a system of records. Statutory Authority Section 331(i) of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 254d), as amended; Section 338A of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 254l), as amended; and Sections 338C-H of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 254m-q), as amended.

Purposes and Uses

The purpose of the National Cancer Institute at Frederick (NCIF) Werner H. Kirsten Program (WHK) is to provide internship opportunities that deliver training and experience in the biomedical sciences to high school students entering their senior year. In return they will receive a stipend payment and course credits toward their graduation. The information that applicants supply will be used to evaluate their eligibility, qualifications, and suitability for participating in the WHK Program. In addition, information from other sources will be considered (e.g., teacher recommendations, high school transcripts). An individual's application, required supplemental forms, supporting documentation, related correspondence and data are maintained in a system of records to be used within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to monitor WHK SIP-related activities. The information may also be disclosed outside the Department, as permitted by the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, to the Congress, the National Archives, the Government Accountability Office, and pursuant to court order and various routine uses (see System of Record Notice 09-15-0037).

Effects of Nondisclosure

Disclosure of the information sought is voluntary; however, if the information is not submitted, except for the replies to questions related to race/ethnicity, an application may be considered incomplete and therefore may not be considered for placement under this program.

Paperwork Reduction Act Public Burden Statement

The purpose of this information collection is to obtain information for the Werner H. Kirsten Program (WHK) through the NIH Office of Intramural Training (OITE) High School Student Internship Program (HS-SIP) Application process, which is used to assess applicant's eligibility and qualifications for the WHK program. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this information collection is displayed on the NIH Application Center WHK Application.

Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

In accordance with applicable federal laws and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services policy, the Department does not discriminate based on any non-merit factor, including race, color, national

origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability (physical or mental), age, status as a parent, or genetic information.

Werner H. Kirsten (WHK) Program Overview

For more than three decades, the Werner H. Kirsten program referred to as WHK here forward in this document, has been working to match rising high school seniors with mentors throughout the NCI Frederick biomedical community. The Werner H. Kirsten program seeks motivated students with demonstrated interest in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). As many Werner H. Kirsten interns have in the past, we hope that because of this experience, you will continue your career path in the field of STEM beyond your time in this program.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) at Frederick offers two High School Internship Programs:

- The NCI-Frederick [Werner H. Kirsten \(WHK\) Student Internship Program](#)
- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) [High School Summer Internship \(HS-SIP\) Program](#)

You can only participate in one of these programs at a time. If you apply for and are selected for both programs, the NCI-Frederick Office of Scientific Operations (OSO) Education & Outreach team will contact you to determine which program you prefer. However, cannot guarantee that you will be offered an internship under your preferred program.

For applicants selected to be participants in the WHK Program, the NCI-Frederick Office of Scientific Operations will pay an eight (8) week summer internship stipend under a [Cancer Research Training Award \(CRTA\) Appointment](#) and will coordinate the accreditation of four weighted credits toward the participants state diploma under the [Special Volunteer \(SV\) Program Appointment](#) during their senior year of high school. In return, applicants must agree to work forty (40) hours per week during their eight (8) week CRTA appointment and three (3) hours per day, five (5) days a week during their school year SV appointment. An applicant becomes a participant in the WHK Program after their acceptance letter is signed by the applicant, the assigned mentor and by the Office of Scientific Operations sponsor or their designee. The acceptance of a position in the WHK program means the applicant agrees to serve in accordance with the requirements as laid out in this program guidance.

The NCI-Frederick encourages prospective participants from groups who are underrepresented in biomedical research, such as women, persons with disabilities, and individuals of ethnic and racial groups to apply for participation in the WHK program.

Program Guidance

You (the applicant) and your parent/legal guardian are responsible for reading and understanding the requirements and complying with the instructions included in this Application and Program Guidance in its entirety before proceeding with your application. The Guidance explains in detail the obligations of individuals selected to participate in the WHK Program. A complete understanding of the commitments required of this program is critical to its successful completion.

What's New for 2024

- For Program Year 2024-2025, the Office of Scientific Operations expects to make approximately thirty (30) new awards to the WHK program.
- The WHK Application process has changed for the 2023-2024 application year. Please review the Application Guidance Section in detail for the procedures in applying for this year's program.
 - The updated process provides for dual application to the WHK Program and the NIH HS-SIP Program.
- There will be added requirements for attending planned events, trainings, and seminars during the summer and throughout the school year. Participation will be reflected on quarterly intern evaluation requirements.
- Updated guidelines regarding absences during the program.

Key Application Dates

Key dates for the Werner H. Kirsten program applicants:

- **Applications Open:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 9 AM ET
- **Application Submission Deadline:** Friday, January 12, 2024, at Noon ET
- **Teacher Recommendations Due:** Friday, January 19, 2024, at Noon ET
- **Mentor Applicant Reviews:** Monday, January 22 through Friday, February 16, 2024
- **Interviews:** Monday, January 29 through Friday, March 1, 2024.
- **Mentor & Student Rankings Due:** Friday, March 15, 2024
- **Matching & Participant Acceptance:** Not to Exceed March 31, 2024
- **Summer Internship Session Start Date:** Monday, June 17, 2024
- **Summer Internship Session End Date:** Friday, August 9, 2024
- **School Year Internship Session:** First day official day of the program participants school year.
- **School Year Internship Session End Date:** Not to Exceed May 31, 2025.

Please note: The above dates are based on estimated timelines but are subject to change.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the WHK Program, applicants must:

1. **Be a United States (U.S.) citizens or permanent resident.** To be eligible for the WHK program, applicants who are selected will be required to present proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent residence. This may include a copy of a birth certificate issued by a city, county, or state agency in the United States, the identification page of a valid U.S. passport, or a certificate of citizenship or naturalization. (Permanent residents must be enrolled in a high school in the U.S. to be eligible.) There are no waivers to this requirement. Resident aliens must provide a copy of their Permanent Resident Card as part of the application process.

2. **Attend a school located within a thirty (30) mile radius of the NCI-Frederick campus.** A current list of eligible schools and educational programs is provided on the WHK website. Home schooled students home address must be within the thirty (30) mile radius to qualify. Students attending schools outside of this geographic radius are not eligible for the WHK Program.
3. **Be in their junior year of high school when applying.** The WHK program is for rising seniors, the program will begin the summer after your junior year and continue through your senior year.
4. **Be seventeen (17) years old by June 15th, 2024.** All selected program participants must be seventeen (17) years of age on or before June 15th of the program year. The summer internship component of the program begins in June following the last school day of all participating schools.
5. **Have the equivalent of three (3) years of math and science credits.** This requirement must be met by the end of your junior year and should be reflected as a part of your application.
6. **Have an overall un-weighted grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or greater (based on a 4.0 maximum GPA).** Applicants with an unweighted GPA of 2.5 -3.0 may apply if they provide a third teacher recommendation. The recommendation should be a strong, detailed recommendation from a teacher within the area of study relevant to the type of internship you are applying for, describing why the student would be a good candidate for consideration. If special circumstances exist as to why the student's GPA is 2.5-3.0, the teacher recommendation should address that. This recommendation is in addition to the application requirements and does not replace any of them.
7. **Have valid health insurance.** If an applicant is not covered by health insurance, he/she cannot participate in the WHK program.
8. **Have been absent from high school ten (10) days or less during sophomore year.** If an applicant has been absent greater than eleven (11) days during their sophomore year, a compelling explanation shall be provided.
9. **Obtain parental/ legal guardian consent.** Consent from a parent or legal guardian should be obtained prior to starting the application. Parents/Legal guardians are advised to review this Program & Application Guidance document thoroughly. A Parental Consent and Acknowledgement form is required to be signed by both applicant and parent/legal guardian as a part of the application process.
10. **Obtain a Maryland work permit.** As required under state law, minors under the age of eighteen (18) are required to obtain a work permit.
11. **Submit a complete application.** Each applicant must complete an online application, which includes two (2) letters of recommendation, proof of citizenship, a report verifying acceptance or enrollment in an eligible high school or approved home school program, and school transcripts. Each applicant is also required to provide sufficient answers to all questions in the application and a student letter. These documents will be used to evaluate an applicant's qualifications to participate in the WHK program. If selected, individuals and their parent or legal guardian will be required to review and submit a signed agreement indicating they agree to meet all the requirements of the program. Please refer to "Completing an application" for further details regarding application requirements.

Background Check

While not required at the time of application, all WHK program appointments are contingent on your ability to successfully pass a federal background check, which is required for logical and physical access to NIH facilities and systems. As part of the clearance process, you will be asked questions about a variety of topics including your citizenship, criminal history, and other personal information. One specific question you will be asked is “In the last year, have you used, possessed, supplied, or manufactured illegal drugs?” This question pertains to the use of controlled substances or drugs as defined under federal law. Please be aware that while marijuana may be legal or decriminalized within your home jurisdiction it remains illegal under U.S. federal law. The use, possession, supply, or manufacture of marijuana may preclude you from obtaining the necessary clearances to participate in NIH intramural training programs, even if you were initially offered a position. If you have questions about this policy or would like guidance on the clearance process, please reach out to NCIFwhksip@nih.gov (please include “Eligibility Inquiry” in the subject line).

Program Requirements

The WHK program requires a full one (1) year commitment. If selected for the program, participants are expected to complete the full one (1) year appointment. If the participant is not able to commit to the full year, they will not be appointed.

Transportation

Program participants **must** have transportation daily to their assigned office during the established work hour, for the entirety of the program, unless selected for a virtual internship. WHK interns that miss multiple days to due transportation issues may be dismissed from the program.

Summer Internship Session

Students selected for the WHK program will be required to complete an eight (8) week summer internship. The intern will be expected to work a mandatory forty (40)-hour work week, 8.5 hours per day, which includes a 0.5-hour (thirty (30) minute) lunch break. During the eight (8)-week summer appointment, participants will be paid a [stipend](#).

School Year Internship Session

Students selected for the WHK program will be required to intern for minimum of three (3) hours per day, Monday through Friday, for the duration of their senior year of high school. Participants will be required to reduce their home school course load to a maximum of two (2) classes per semester. The course load requirement is necessary to avoid inhibiting the productivity of the internship requirements while also providing an excellent educational opportunity for each student. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the WHK program mentor, the NCI-F WHK program coordinator and the appropriate school system staff. During the school year, participants will receive four (4) weighted credits, one per semester, toward their graduation requirements.

Mandatory Safety Training

Applicants selected for the program will be required to attend a mandatory safety training at the NCI-Frederick on laboratory techniques and safety procedures before their internship begins. Participants must always comply with all NCI Frederick rules and Lab safety regulations or risk being dismissed from the program.

Scientific Research/Support Projects

Program participants will be required to complete a comprehensive primary scientific research or support project and two (2) additional secondary projects and/or presentations during their internship. The intern will work with their mentor to establish the topic or hypothesis, the requirements, and the desired outcomes of their primary project. Secondary projects and presentations may include:

- writing a paper, research proposal, or an article for a newsletter
- presenting a paper on their research or project to a journal club, at a quarterly intern meeting, or at a lab meeting
- presenting their research at one or more scientific events such as the NIH or NCI Student Poster Day, the Spring Research Festival, or the Frederick County Science Fair.

Mentor Work Assignments

Weekly work assignments may be given at the discretion of the WHK SIP Mentor. The homework assignments may include directed reading, researching a topic, evaluating a process, or any other topic relevant to the internship experience. These assignments will be completed outside the internship laboratory experience, although advice/guidance from the WHK SIP Mentor may be required to complete some components of the assignments. These assignments should not detract from the intern's time in the lab/office or impact their performance in the lab/office. It will be the intern's responsibility to monitor due dates and ensure assignments are submitted to the school system staff in a timely manner. If necessary, the school system staff will notify the WHK SIP Mentor as assignments are completed.

School Assignments

School system staff may require interns to complete specific assignments related to their WHK internship which can also impact their grade for the internship. These assignments are to be completed outside laboratory time or during "down-time" in the lab.

Mandatory WHK Trainings and Events

Participants will be required to attend all mandatory WHK meetings and scheduled activities throughout the summer and school year such as the Quarterly Intern Check-in meetings, Intern Journal Club, Summer Student Seminar Series (SSSS), Science Skills Boot Camp and Spring Research Festival.

Quarterly Self Evaluations

As part of their requirement, WHK interns will be asked to write a self-evaluation each quarter for use in term grading.

Business Decorum

Appropriate attire, attitude, work habits, and punctuality regarding work hours is expected of all interns. As an intern you will be expected to read and respond, in a timely fashion, to all WHK internship related emails and other correspondence that will be mailed to your assigned NIH e-mail address.

Program Compliance

Program Evaluation

Program participants will be evaluated by appropriate school system staff with quarterly input from their program mentor. Each WHK program mentor will submit an evaluation to the school system after reviewing progress during the evaluation period with the intern. Intern evaluations will be based on the following areas: demonstrates respectful behavior, plans and works cooperatively with others, willingness to ask for and use guidance, communicates clearly with mentor, follows all safety procedures discussed at Safety Training Day and on first day of internship with mentor, responds to all job related tasks, submits lab notebook regularly to mentor, demonstrates engagement in their work, is present and punctual every day of internship, shows capability of meeting the level of task of the position, utilizes critical thinking and problem solving skills, willingness to learn and accept feedback and efficiently and effectively uses time and resources to complete tasks. The interns will also be asked to write a self-evaluation each quarter.

Worksite Absences

Participants in the program, because they are not employees, do not earn annual or sick leave. However, they will be excused for Federal holidays and any other time the government is closed. Program participant will be given three (3) days during the summer appointment for paid excused absences such as illness or personal emergencies. More extended absences, such as vacation leave, must be approved by the mentor with concurrence from the WHK program manager. These extended absences will not be paid, so it will be the responsibility of the participant and the mentor to decide how the missed time will be made up. The participant must complete a full eight (8) week summer internship to be compliant with the program requirements.

Stipend Information and Tax Implications

The stipends for trainees are adjusted yearly; the level depends on education completed prior to starting at the NIH. For details, see the [Trainee Stipends](#) page. The Institute/Center (IC) in which you work, or your research group, pays your stipend. Intern stipends are considered an award for training and not wages for service or employment.

Stipends are paid in arrears on a thirty (30)-day monthly basis. Program participants must complete an Automated Clearing House (ACH) Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form to designate payment to a financial institution. NCI Certification Officials will certify stipend payments in the Fellowship Payment System (FPS) between the 20th and 25th of each month. Monthly stipend

payments, for those that have ACH, are direct deposited, usually within the first five (5) business days of each month.

Stipends are subject to Federal, state, and local income taxes; however, NIH does not withhold taxes from trainee stipends. Interns are responsible for paying taxes at the end of the calendar year, if applicable. All interns will receive an IRS Form 1099-G by mail indicating the amount of income received.

CRTA appointments are considered awards for training and not wages for service or employment, therefore neither Social Security nor Medicare taxes are deducted from stipends.

Disclaimer: Interpretation and implementation of the tax laws is the domain of the IRS and the courts. You should consult your tax advisor or your local IRS office about the applicability of the current tax code to your own situation, and for information about tax code changes, taxability of fellowship stipends, and the proper steps to be taken regarding your tax obligations.

Application Guidance

The application will open on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 9 AM ET. Please read this Program and Application Guidance document in its entirety before proceeding with an application. The Guidance explains in detail the obligations of individuals selected to participate in the WHK Program. A complete understanding of the commitment required for the successful completion of the WHK program is pertinent prior to applying.

Application Deadline

The online application and all supporting documentation must be submitted by Noon ET on Friday, January 12, 2024. Upload all supporting documentation to the WHK Application Portal before this deadline.

Diversity and inclusion

Diversity strengthens our community. We welcome applicants from diverse backgrounds and strongly encourage applications from:

- people from racial and ethnic groups that have been underrepresented in biomedical research and healthcare fields.
- people with disabilities
- people who identify as LGBTQ+
- people disadvantaged by life circumstances that have negatively impacted their educational opportunities.

Completing An Application

Applicants will apply for the program via online application. It is required that the information in the online application match the submitted supporting documentation. Application packages will be initially

reviewed to determine their completeness. Application packages deemed incomplete (e.g., missing required information or incomplete application materials) as of the application deadline will not be considered for selection. Applicants should keep a copy of the application package for their records.

Program staff will not accept requests to update a submitted application or permit the submission/resubmission of incomplete, rejected, or otherwise delayed application materials after the deadline. In addition, program staff will not fill in any missing information or contact applicants regarding missing information.

WHK Program Portal Registration

Before applying, you **must** first create a student profile in the [WHK Program Portal](#). To do this:

- Click on the Sign-In link on the left-hand side of the home page.
- Select “I’m a student” from the Login page.

First time users of our portal will be required to create an OpenID account. This ensures a secure sign-in to our system. If issues are encountered while creating an OpenID account, please email our technical support at ncifwebmaster@nih.gov.

- From the student dashboard download the “Parental Consent” form and have your parent/legal guardian review, complete and sign.
- Click “Start Student Registration”
- Select your areas of interest.
- Upload your completed Parental Consent Form and submit your profile registration.
- A link will be provided for you to continue to complete your application via the NIH Application Center.

Online Application

Applicants will complete their full application via the [NIH Application Center](#). The NIH Application Center allows you to apply for multiple NIH program options. To apply for the WHK Program, you must select that option and continue.

Applicants are required to complete each of the sections below to be able to submit an online application:

1. **Eligibility.** You must review the eligibility requirements and agree by checking the box before clicking on “Apply Now”. **Age Eligibility Screening.** Upon application review, if an individual does not meet the age requirement their application will be deemed ineligible. Please refer to the Eligibility Requirements section of this Guidance for further details.
2. **Contact & Address Information.** Answers to this section pertain to basic personal information such as name, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, contact information and relative identification. **Relatives.** Applicants will need to identify relatives working at the NIH. Students related to NIH employees and/or associated contractors may apply. However, direct, or indirect WHK

mentorship between interns and relatives is strictly prohibited. Furthermore, NCI employees or contractors may not advocate or participate in the review, evaluation or selection of any intern application involving a relative or friend. The [NIH Policy on Nepotism](#) extends the definition of relative to include close, personal relationships between persons who share the same household. Applicants must identify all relatives currently employed by the NCI-Frederick in this step. If we find that a student has not identified a relative working at the NCI Frederick it may be terms for non-selection to the program.

3. **Citizenship.** Applicants who are not US Citizens must submit a Permanent Resident Card during the onboarding paperwork process.
4. **Education Level.** Applicant will identify their education level and years completed at that level.
5. **Education Experiences.** In this section applicants will provide details on their education profile which includes providing details on current and future classes, extracurriculars, anticipated college level classes and level of participation in advanced placement courses.
6. **Coursework and Grades.** Applicants will be required to provide an unofficial school transcript.
7. **References/Teacher Recommendations.** Applicants are required to submit references from two (2) teachers to provide recommendation on their behalf, the recommendations must be completed by a current year science and/or mathematics teachers for scientific lab interns. For applicants applying for a scientific support internship only, recommendations from current year teachers in math, writing, business, computer science or IT can be used. If the applicants GPA is below a 3.0, a third teacher recommendation is required. **Please note: Teacher references must be submitted by Friday, January 19th, 2024, at Noon ET.**
8. **CV/Resume.** A complete resume should consist of personal info including country of citizenship and contact information, work experience, any relevant volunteer experience, and other qualifications such as job skills, languages, typing speed, and experience with computer programs, etc.
9. **Cover Letter.** Applicants must provide a personal statement student cover letter addressing the following four major components:
 - a. **Academic goals and career interests.** This should speak to the applicants' future goals, what they might like to be doing and how they plan to get there academically. If the applicant has several goals or career interests in mind, they should list them all; scientific intern applicants should not limit themselves to a specific scientific discipline unless unwilling to accept an internship in any other area. Although an applicant may have specific interests, it is often rewarding to experience an internship in a discipline other than your first choice, especially if you have not had exposure to other areas. Mentors look for highly motivated, responsible, dedicated students who enjoy new challenges.
 - b. **Why.** Applicants should describe in detail why they want to be a part of the WHK program. Applicants should not use generalities such as "because I want to find a cure for cancer," or "because it looks good on a college application.". As an applicant the response should be specific to you and cover thoroughly how you think the program will benefit you, what you intend to get out of the program and what you will contribute to the program.
 - c. **Hobbies and other areas of interest.** Applicants should highlight participation in hobbies, clubs, and other organizations outside of the school setting that may not have

been identified in other parts of the application, including but not limited to organized programs and volunteer organizations.

- d. **Relevant personal experiences.** The applicant should describe experiences that define them as an individual. As an applicant, detail an experience that was important to you and how it affected you. Some examples of this could be experiences volunteering, a special student/teacher relationship, experience with a science fair or academic competition, or a situation or event that sparked your interest in the sciences or your desired career path.

10. **Review and submit.** Applicants are required to certify to the accuracy, truthfulness, and completeness of their application and information entered in the online application before submission.

(1) TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Completed teacher recommendations must be received by Friday, January 19th at Noon ET. If the recommendations are not received by the established deadline the applicant will be deemed ineligible. All recommendations must be completed online through the online application portal. Please ensure accurate email addresses are provided, the recommendation link will be emailed to the teachers, and they will need to complete the required form online.

You are responsible for making certain that we receive your letters of reference. Log in and check your application using the 'Modify Application' tool in the [NIH Application Center](#). You can resend the request and contact your reference to remind them to submit the letter.

(2) REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all required supporting documents have been uploaded by Friday, January 12th, 2024, at Noon ET. Failure to submit a complete application package by the deadline will deem the applicant ineligible, and they will not be considered for the WHK Program.

Required Supporting Documentation:

- A. **Parental Consent and Acknowledgement form.** Both applicant and parent/guardian signatures are required.
- B. **Supplemental Documentation for Home-schooled applicants.** Please see section below titled Special Instructions for Home-schooled students. Email supplements to ncifwhksip@nih.gov.

(3) SELF-CERTIFICATION

Applicants are required to certify to the accuracy, truthfulness, and completeness of their application and information entered in the online application. The applicant should ensure that their parent or guardian reviews this full program & application guidance document, there is a printable

PDF format available for download on the WHK website. You must review and agree before submission.

After submitting the online application, applicants should download a PDF copy of their application and submit it to their school point of contact (POC). Please refer to the Eligible School list posted on the WHK Website to identify your school POC.

Special Instructions for Home-schooled Students

The WHK SIP is open to homeschooled students who meet all the application criteria as identified in the application package. The forms included in this application package were created for students attending formal schools in the public and private/religious sectors. We request that all homeschooled students complete the forms to the extent they are able. In addition, because all the information requested on these forms is critical to mentors in making their selections of students to interview, we ask that homeschooled students also provide the following (to be submitted as part of the application package) to assist our mentors with their evaluations:

1. Standardized test scores including but not limited to the SAT and/or ACT.
2. List of classes taken at any formal learning center or educational institution.
3. List of any science or math related courses/training.
4. List of any laboratory or computer experience.
5. Document how the applicant meets the required 3.0 GPA (or equivalent).
6. Indicate if the applicant has participated in any science related activity outside of classroom instruction (e.g., science fairs, presentation, other types of competitions, trips, etc.)

This information is submitted in lieu of transcripts and other evaluative measures not required in homeschooling. If a homeschooled student is selected to participate in the WHK SIP, it is recommended that the individual primarily responsible for the student's instruction arrange to visit the student's mentor/co-mentor in the fall and spring of the school year to discuss how the student is managing their internship responsibilities. Minimal contact between mentors/co-mentors and home school instructors is recommended. This supporting documentation should be sent forward to ncifwhksip@nih.gov.

Application Review and Selection Process

Applicants will receive a submission confirmation email once the application has been successfully submitted online through the OITE application portal. Applicants will be able to view and edit their submitted application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the entirety of the application and supporting documents are accurately submitted prior to the application deadline.

Applicants who are no longer interested in being selected for the 2024-2025 WHK Program may withdraw their application at any time prior to the signing an acceptance letter. To do so, applicants must send an email to ncifwhksip@nih.com stating they want to withdrawal their application.

The application review and selection process occur over several months. After the application deadline, applications will be verified for completeness and to ensure all eligibility requirements are met. Then registered program mentors will begin reviewing verified applications to select candidate(s) for

interviews. Only registered program mentors are authorized to determine the suitability of candidates, offer invitations to interview, and makes final determinations on intern selection. The WHK Program will provide email updates, as applicable, as well as updates on the Status page of the WHK website. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure their contact information is correct. If updates in contact information are necessary, applicants can make changes on their student portal page.

NOTIFICATION OF INTEREST

Applicants selected for an interview will be notified no later than February 29, 2024, and will be provided instructions on how to proceed in contacting interested mentors to request an interview. To pursue an interview with a mentor, an applicant must respond by the deadline in the notice of interest email/letter. If the applicant does not respond by that deadline, the interview window may expire and may be offered to an alternate applicant.

INTERVIEW RANKING

Once the interview window closes, both applicants and mentors will be asked to complete the interview ranking process. Applicants that were interviewed will receive guidance via email with instructions and a deadline to complete their interview rankings. If an applicant does not complete their rankings by the required deadline, it may be cause for non-selection.

NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION

Applicants selected for the program will be notified no later than March 31, 2024, and will be provided instructions on how to proceed in accepting the position by the designated deadline.

Applicants who respond by the deadline will be asked to sign the WHK Internship agreement and complete all the onboarding paperwork package requirements. Individuals selected who decide not to accept the award may decline, which permits the promotion of alternates to selectee status. Once an applicant declines the offer of internship, the award will be offered to an alternate. There will not be any opportunities to reclaim the position. A decision to decline the internship award is final and cannot be changed under any circumstances.

Safety and Risk Assessment

The [NIH Policy Manual 3015 Admittance of Minors to Hazardous Areas](#) and 2300-320-7 [Intramural Research Training Award \(IRTA\) Program](#) define the criteria for students working in NIH facilities. The EHS safety program performs focused risk assessments to evaluate chemical, biological, radiological, and other hazards that may be present in areas where minor students work. To evaluate the need for this risk assessment, mentors will complete an EHS Risk Assessment for Minor Student Programs as part of their mentor registration process.

Radiation:

Minor student intending to use radiation must receive approval from the NCI at Frederick Radiation Safety Officer.

Biological:

Minor students are prohibited from working with human and/or nonhuman primate blood, body fluids, primary cell cultures and tissue. Students working with biological research material must complete OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Training, initially and annually thereafter. In addition, students must be trained by their mentor on any applicable IBC registrations, biological safety practices, and procedures for risk mitigation.

Chemical:

Chemicals that students may not use and must be isolated from:



1. GHS category 1 and 2 acutely toxic chemicals, H-Codes: H300, H304, H305, H310, H330
2. GHS category 1A reproductive toxicity, H-Codes: H360, H360F, H360D, H360FD, H360Fd, H360Df



3. National Toxicology Program listed known carcinogens
 - a. <https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/whatwestudy/assessments/cancer/roc>
 - b. Scroll down to “substances listed” link
 - c. Known to be human carcinogens only

When these chemicals are present in a laboratory space that laboratory space requires a Safety Mitigation Plan for Minor Employees, chemicals must be isolated where the student may not access the chemicals, meaning the chemical must be in an enclosed container (cabinet, fridge, box with lid, etc.) and clearly labeled “not for student use.” Areas where these chemicals were used must be decontaminated after the chemicals have been isolated. Please make students aware that they may not open the containers and remind fellow lab staff that the chemicals cannot be used while student are present.

Chemicals students may not use that do not require isolation from:



1. GHS any category acutely toxic chemicals, H-Codes: H301, H302, H303, H311, H312, H313, H331, H332, H333



2. GHS any category of reproductive toxicity, H-Codes: H360, H360F, H360D, H360FD, H360Fd, H360Df, H361, H361f, H361d, H361fd, H362
3. GHS any category of carcinogenicity, H-Codes: H350, H350i, H351
 - a. National Toxicology Program, Reasonably Anticipated To Be Human Carcinogens

Program Legal Authorities

Applicants selected for the WHK program will participate under the following NCI Training Authorities:

Cancer Research Training Award

The CRTA is an NCI-specific fellowship award program that establishes an "umbrella" appointment mechanism with uniform provisions and a streamlined application process for the diverse training fellowship programs supported throughout NCI's Divisions, Offices, and Centers.

The CRTA fellowship award program policies are in alignment with many of the NIH Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA) program policies, which are based on the following legislative authorities:

(1) Section 405 (b) (1) (D) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 USC 284 (b) (1) (D), as amended, which authorizes Directors of each national research institute to conduct and support research training for which fellowship support is not provided under section 487 of the Public Health Service Act and which is not residency training of physicians or other health professionals.

(2) As defined in the implementing regulations at 42 CFR § 63.3, "the purpose of an NIH research traineeship is to provide support for financial subsistence to an individual during a period in which the awardee is acquiring training in: (a) basic and/or clinical biomedical or behavioral research relating to human health, including extending healthy life and reducing the burdens of illness, or (b) medical library science or related fields pertaining to sciences related to health or the communication of health sciences information. Traineeships are intended to make available in the United States an increased number of persons having special competence in these research fields through developmental training and practical research experience in the facilities of NIH, with supplemental training at other qualified institutions (see 63.8(a))."

The CRTA program incorporates the specific research mission of the NCI and is authorized under an NCI-specific training authority:

Section 413 (b) (3) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 USC 285a-2 (b) (3), as amended pertaining to the National Cancer Institute, which states that the Director of NCI in carrying out the National Cancer Program shall "support appropriate programs of education and training (including continuing education and laboratory and clinical research training)".

Service is a by-product of the CRTA Program, unlike Research and Clinical Fellowships where service is a dominant part of the training objective. CRTA Fellows do not perform a service for the Public Health Service. Rather, the CRTA Fellows are accepted for training in scientific disciplines that will enhance public health efforts to prevent, diagnose, and/or treat cancer, a disease of major public health significance. CRTA Fellows receive stipends and are considered to be in training status; they do not incur a service payback obligation. CRTA Fellows are not considered employees of the Federal government.

NOTE: Trainees are prohibited from having any human subject/patient contact unless they are entirely under the direct supervision, at all times, by an appropriately qualified NIH employee (FTE). See Section D.7. Tort Claims. Trainees may not be assigned official supervisory responsibilities, or sign documents (e.g., requisitions) on behalf of the Government.

The CRTA Program encourages prospective participants from groups who are underrepresented in biomedical research, such as women, persons with disabilities, and individuals of ethnic and racial groups to apply for participation in the CRTA Program. See the Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity, NOT-OD-20-031, available at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-031.html>.

Special Volunteer Program

Special Volunteers (SV) are individuals who provide research services, direct patient care, clerical support, technical assistance, or any other necessary services for NIH. SVs are not financially compensated by NIH for their activities or services.

The SV program incorporates the specific research mission of the NCI and is authorized under an NIH-specific training authority:

Sections 402 and 405 of the PHS Act, as amended. The Director, NIH, and the Directors of the national research institutes and centers may accept voluntary and uncompensated services.