



# LRP AMBASSADOR TOOLKIT

*Resources to Support Outreach to Potential LRP Applicants*

OFFICE OF  
EXTRAMURAL PROGRAMS

DIVISION OF  
LOAN REPAYMENT

NATIONAL INSTITUTES  
OF HEALTH

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Welcome to the LRP Ambassador Program.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Ambassador Program Overview .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Display the LRP Ambassador Badge with Pride! .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Reach Out to Prospective Applicants .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Sample Email: About the LRPs in General.....	9
Sample Email: At the Start of the LRP Application Cycle .....	10
Sample Email: Notice about the LRP Technical Assistance Webinar .....	11
Sample Email: Midway Through the Application Period .....	12
<b>Plan an Event .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Event Planning Resources.....	14
<b>Counsel Extramural LRP Applicants .....</b>	<b>20</b>
What are the Five Extramural LRPs? .....	20
What are the Eligibility Criteria for an Extramural LRP Applicant? .....	21
What are the Application Deadlines? .....	23
What are LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, Referee/Recommender, and Institutional Business Official Roles? .....	24
What are the Evaluation Criteria for LRP Applications? .....	26
Who are the NIH LRP Institute and Center Program Officer/Liaison? How Do I Contact DLR? .....	27
What are Some Helpful Resources .....	27
<b>Use Social Media as an LRP Ambassador .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions .....</b>	<b>31</b>

## WELCOME TO THE LRP AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Welcome to the LRP Ambassadors Program, and thank you for your support of the Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). We appreciate the time and effort you take to build awareness of the LRPs with your colleagues. Ambassadors play a vital role in the Division of Loan Repayment (DLR)'s efforts to build a robust biomedical research workforce by helping us identify qualified applicants to the LRPs and encouraging them to apply.

This Ambassador Toolkit provides tips, resources, and materials designed to help you educate and inform potential LRP applicants about the opportunities available through LRPs. These tools include:

- **Ambassador Program Overview** that describes your role and can be shared with other potential Ambassadors
- **Reach Out to Prospective Applicants** contains sample emails to use to inform potential applicants about the LRPs
- **Plan an Event is a guide** to facilitating larger group meetings about the LRPs
- **Counsel Extramural NIH LRP Applicants** provides guidance on how to counsel LRP applicants
- **Use Social Media** is a guide to NIH policies on social media that define how you can use social media sites when acting on behalf of NIH
- **Frequently Asked Questions** addresses common questions about being an LRP Ambassador

You are welcome to use any of these materials “as is,” but we encourage you to adapt them to your own needs and to develop your own activities and approaches. And if you find something that works well for you, please share it on the [LRP Ambassadors Facebook page](#) so that others can learn from your experience.

We hope you find these materials helpful as you share information about the opportunities through the LRPs with those interested in a biomedical research career to have their student loans paid, eliminating a barrier that often forces researchers to pursue more lucrative clinical careers. Working together, we can help young career scientists to chart a viable path to achieving their goals in research.

Thank you for volunteering to be an LRP Ambassador. Please feel free to reach out to us at any time at [lrpambassador@od.nih.gov](mailto:lrpambassador@od.nih.gov) if you have questions or if you have suggestions for improving the Ambassador Program.

Sincerely,



Ericka Boone, Ph.D.  
Director  
Division of Loan Repayment



# LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAMS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## LRP AMBASSADOR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The NIH Loan Repayment Program (LRP) Ambassador Program is a network of former and current LRP awardees that promote the NIH LRPs within the extramural scientific community. The NIH LRPs are a vital component of our nation's efforts to recruit and retain promising investigators in research careers, and LRP Ambassadors play an integral role in this process. LRP Ambassadors serve as a personalized link/connection between the Division of Loan Repayment (DLR) and potential applicants at their home institutions by providing advice and encouragement regarding the LRP application process, their experiences, and more.



### Who Can Be an LRP Ambassador?

The Loan Repayment Program (LRP) Ambassadors are current and past LRP award recipients that want to assist DLR in informing and educating prospective LRP applicants about the program. Mentors, supervisors, and institutional business officials may also join the Ambassador Program.



### What are the Roles and Responsibilities of Ambassadors?

The roles and responsibilities of LRP Ambassadors include:

1. Learning about the LRPs and the application process in order to be an informed communicator.
2. Identifying potential eligible applicants to the LRPs within their home institutions.
3. Sharing relevant information about the LRPs with potential applicants in a timely manner through face-to-face encounters, electronic communication, and planned events.
4. Sharing/reporting information on their activities with NIH/DLR staff.



### Why Should I Become an LRP Ambassador?

For LRP awardees, becoming an Ambassador is a way to “give back” to their community and to help other young career scientists along their path to research independence. For mentors, supervisors, and institutional contacts, becoming an Ambassador is a way to support promising investigators within their research networks. For both groups, being an Ambassador opens new avenues for working with NIH to help increase the numbers of active researchers within the biomedical research workforce.

## DISPLAY THE LRP AMBASSADOR BADGE WITH PRIDE!

You earned it... now show your pride in becoming an LRP Ambassador by posting the digital LRP Ambassador Badge on your Facebook and LinkedIn pages, emails, and other sites. The LRP Ambassador Badge tells the world about your accomplishments in becoming an LRP awardee and your interest in helping others to succeed in their research careers.

To access a digital copy of the LRP Ambassador Badge, first choose which size badge you'd like to use. Click the link (Large, Medium, or Small) next to the badge. Right-click the image that appears on your screen, and then click on the "copy image" option.



[LARGE](#) (250x202)

[MEDIUM](#) (150x121)

[SMALL](#) (100x81)

Paste it on your website, blog, or wherever you want to link to your profile!

## REACH OUT TO PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

Sample outreach materials, including sample emails, are provided in this toolkit. You can use these materials to generate awareness of the Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) and to share information with potential applicants about LRP eligibility, LRP application deadlines, and about your own experiences as an LRP applicant. You can also use these materials to share time-sensitive information from DLR such as LRP application cycle updates, deadlines, and date and sign-up information about the LRP Technical Assistance Webinar.

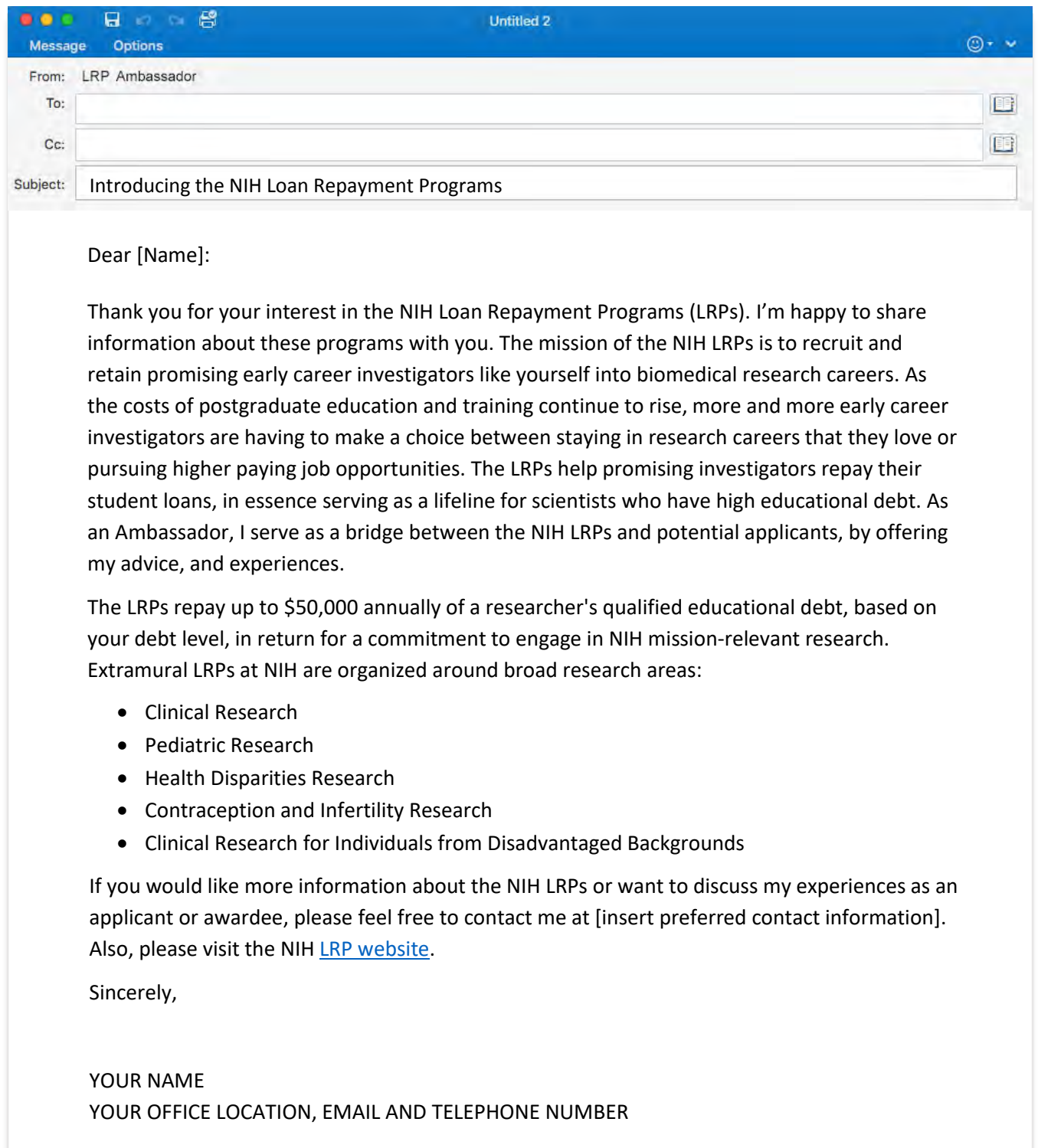
Sharing information about the LRPs is one of your most important roles as an LRP Ambassador. To make this role easier, we have provided sample outreach emails in this toolkit. Sample topics include:

- Introductory Email
- About the LRPs in General
- At the Start of the Application Process
- Notice about the LRP Application Technical Assistance Webinar
- Midway Through the Application Process

How can you begin to use these sample outreach materials? First, identify the individuals who are likely prospects in your department and put together their email addresses. Then choose the message(s) that fit your situation best. Cut and paste the text “as is,” filling in the blanks, or use it as a template to create your own message(s). You can find the application deadline date each year on the [LRP home page](#).

You can also paste the Ambassador Program badge into your emails to reinforce your role as an LRP Ambassador. See page 6 for instructions on how to access and use the LRP Ambassador badge.

## Introductory Email



The image shows a screenshot of an email client window titled "Unfiled 2". The window has a blue header with "Message" and "Options" buttons. The email content is as follows:

From: LRP Ambassador

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: Introducing the NIH Loan Repayment Programs

Dear [Name]:

Thank you for your interest in the NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs). I'm happy to share information about these programs with you. The mission of the NIH LRPs is to recruit and retain promising early career investigators like yourself into biomedical research careers. As the costs of postgraduate education and training continue to rise, more and more early career investigators are having to make a choice between staying in research careers that they love or pursuing higher paying job opportunities. The LRPs help promising investigators repay their student loans, in essence serving as a lifeline for scientists who have high educational debt. As an Ambassador, I serve as a bridge between the NIH LRPs and potential applicants, by offering my advice, and experiences.

The LRPs repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt, based on your debt level, in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research. Extramural LRPs at NIH are organized around broad research areas:

- Clinical Research
- Pediatric Research
- Health Disparities Research
- Contraception and Infertility Research
- Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

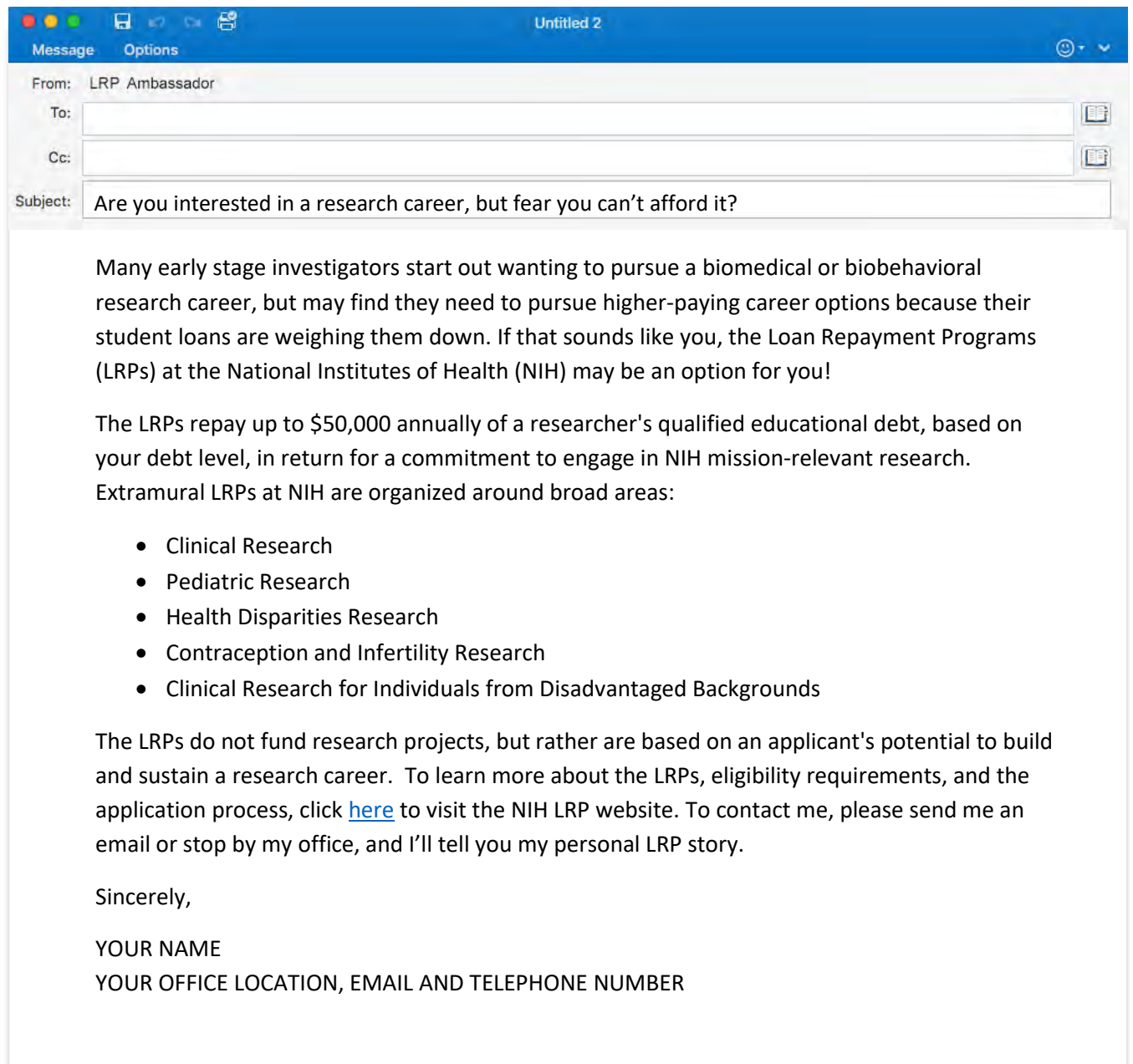
If you would like more information about the NIH LRPs or want to discuss my experiences as an applicant or awardee, please feel free to contact me at [insert preferred contact information]. Also, please visit the NIH [LRP website](#).

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME  
YOUR OFFICE LOCATION, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER



## About the LRPs in General



The screenshot shows an email client interface. The window title is "Untitled 2". The email header includes "Message" and "Options" tabs. The "From" field is "LRP Ambassador". The "To" and "Cc" fields are empty. The "Subject" field contains the text: "Are you interested in a research career, but fear you can't afford it?". The email body contains the following text:

Many early stage investigators start out wanting to pursue a biomedical or biobehavioral research career, but may find they need to pursue higher-paying career options because their student loans are weighing them down. If that sounds like you, the Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) may be an option for you!

The LRPs repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt, based on your debt level, in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research. Extramural LRPs at NIH are organized around broad areas:

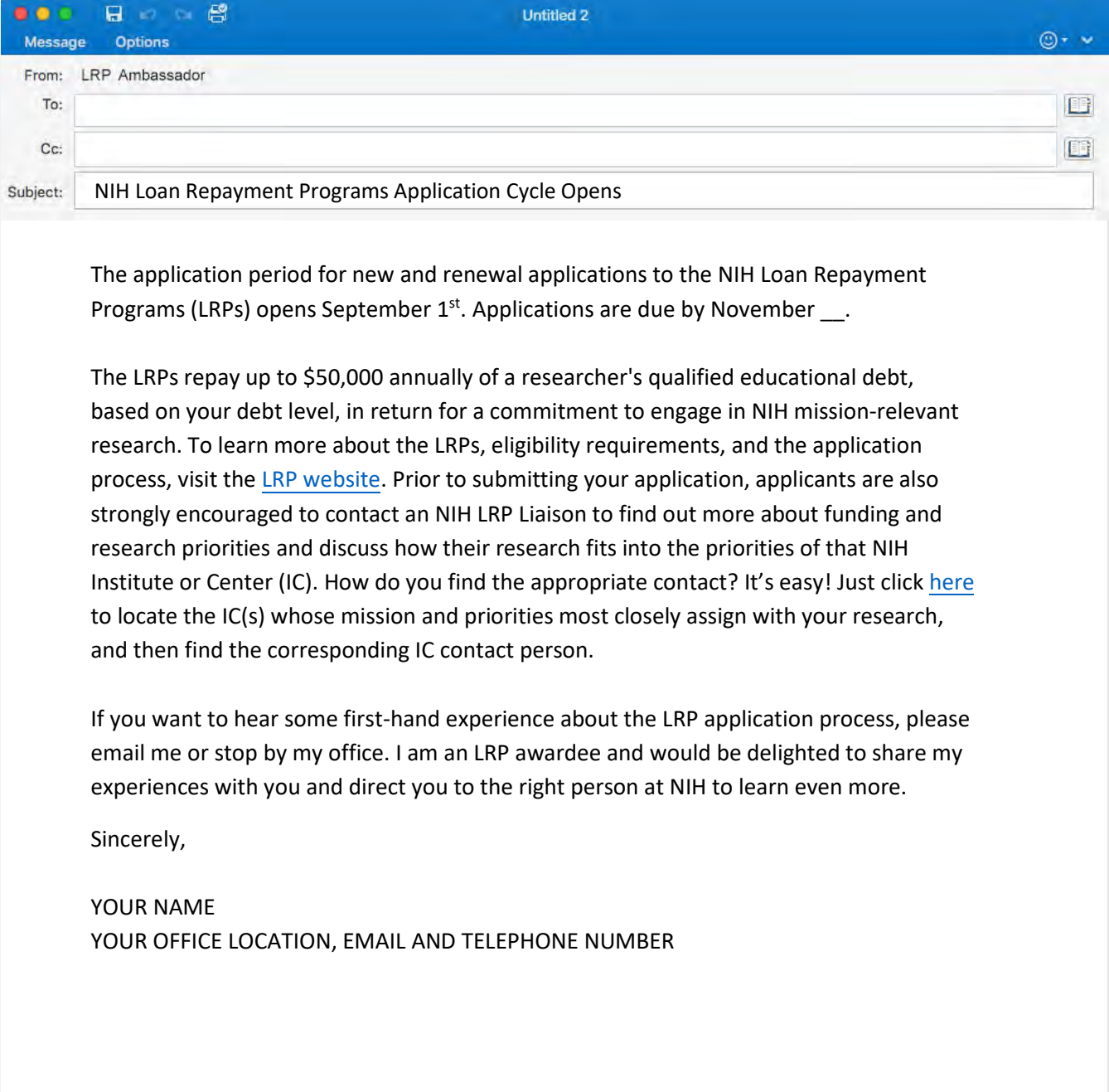
- Clinical Research
- Pediatric Research
- Health Disparities Research
- Contraception and Infertility Research
- Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds

The LRPs do not fund research projects, but rather are based on an applicant's potential to build and sustain a research career. To learn more about the LRPs, eligibility requirements, and the application process, click [here](#) to visit the NIH LRP website. To contact me, please send me an email or stop by my office, and I'll tell you my personal LRP story.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME  
YOUR OFFICE LOCATION, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

## At the Start of the LRP Application Cycle



The screenshot shows an email client window titled "Untitled 2". The "Message" tab is active, and the "Options" menu is open. The email header includes "From: LRP Ambassador", "To:" (empty), "Cc:" (empty), and "Subject: NIH Loan Repayment Programs Application Cycle Opens". The body of the email contains the following text:

The application period for new and renewal applications to the NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) opens September 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications are due by November \_\_.

The LRPs repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt, based on your debt level, in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research. To learn more about the LRPs, eligibility requirements, and the application process, visit the [LRP website](#). Prior to submitting your application, applicants are also strongly encouraged to contact an NIH LRP Liaison to find out more about funding and research priorities and discuss how their research fits into the priorities of that NIH Institute or Center (IC). How do you find the appropriate contact? It's easy! Just click [here](#) to locate the IC(s) whose mission and priorities most closely assign with your research, and then find the corresponding IC contact person.

If you want to hear some first-hand experience about the LRP application process, please email me or stop by my office. I am an LRP awardee and would be delighted to share my experiences with you and direct you to the right person at NIH to learn even more.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME  
YOUR OFFICE LOCATION, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

## Notice about the LRP Application Technical Assistance Webinar

Message Options

From: LRP Ambassador

To:

Cc:

Subject: Sign up for NIH's Loan Repayment Program Webinar

Are you thinking of applying for one of the five extramural Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH)? The LRPs help early career scientists stay in research by repaying up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt, based on your debt level, in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research.

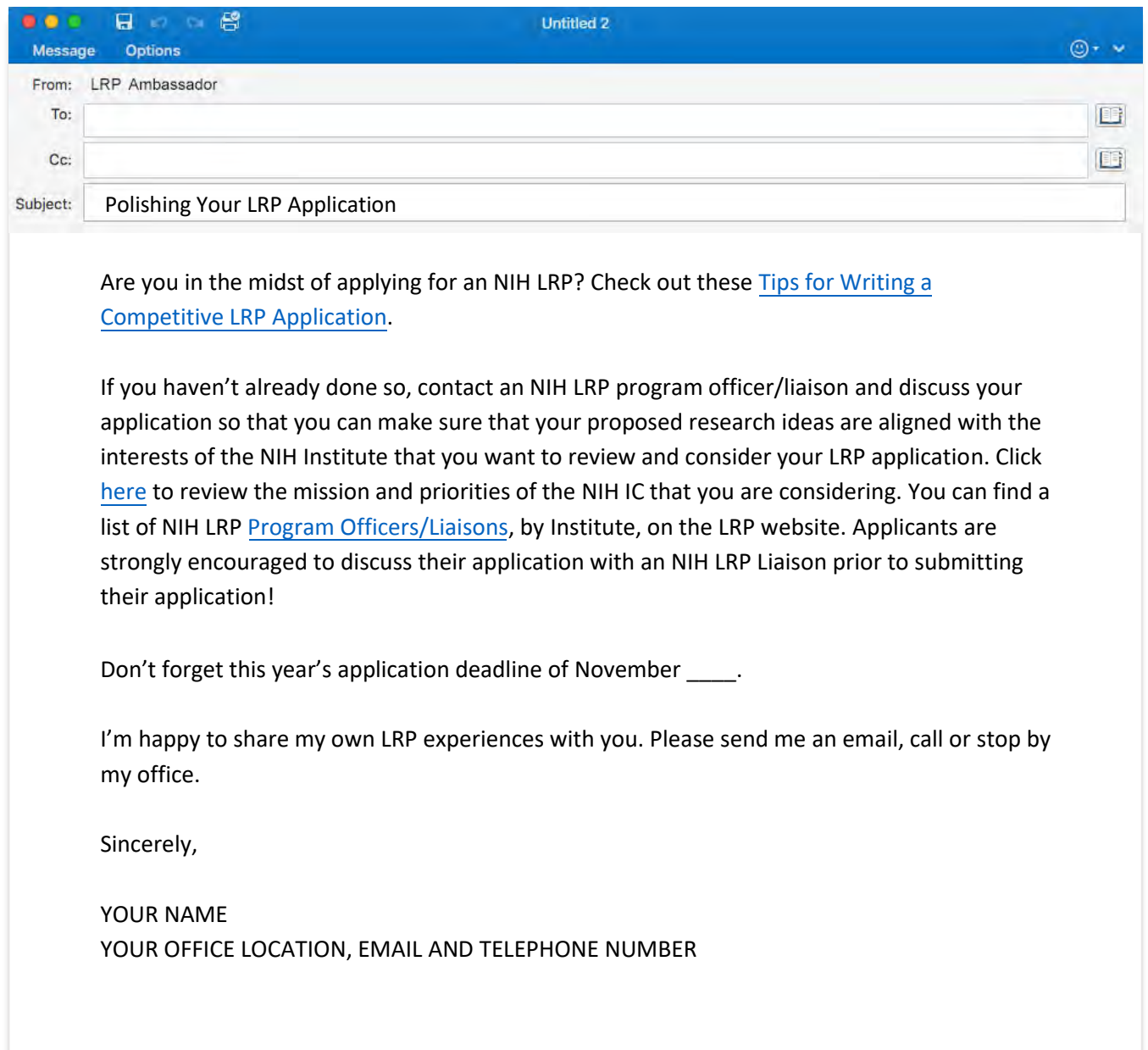
The Division of Loan Repayment (DLR) at NIH is offering a technical assistance webinar about the LRP application process on \_\_\_\_\_. Go to the [Contact and Engage](#) section of the LRP website to find more information on the date, time and links to the webinar. The webinar will also be posted on the LRP website for future reference.

I'm an LRP awardee, and I'm happy to share my LRP experience with you. Feel free to send an email or stop by my office to chat.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME  
YOUR OFFICE LOCATION AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

## Reach Out To Prospective Applicants



The image shows a screenshot of an email draft window. The window title is "Untitled 2". The header bar is blue and contains "Message" and "Options" on the left, and a smiley face icon and a dropdown arrow on the right. The email fields are as follows:

- From: LRP Ambassador
- To: [Empty text box]
- Cc: [Empty text box]
- Subject: Polishing Your LRP Application

The body of the email contains the following text:

Are you in the midst of applying for an NIH LRP? Check out these [Tips for Writing a Competitive LRP Application](#).

If you haven't already done so, contact an NIH LRP program officer/liaison and discuss your application so that you can make sure that your proposed research ideas are aligned with the interests of the NIH Institute that you want to review and consider your LRP application. Click [here](#) to review the mission and priorities of the NIH IC that you are considering. You can find a list of NIH LRP [Program Officers/Liaisons](#), by Institute, on the LRP website. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their application with an NIH LRP Liaison prior to submitting their application!

Don't forget this year's application deadline of November \_\_\_\_.

I'm happy to share my own LRP experiences with you. Please send me an email, call or stop by my office.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME  
YOUR OFFICE LOCATION, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

## PLAN AN EVENT

Events are a great way to share the mission of the NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs), talk to potential applicants, and share your story. Events can range from something small like an informal coffee or brown bag meeting with a few potential applicants to a more formal meeting. If you have a large group and the use of slides is appropriate, a presentation about the LRPs is available on the [Resources](#) section of the Ambassador website.

One event that you might want to consider is hosting a joint viewing of the LRP Technical Assistance Webinar that is usually offered early during the application cycle. As an LRP Ambassador, you will be sent advance information about date and sign-up process for this webinar so that you can publicize the event at your institution (see sample outreach email regarding the technical assistance webinar in this toolkit). The webinar may also be posted on the [LRP website](#) after its initial airing. Inviting prospective applicants to view the webinar together in one place and then sharing your LRP experience during a Q&A after the webinar is a great way to add value to the webinar itself.

Although event planning may require more work than other valuable Ambassador activities like speaking informally with prospective applicants or sending out emails, you can share the responsibility with other LRP Ambassadors at your institution(s). You can find a list of NIH LRP Ambassadors in your geographical area in the [Ambassador Directory](#). Combining your resources with others not only lightens the individual burden of responsibility, but also allows you to extend your reach within your institution more effectively. If no Ambassador is listed at your institution, you can also contact LRP Communications to find one near you at [lrp.communications@mail.nih.gov](mailto:lrp.communications@mail.nih.gov).

### Tips to Consider for Planning a Successful Event:

- **Know what kind of event you are comfortable with hosting:** Keep it small if needed. Letting potential applicants know about the program is the most important thing, so don't feel that you have to throw a star-studded event!
- **Learn about the LRPs:** Potential applicants have questions. Information about the Loan Repayment Programs are available on:
  - The [LRP website](#)
  - This toolkit, located on the [LRP Ambassador Resources](#) page
  - The LRP social media sites: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), etc.
- **Identify Helpful Resources:**
  - Review the [Directory of Ambassadors](#) on the LRP Ambassador web page to identify Ambassadors in your area who can help you reach out to and maintain applicant relationships
  - If necessary, use hand-out materials (see Handouts in this Event Planning Guide), and share contact information, and other resources with potential applicants
  - If you have questions, email [lrp.communications@mail.nih.gov](mailto:lrp.communications@mail.nih.gov) or call the LRP help line, (866) 849-4047 for more information

- **Keep it Up:** Knowing that recruitment, retention, and award is a cyclical process will help you as you reach out to potential applicants. Just because the application cycle has ended for the year doesn't mean there aren't individuals who may be interested in learning more about the LRPs, so keep getting the word out.

### Additional Advice Regarding Planning an Event:

1. Determine the goal and size of the event (e.g., sharing information about the LRPs with a small or large group)
2. Identify key participants, such as LRP Ambassadors, experienced mentors, and/or financial aid officers
3. Determine if you have resources to serve refreshments
4. Finalize the date
5. Secure the venue, e.g., a classroom or small auditorium on campus
6. Identify and invite potential applicants
7. Publicize the event through email, posters, LRP Facebook page, or your organization's intranet site (see sample email and poster in this Event Planning Guide)

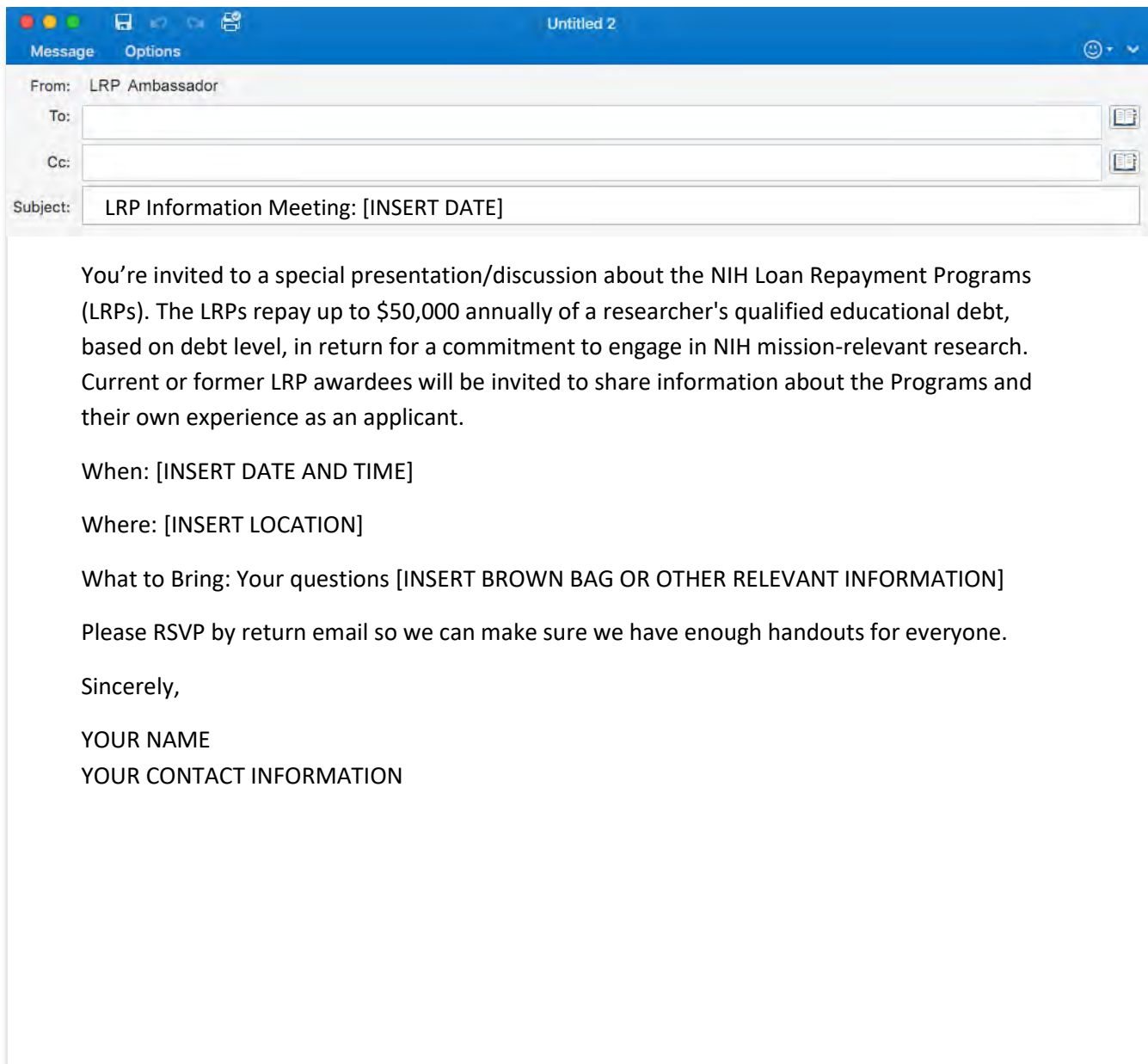
### Event Planning Resources

Find the following resources in this section:

- Email Invitation to Event (page 15)
- Poster Advertising Event (page 16)
- Handouts
  - LRP General Information (pages 17-18)
  - LRP Application Infographic (page 19)

In addition, you may wish to share the [Online Application System Instruction Booklet](#) as a handout. A slide presentation about the LRPs is available in the [Resources](#) section of the LRP Ambassador web page.

## Email Invitation to LRP Information Event



The image shows a screenshot of an email client window titled "Untitled 2". The window has a blue header bar with "Message" and "Options" on the left, and a smiley face icon on the right. Below the header, the email fields are as follows:

- From:** LRP Ambassador
- To:** [Empty text box]
- Cc:** [Empty text box]
- Subject:** LRP Information Meeting: [INSERT DATE]

The main body of the email contains the following text:

You're invited to a special presentation/discussion about the NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs). The LRPs repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt, based on debt level, in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research. Current or former LRP awardees will be invited to share information about the Programs and their own experience as an applicant.

When: [INSERT DATE AND TIME]

Where: [INSERT LOCATION]

What to Bring: Your questions [INSERT BROWN BAG OR OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION]

Please RSVP by return email so we can make sure we have enough handouts for everyone.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME  
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION



## *Come Learn about the* **Loan Repayment Programs from NIH!**

The NIH LRPs repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt (based on debt level) in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research.

WHEN: \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE: \_\_\_\_\_

SPEAKER(S): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION





## General Information

The NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) will repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt (depending on debt level) in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research.

New LRP awards are for two years and awardees may be eligible to apply for 1- or 2-year renewal awards at the end of their new award period. The repayment amount for an LRP award is generally equal to one-quarter of the total eligible educational debt, up to \$50,000, for each year of the award. To receive the maximum amount of \$100,000 for a two-year award, an applicant must have at least \$200,000 in eligible educational debt at the contract start date.

Although organized around broad research areas, the LRPs are not intended to fund research projects. Rather, LRP awards are based on an applicant's potential to build and sustain a research career.

## Eligibility

**Citizenship** - You must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident of the U.S. by the LRP award start date.

**Qualifying Degree** - Possess an M.D., Ph.D., Pharm.D., Psy.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.P.M., D.C., N.D., O.D., D.V.M., or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited institution. The exception is the Contraception and Infertility LRP, which also accepts certain master's degrees and certifications.

**Qualified Educational Debt** - You must have total qualified educational debt  $\geq 20$  percent of your institutional base salary at the time of award. Institutional base salary is the annual amount you are paid for your appointment, whether the time is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other activities. Institutional base salary excludes any income that you may earn outside of the duties of the organization. It is not necessary for renewal applicants to satisfy the 20 percent debt-to-income requirement. Visit the [Loan Information page](#) for more details on loans that do or do not qualify for LRP repayment.

**Qualified Research** - You must be engaged in research that is not prohibited by Federal law, regulations, or policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or National Institutes of Health (NIH). You must engage in qualified research for an average of at least 20 hours per week during each quarterly service period of your LRP award.



**Domestic, nonprofit research funding** - Your research must be supported by a domestic, nonprofit foundation, university, professional association, or other nonprofit institution, or a U.S. government agency (Federal, State, or local). NIH grants and university salaries are considered eligible funding. Your primary employment must be with a nonprofit institution.

For additional eligibility information, visit the [Eligibility & Programs](#) section of the LRP website.

### The Five Extramural Loan Repayment Programs

You will need to decide which of the five LRPs best matches your general research area. To learn more about the LRPs, visit the [LRP website](#) or call the LRP Information Center at (866) 849-4047.



#### ***Clinical Research LRP***

For investigators conducting patient-oriented clinical research with human subjects or research on disease in human populations involving material of human origin.



#### ***Pediatric Research LRP***

For investigators conducting research directly related to diseases, disorders, and other conditions in children, including pharmacological research.



#### ***Health Disparities Research LRP***

For investigators conducting research that focuses on one or more of the minority health disparity populations defined by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.



#### ***Contraception and Infertility Research LRP***

For investigators conducting research in conditions that impact couples' ability to either conceive or bear young, or research on providing new or improved contraception methods.



#### ***Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds***

For clinical investigators coming from an environment that inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skill, and ability required to enroll in, and graduate from, a health professional school, or from a family with an annual income below low-income thresholds.

# LRP AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

## LRP APPLICATION INFOGRAPHIC



See the interactive version of this infographic, with supporting information, at <https://www.lrp.nih.gov/infographics>.

## COUNSEL EXTRAMURAL NIH LRP APPLICANTS

The purpose of this document is to provide information and resources to help you counsel prospective applicants on the Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) and the application process. When providing information to prospective LRP applicants, use your own experience as a model for a successful application. Your experience will provide a “real life” example of how to effectively navigate the application process.

Here are six informational points to review when counseling an individual about the LRPs (expanded information on these six points are also included in this toolkit):

- Five Extramural NIH Loan Repayment Programs
- Eligibility criteria for an extramural LRP application
- Application deadlines
- LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, Referee/Recommender, and Institutional Business Official Roles
- Evaluation criteria for LRP application
- NIH LRP Institute and Center Program Coordinator contact information

Provide the following resource website links and tips (found at the end of this document) to help in describing the application process:

- Online Application System Instruction Booklet
- Tips for Writing a Successful Application
- Application Process Interactive Roadmap
- “NIH Loan Repayment Programs Application Technical Assistance” webinar, when available

### What are the Five Extramural NIH Loan Repayment Programs?

There are five extramural Loan Repayment Programs for researchers not employed by NIH. Applicants need to decide which of the five Extramural LRPs most appropriately matches to their general research area. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the summary descriptions of each of the LRPs.

For the Clinical Research, Pediatric Research, and Health Disparities Research LRPs, individuals are given the option preferred Nindicate a IH Institute or Center (IC) for peer review. For help determining IC match, applicants should contact the appropriate LRP IC Liaison(s). It is recommended that applicants read the Mission and LRP Research Priorities Statements for each of the NIH ICs in order to determine the best match. A list of LRP IC Liaisons, IC Mission Statements, and LRP Research Priorities Statements can be found on the Contact & Engage page.

### *The five extramural LRPs include:*

- **Clinical Research** – for investigators conducting patient-oriented clinical research with human subjects or research on disease in human populations involving material of human origin. These applications are reviewed by all participating NIH ICs, except for the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD).
- **Pediatric Research** – for investigators conducting research directly related to diseases, disorders, and other conditions in children, including pediatric pharmacological research. These applications are reviewed by all participating NIH ICs, except NIMHD.
- **Health Disparities Research** – for investigators conducting research that focuses on one or more of the minority health disparity populations defined by NIMHD and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.
- **Contraception and Infertility Research** – for investigators conducting research in conditions that impact on the ability of couples to either conceive or bear young, or research on providing new or improved methods of preventing pregnancy. Applications for this LRP are reviewed solely by NICHD.
- **Clinical Research for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds** – for clinical investigators coming from an environment that inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skill, and ability required to enroll in, and graduate from, a health professional school, or from a family with an annual income below low-income thresholds.

For expanded information on eligibility criteria for the five extramural NIH LRPs, please review the [eligibility information](#) on the LRP website or call the LRP Information Center at (866) 849-4047.

## What are the Eligibility Criteria for an Extramural NIH LRP Applicant?

No applicant will be excluded from consideration on the basis of age, race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other non-merit factors.

**Citizenship** - You must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident of the U.S. by the LRP award start date.

**Qualifying Degree** - Possess an M.D., Ph.D., Pharm.D., Psy.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.P.M., D.C., N.D., O.D., D.V.M., or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited institution. The exception is the Extramural Contraception and Infertility LRP, which also accepts certain master's degrees and certifications. See the Extramural Contraception and Infertility LRP page for additional details.

**Qualified Educational Debt** - You must have total qualified educational debt in excess of 20 percent of your institutional base salary at the time of award. Institutional base salary is the annual amount you are paid for your appointment, whether the time is spent on research, teaching, patient care, or other

activities. Institutional base salary excludes any income that you may earn outside of the duties of the organization. It is not necessary for renewal applicants to satisfy the 20 percent debt-to-income requirement.

**Qualified Research** - You must agree to conduct only research that is not prohibited by Federal law, regulations, or policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or National Institutes of Health (NIH). If you receive an LRP award, you must conduct your research in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local law (e.g., applicable human subject protection regulations) for the entire contract period. Additionally, you must engage in qualified research for an average of at least 20 hours per week during each quarterly service period of your LRP award.

**Domestic, nonprofit research funding** – Your research must be supported by a domestic, nonprofit foundation, university, professional association, or other nonprofit institution, or a U.S. government agency (Federal, State, or local). A domestic foundation, professional association, or institution is considered to be nonprofit if it is exempt from Federal tax under the provisions of Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501). NIH grants and university salaries are considered eligible funding. Your primary employment must be with a nonprofit institution.

### Ineligible Individuals

You are ineligible to apply for the NIH LRPs if you are:

- An individual who is not a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident of the U.S. by the LRP award start date;
- An individual who has or had a Federal judgment lien against his/her property arising from Federal debt;
- An individual who owes an obligation of health professional service to the federal government, a state, or other entity, unless deferrals or extensions are granted for the length of the NIH LRP contract;
- An individual employed by a federal government agency, with a work schedule of more than 20 hours per week (5/8ths time or more);
- An individual who receives any research funding support or salary from a for-profit institution or organization;
- A current recipient of an NIH Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA) or a Cancer Research Training Award (CRTA);
- An individual conducting research for which funding is precluded by Federal law, Federal regulations, or HHS/NIH policy, or that does not comply with applicable Federal, State, and local law regarding the conduct of the research (e.g., applicable human subject protection regulations);
- An individual who does not meet the 20% debt-to-income ratio.

## What are the Application Deadlines? Do You Need an eRA Commons ID to Submit Your Application?

Make sure prospective applicants are aware of all application deadlines. Also, please note that all applicants are now required to have an NIH eRA Commons ID to submit an LRP application. If a prospective applicant does not have one, please suggest that they contact their grants administrator or research supervisor to request one right away as it can take several weeks to receive an NIH eRA Commons ID.

In general, the deadlines for extramural new and renewal awards are the following:

### **Online Application Period**

🕒 September 1 – November 15

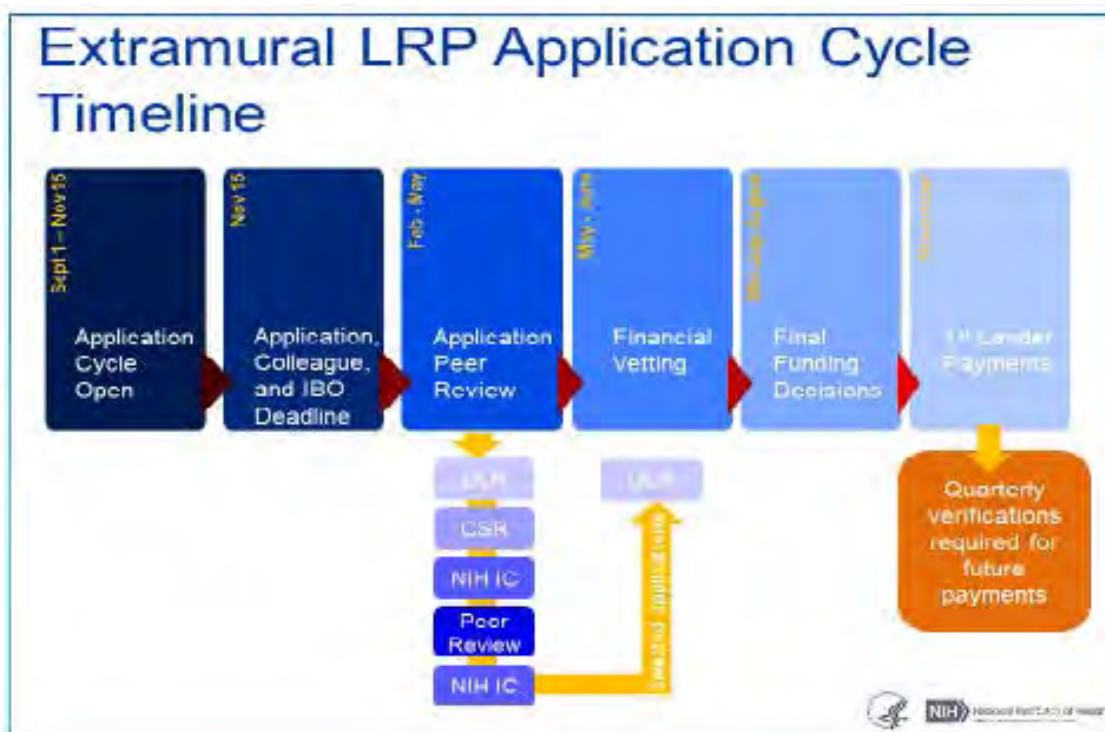
### **Online Application, Colleague and Institutional Documentation Deadline**

🕒 November 15

### **NIH IC Peer Review Period**

🕒 February – May

A timeline of the LRP application and approval process appears below. Check the [current application deadlines](#) on the LRP website for this year's application cycle.



## What are the LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, Referee/Recommender, and Institutional Business Official Roles?

Describe the NIH LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, and Referee/recommender roles to the potential applicant. To help him or her understand these important roles, please provide examples of your LRP Research Supervisor, Mentor, and Referee/Recommenders.

### ***Research Supervisor Description***

A research supervisor is an individual with the ability to verify that an LRP awardee is conducting research as described in the awardee's research plan at the required level of effort. A research supervisor will be asked to verify an awardee's research service at the end of each quarter (13 weeks) throughout the length of an awardee's LRP contract. At the end of each quarter, the research supervisor will receive an email from DLR with instructions regarding how to log into the Research Supervisor's Portal to complete the service verification process. The service verification serves to certify that:

- An awardee is still employed to conduct research at the institution for an average of at least 20 hours per week each quarter (13 weeks);
- An awardee's research has not changed significantly; and
- An awardee is not expected to leave the research institution before the end of the next quarter.

### ***Research Mentor Description***

A research mentor is an accomplished and trusted advisor who gives help and advice to a less experienced researcher. A mentor will be asked to provide the following items in support of an applicant by the published deadline:

#### *New Award Applicants*

- Recommendation letter (additional information can be found on the Referee/Recommenders page);
- Concurrence of the applicant's research activities statement;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research environment statement;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research training and mentoring plan.

#### *Renewal Award Applicants*

- Recommendation letter (additional information can be found on the Referees/Recommenders page);
- Concurrence of the applicant's research activities statement;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research environment statement;
- Concurrence of the applicant's research training and mentoring plan;
- Concurrence of the applicants research accomplishments document.



Mentors will receive an email from DLR containing instructions regarding how to provide supporting documentation (including a reference letter) for an applicant. To submit supporting documentation, a mentor must have an eRA Commons ID, and must log into the LRP application system. If a mentor does not have an eRA Commons ID, he or she should apply for one as soon as possible. If a mentor needs login assistance to their LRP portal, he or she should contact the LRP Information Center at (866) 849-4047.

For more information on Research Supervisors and Mentors, click [here](#).

### ***Referee/Recommender Description***

A referee/recommender can address an applicant's research capabilities and commitment to a research career. For mentored applicants, their mentor should also serve as one of their recommenders.

A referee/recommender submits a reference letter via the LRP websystem by the [published deadline](#). The reference letter is expected to include the following information about the applicant:

#### ***New Award Applicants***

- Previous training and experience to prepare for a research career
- Commitment to a career in research
- Potential for a successful career in research
- Research related strengths and weaknesses
- Overall recommendation

#### ***Renewal Award Applicants***

- Previous training and experience to prepare for a research career
- Commitment to a career in research
- Potential for a successful career in research
- Research related strengths and weaknesses
- Research accomplishments during the current/most recent LRP award period
- Development as an independent investigator
- Overall recommendation

Referees/Recommenders will receive an email from DLR containing instructions regarding how to provide supporting documentation (including a reference letter) for an applicant. To submit supporting documentation, a mentor must have an eRA Commons ID, and must log into the LRP application system. If a mentor does not have an eRA Commons ID, he or she should apply for one as soon as possible.

If a mentor needs login assistance to their LRP portal, he or she should contact the LRP Information Center at (866) 849-4047.

For more information on Referees/Recommenders, click [here](#).

### ***Institutional Business Official Description***

An Institutional Business Official (IBO) represents the LRP applicant's employing institution in an official capacity. An IBO will be asked to certify by the published deadline that the applicant is eligible for an LRP. In addition, the IBO assures that the applicant will be provided the necessary time and resources to engage in the research project for the period of the Loan Repayment Program award (two years for a new award and one or two years for a renewal award).

For more information on the role of an IBO, click [here](#).

## What are the Criteria by Which Extramural LRP Applications Are Evaluated?

The applicant's potential to pursue a career in research, including:

- Appropriateness of the applicant's previous training and experience to prepare for a research career;
- Appropriateness of the proposed research activities during the LRP award period to foster a career in research;
- Commitment to a research career, as reflected by the personal statement of long-term career goals and plan to achieve those goals; and
- Strength of the reference letters (recommendations) attesting to the applicant's potential for a successful career in research.

Quality of the overall environment to prepare the applicant for a research career, including:

- Quality and availability of appropriate scientific mentors and colleagues to help achieve or enhance the applicant's research independence, including the mentors' record in mentoring researchers, funding history and research productivity; and
- Quality and appropriateness of institutional resources and facilities.

For renewal award applications, progress under the previous project period is an additional evaluation criterion:

- Assessment of the renewal applicant's research accomplishments during the previous LRP support period; and
- Assessment of the renewal applicant's development as an independent investigator.

## Who are the NIH LRP Institute and Center Program Officers/Liaisons?

For the Clinical Research, Pediatric Research, and Health Disparities Research LRPs, applicants have the option to indicate a preferred NIH Institute or Center (IC) for peer review. For help determining the best IC match, applicants should contact the appropriate NIH LRP IC Program Officer/Liaison. It is recommended that applicants read the mission and research priorities statements for each of the NIH ICs first in order to determine the best match.

Refer individuals to the NIH LRP IC Program Officers/Liaisons for specific questions about each of the five NIH extramural LRPs.

A listing of the NIH LRP IC Program Officers/Liaisons and IC mission research priorities statements can be found on the [Contact & Engage](#) section of the LRP website.

## How do I Contact DLR?

For additional questions about the LRPs and the application process, contact the LRP Information Center via the following ways.

Toll free: (866) 849-4047

Fax: (866) 849-4046

Email: [lrp@nih.gov](mailto:lrp@nih.gov)

Mailing address: 6700B Rockledge Dr., Suite 2300, Bethesda, MD 20892-6904

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=NIH%20LRP): <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=NIH%20LRP> [Twitter](#):

[https://twitter.com/NIH\\_LRP](https://twitter.com/NIH_LRP)

## What are Some Helpful Resources?

The Division of Loan Repayment (DLR) has developed technical assistance resources to help applicants craft their applications. Share the following resources with applicants:



### [\*\*Online Application System Instruction Booklet\*\*](#)

This booklet provides detailed instructions and information for completing an NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) application.

**[Tips for Writing a Successful Application](#)**

This tip sheet provides useful information about characteristics of strong applications and common reasons that applications are not funded.

**[Application Process Interactive Roadmap](#)**

The interactive application process roadmap provides guidance for what an applicant should be doing or thinking about at each stage of the application process.

**[NIH Loan Repayment Programs Technical Assistance Webinar](#)**

DLR offers a live webinar each year to introduce features of the application process and answer common questions about the application process. DLR will share information about the upcoming webinar with Ambassadors so that they may share the information with potential applicants. As it becomes available, the recorded yearly webinar may be accessed by clicking the title above.

## USE SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN LRP AMBASSADOR

You may find that posting information about the LRPs on your social media accounts is an effective and efficient way to get the word out to prospective applicants. One of the easiest ways to use social media is to subscribe to the NIH LRP Twitter account (hashtag @NIH\_LRP) and Facebook page. Then you can simply re-tweet or share messages that you think will be of interest to your followers. Follow these steps:

### LRPs on Twitter:

- Set up a Twitter account or sign in to your existing account at [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)
- Click on “Twitter” above or search Twitter for the NIH Loan Repayment Program
- Click on “follow” to add the NIH LRP tweets to your Twitter feed.

### LRPs on Facebook:

- Set up a Facebook account or sign in to your existing account at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- Click on “Facebook” above or search Facebook for the NIH Loan Repayment Program
- Click on “Like” on the NIH LRP page, and indicate that you would like LRP messages added to your Newsfeed.

Once you have a Twitter and/or Facebook account, you may want to send one or two initial messages to let people know that you are an LRP Ambassador, e.g.:

- Worried you can’t afford a research career? Contact me about the NIH Loan Repayment Programs at [myname.XXXX.edu](mailto:myname.XXXX.edu).
- I’m an LRP Ambassador, and I’m happy to talk about NIH Loan Repayment Programs that pay off student debt. Contact me at [myname.XXXX.edu](mailto:myname.XXXX.edu).

Remember to include your LRP Ambassador Badge on your messages!

Follow these important guidelines when using social media to communicate about the LRPs:

1. Post your NIH LRP Ambassador badge on your posts to identify yourself as a credible spokesperson for the NIH LRPs.
2. Do not represent yourself as an employee of NIH.
3. Make sure that the information you post is truthful and accurate.
4. Be respectful of NIH, the LRPs, and your followers. Never post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, or is otherwise unlawful.
5. Respect copyright and fair use, i.e., attribute authorship where due.
6. Respect confidential and proprietary information that you may have learned about the LRPs and/or an LRP applicant.

And don't forget—there is an [LRP Ambassadors Facebook page](#) just for you. Use it to stay on top of what's happening with the Ambassadors Program and to connect with other Ambassadors. In particular, share your successes in reaching out to prospective applicants with other Ambassadors by posting them on the LRP Ambassador Facebook page.

For questions about social media use, contact the LRP Communication Specialist at [lrpambassador@od.nih.gov](mailto:lrpambassador@od.nih.gov).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Who can be an LRP Ambassador?

Potential Loan Repayment Program (LRP) Ambassadors are current and past loan recipients who assist prospective applicants in learning more about the LRPs. Mentors, supervisors, and institutional contacts may also join the Ambassador Program.

### What are the roles and responsibilities of Ambassadors?

The roles and responsibilities of LRP Ambassadors include:

1. Learning about the LRPs and the application process in order to be an informed communicator.
2. Identifying potential eligible applicants to the LRPs within their home institutions.
3. Sharing relevant information about the LRPs with potential applicants in a timely manner through face-to-face encounters, electronic communication, or planned events.
4. Sharing/reporting information on their activities with NIH/DLR staff.

### Why should I become an LRP Ambassador?

For LRP awardees, becoming an Ambassador is a way to “give back” to their community and to help other young career scientists along their path to research independence. For mentors, supervisors, and institutional contacts, becoming an Ambassador is a way to support promising investigators within their research networks. For both groups, being an Ambassador opens new avenues for working with NIH to help increase the numbers of active researchers within the biomedical research workforce.

### How do I learn more about the Ambassador Program?

You can learn more about the LRP Ambassador Program by reviewing the information on the [Ambassador web page](#) on the LRP website.

### Who are potential applicants I should contact?

Focus primarily on postdocs in your department who meet the eligibility requirements. Applicants must be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or permanent resident of the U.S. by the LRP award start date (July 1<sup>st</sup>), and have earned a terminal level degree (e.g., M.D., Ph.D., Pharm.D., Psy.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.V.M., etc.) from an accredited institution (there are exceptions for individuals applying to the Contraception & Infertility LRP). See the LRP website regarding additional program and loan [eligibility requirements](#).

Assembling and updating an electronic mailing list of these potential applicants will make it easy to contact them regularly.

### How can I get information to potential LRP applicants?

See the “[Reach Out to Prospective Applicants](#)” and “[Use Social Media as an LRP Ambassador](#)” sections of this toolkit for draft messages that you can edit and either send via email or post on social media.

**How do I plan an informational event about the LRPs at my institution?**

See the “[Plan an Event](#)” section of this toolkit for ideas, handouts, and a slide presentation that you may use when hosting an informational session on the LRPs. This guide can be found under the [Resources](#) section of the Ambassador web page. Sharing responsibilities for planning, recruiting potential applicants, and presenting with fellow Ambassadors at your institution is a way to lighten the load of preparing an event.

**How do I counsel an applicant?**

See the “[Counsel an Extramural LRP Applicant](#)” section of this toolkit for guidance. You can share your own experience as an LRP applicant and awardee, discuss information and resources about the LRPs. Encourage applicants to view information on the website and share any news or updates from the Division of Loan Repayment.

**How often should I contact potential applicants?**

At a minimum, you should contact potential applicants at the beginning of the LRP application period to inform them about application deadlines and your availability as an LRP Ambassador. Ideally, you may wish to contact applicants 2 to 3 times (e.g., before and then again during the application cycle to share information about LRP application resources and keep them focused on their applications).

**How do I find out about the regional conferences?**

Subscribe to the Loan Repayment Program [Twitter](#) feed and “like” the Loan Repayment Program page on [Facebook](#) to stay current on information about the regional conferences. You can also check the Connect page on the [LRP website](#) for information about upcoming regional conferences.

**How do I find other LRP ambassadors at my institution or other institutions?**

See the [Directory of Ambassadors](#) on the LRP Ambassador web page for a listing of current LRP ambassadors. You can also contact the Division of Loan Repayment at [lrp.communications@mail.nih.gov](mailto:lrp.communications@mail.nih.gov)

**How do I contact the Division of Loan Repayment for any further questions about the LRPs?**

For additional questions about the LRPs and the application process, contact the LRP Information Center.

LRP Information Center

Toll free: (866) 849-4047

Fax: (866) 849-4046

Email: [lrp@nih.gov](mailto:lrp@nih.gov)

Mailing address: 6011 Executive Blvd, Suite 206, Bethesda, MD 20852