# **NIH Letters of Support Guidelines and Template**

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***Guidelines***

1. *The purpose of a letter of support is to demonstrate support of institutions, consortium participants, collaborators, key personnel, and other significant contributors.*
2. ***Format:***
   1. *Signed letter placed on official letterhead of institution/department*
   2. *No page limit*
   3. *All letters must be combined into a single PDF, table of contents may be included*
3. ***Common Types of LOS:***
   1. [*Institutional Support*](#_Institutional)
   2. [*Consultants*](#_Consultant)
   3. [*Collaborators*](#_Collaborators)
   4. [*Departmental Support*](#_Departmental_Support)
   5. [*Advisory Boards*](#_Advisory_Boards)
   6. [*Community Support*](#_Community_Support)
   7. [*Patient Advocates*](#_Patient_Advocates)
   8. [*Subaward Sites*](#_Subaward_Sites)
   9. [*FOA-specific LOS*](#_FOA-Specific_LOS)

[**INSERT ON OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD**]

[**INSERT DATE**]

[**INSERT SIGNATURE BLOCK OF CONTACT PI**]

Re: Purpose of the Letter / Project Title

Dear      ,

## Introduction and Support Paragraph

* **1st sentence** expressing interest, support and/or enthusiasm about the project;
* **2nd sentence** indicating involvement in the project, and list role(s) on the project/role as leader of department/institution, as appropriate.

## Expertise and/or Institution Paragraph

* Include 2-3 biographical sentences about the person’s qualifications if the LOS is about them .

**OR**

* Include 2-3 sentences about the institute they are representing if they are not representing themselves.
* Conclude paragraph by tying in the person’s biography and/or Institute’s goals to the goals of the project so that relevance is clear.

## Common Types of LOS – Key Information – Choose from the following:

### ***Institutional Support***

* Can include: School, Department, Division, and/or any affiliated Centers, Institutes, etc.
* Purpose is to demonstrate interest and support of the project
* May commit specific resources (Verify with institution before proceeding)

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1 paragraph about the Institution School’s/Department’s/Center’s/Institute’s/etc. mission, value, and goals
* Know the role of the signer (signing on behalf of their Institution vs. signing on behalf of themselves)
* Resource commitments MUST be included if they are being provided
* Tie project goals into the Institutional mission/vision
* Signor should sign on behalf of the Institution, use appropriate letterhead, and, unless highly relevant, include less personal info

### ***Consultant***

* Required for anyone being paid as a Consultant on budget (biosketch not always required)
* Utilize LOS to describe Consultant’s expertise and appropriateness for the project (personal statement/biosketch info)

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1-2 paragraphs about the Consultant (either personal background and/or institute they represent)
* Must include proposed amount of effort and cost
* Describe services/scope of work as reflected in budget justification

### ***Collaborators***

* Anyone who is performing work for the project but is not a key personnel or Consultant can be considered a collaborator
* Utilize LOS to describe Collaborator’s expertise and appropriateness for the project (personal statement/biosketch info)
* Should only include those whose contribution would strengthen the application

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1‐2 paragraphs about the Collaborator (personal background and/or institute they represent)
* Describe the nature of the collaborator and whether it is tied into any project aims (i.e. providing samples, ad hoc advice/support, etc.)

### ***Departmental Support***

* At a minimum, PIs should have support of their Department/Division head
* Use LOS to describe Department’s/Division’s mission/values/goals and support for the PI and their project
* **Early-Stage Investigators (ESIs):** Must include description of Departmental support of ESIs (protected time for research, access to resources, etc.)

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1 paragraph about the Department/Division Mission, Vision, key stats
* Describe why aims/goals of project tie into Departmental mission/efforts
* Signor should sign on behalf of the Department and include less personal info, unless highly relevant

**Note**: If signor is also KP/OSC on the project, this should be carefully mentioned and should not be an emphasis of the LOS

### ***Advisory Boards***

* Check FOA to ensure Advisory Board Members can be named
* Use LOS to describe appropriateness of Board Member for their proposed role (Biosketches are not always required/included)
* Include specific commitment of time/travel as required (i.e. confirm they will be available for a yearly in-person meeting and ad hoc advice as needed)

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1 paragraph about the Advisory Board member
* Can include descriptions of institutes they represent, if appropriate
* Describe why aims/goals of project tie into their particular expertise
* Signor should sign on behalf of themselves and emphasize their expertise and previous relationship to PI/Project
* List any time commitments (ad hoc advisement meetings, yearly in person meetings, etc.)

### ***Community Support***

* Only appropriate for projects with community components or external partnerships with non‐traditional research institutions
* Use LOS to demonstrate community interest, involvement, and support of a particular project
* Can either be subaward sites or participating partners

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1 paragraph about the organization/institute of the signor (mission, values, stats)
* 1 paragraph about the signor themselves, include leadership roles at organization
* Describe why aims/goals of project tie into the mission of the organization
* Typically these LOS are much more personal and less scientific as they are often written by lay members of the community
* Emphasize aspects of interest to the community

### ***Patient Advocates***

* Typically used when patients are involved in the research strategy
* Use LOS to demonstrate a personal narrative and patient interest for the project particular project
* Include specific commitment of time/travel as required

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1 paragraph about the signor themselves, include personal tie in to the disease being studied, project goals, etc.
* Typically these LOS are much more personal and less scientific as they are often written by lay members of the community
* Emphasize aspects of interest to the patient themselves
* List any time commitments (ad hoc advisement meetings, yearly in person meetings, etc.)

### ***Subaward Sites***

* Only appropriate for projects with subaward sites
* Each site should have LOS indicating confirmation of interest in this project and support of work being performed at their site
* Typically NOT signed by the KP of the subaward site
* Can also double as Departmental/Institutional Support LOS

**Key LOS Information:**

* 1 paragraph about the Institution
* State/clarify the role of the signer and relationship to the Site Lead(s)
* Resource commitments MUST be included if they are being provided
* Tie PI’s goals into the Institution/Department’s own efforts and interests
* Signor should sign on behalf of the Institution/Department and include less personal info, unless highly relevant

### ***FOA-Specific LOS***

* Always read FOA for any specific requirements for LOS

# **ALL LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

## Specific Resources Paragraph (if applicable)

* Include a statement about the specific institutional commitment of resources (including money, space, staffing, equipment, etc.). ONLY include this if a pre-determined specific commitment has been made.

## Concluding Paragraph

Concluding paragraph should include 1-3 sentences reiterating interest, role, and/or support of the project, and indicating that the signator is looking forward to working on the project (or future involvement in the application), if applicable.

Sincerely,

[**INSERT SIGNATURE**]

[**INSERT SIGNATURE BLOCK**]