Inclusion Across the Lifespan: guidance for applying the policy

The Inclusion Across the Lifespan policy (IAL) applies to all exempt and non-exempt human subjects research (see NOT-OD-18-116), beginning with competing grant applications due on/after January 25, 2019, and R&D contract solicitations issued on/after this date.

Prior to this date, the Inclusion of Children in Research Policy continues to be in effect.

In applications or proposals:
- Include an Inclusion plan
- Submit a plan for including individuals across the lifespan
- If excluding based on age, provide rationale and justification for the specific age range*

In progress reports:
- Report age at enrollment
- The policy requires the age of participants at enrollment to be included in reports
- Age at enrollment may be reported to NIH in units ranging from hours to years.

Remember: Scientific Review Groups (SRGs) will assess each application/proposal as being "acceptable" or "unacceptable" with regard to the age-appropriate inclusion or exclusion of individuals in the research project.

*Exclusion based on age must be due to ethical or scientific reasons. Acceptable justifications may include:
- The disease to be studied does not occur in the excluded age group
- The research topic is not relevant to the excluded age group
- Knowledge sought is already available for the excluded group
- Separate study for the excluded age group is warranted or preferable
- Research involves data from pre-enrolled participants
- Laws/regulations bar inclusion of individuals in a specific age group in research
- The study poses unacceptable risk to the excluded age group