Letters of Reference:

Letters of reference are an important component of the 2009 Avant-Garde Award DP1 (RFA DA-09-011) application. Applicants must arrange to have **three** (and no more than three) **letters of reference** submitted electronically on their behalf to the NIH eRA Commons Web site at
https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/reference/submitRefereeInformation.jsp.

The letter submission page can be accessed without signing into the Commons, and referees do not have to be registered in the Commons. Letters must be submitted by referees, not by applicants. Applicants are responsible for monitoring the submission of their letters to ensure that three letters have been submitted prior to the submission deadline. Applicants are encouraged to provide the following instructions to their referees:

Instructions for Referees

Submission Date/Time:
Letters may be submitted **beginning May 2, 2009**, and **must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m.** (**Eastern Daylight Time**) **June 2, 2009** at
https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/reference/submitRefereeInformation.jsp.
Late letters will not be accepted. Applications with fewer than three letters of reference may not be reviewed.

Letter Format:
In **two pages or less (PDF format)**, describe the applicant's qualities that support his/her claim to scientific innovativeness and creativity. When possible, give specific examples that illustrate these qualities. Address the likelihood that the applicant will conduct groundbreaking research in the proposed research area.

The **applicant's name must** be included at the top of the letter. Although the referee's signature is not required, the letter **must** include a signature block with the referee's full name, title, and institution.

Required Information for Submission:
The following information is required and must be entered on the letter submission page https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/reference/submitRefereeInformation.jsp at the time of submission:

Referee Information:
> Referee's First and Last Name (Required)
> Referee's Middle Initial (MI) (Not Required)
> Referee's Email Address (Required)
> Referee's Institution/Affiliation (Required)
> Referee's Department (Required)

Note: A Commons User Name is not required of referees and should not be entered on the letter submission form. Referees must provide the applicant's Commons User Name.

Applicant Information (to be provided to referees by applicants):
Applicant's Commons User Name (Required)
Applicant's First and Last Name (Required)
(Note: must match exactly the applicant's name in the Commons)

Funding Opportunity Number (FOA) of this announcement **RFA-DA-09-011** (Required)

Confirmation Number (Required only when resubmitting a letter for the current FOA)

Reference Letter—two pages maximum PDF format

Confirmations:
Confirmations will be sent by email to both the applicant and the referee. The confirmation will include a Confirmation Number. Please print and save this Confirmation Number because it is required when a revised referee letter is submitted. Revised letters will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time) June 2, 2009.

Problems or Questions: If you have questions or problems submitting a letter, or if you do not receive an email confirmation, please contact the NIH Help Desk at commons@od.nih.gov or (301) 402-7469; (866) 504-9552 (Toll Free); (301) 451-5939 (TTY), Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. While referees may submit letters for any number of applicants, each referee may submit only **one letter per applicant**. Submissions of revised letters must include a Confirmation Number. **Please do not attempt to submit a second letter for the same applicant without a Confirmation Number** as this may preclude the applicant's other referees from submitting letters. If you are unsure if your letter was successfully submitted, please contact the Help Desk.