

Program Director Associations Guide for Residency Applicants

Interventional Radiology

The *Program Director Associations Guide for Residency Applicants* is a collaborative effort between the Organization of Program Directors Association (OPDA), Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and American Medical Association (AMA). Its purpose is to provide specialty-specific guidance, application information, and resources.

This guide outlines specialty-level guidance and policies for applicants to Interventional Radiology programs. **Specialty-specific guidance reflects the specialty's intent for applicant preparation and the residency application process but may not reflect all individual program requirements.** Applicants should review individual program requirements in Residency Explorer™ tool, FREIDA™, or on program websites.

Specialty responses in this guide were provided through a standardized web form. The corresponding questions from that form are referenced in the footnotes. If a specialty indicated “No specialty guidance,” it means the specialty does not provide guidance on that aspect of the selection process.

Table of Contents

Specialty-Specific Resources.....	2
Away Rotations.....	2
Use of USMLE and/or COMLEX-USA Scores.....	2
Application Process	3
Program Signals	3
Letters of Recommendation or Evaluation	4
Research/Scholarly Activity	4
Supplemental Information.....	4
Applicant Communications	4
Interviews.....	5
Open Houses / Second Looks	5
Match Platform.....	5

Specialty Guidance for the 2026–2027 Cycle

Specialty-Specific Resources

Interventional Radiology has published a statement:

<https://www.sirweb.org/connect/sections/association-of-program-directors-in-interventional-radiology-apdir-section/#interview-statement>

Away Rotations

Away Rotation Details	Specialty Recommendation
Away rotations in the specialty ¹	Strongly Recommended Purpose: important to being considered, but not always required given certain circumstances
Number of away rotations in the specialty	No specialty guidance

Additional Guidance: Away rotations are an opportunity for programs to get a feel for a candidate as well as the student to determine if they could see themselves at that institution for the next 5 -6 years. Offers and timelines of visiting student acceptances vary but are generally determined from Feb-June.

Use of USMLE and/or COMLEX-USA Scores

License Exam Details	Specialty Recommendation
USMLE transcripts required for DO applicants? ²	No specialty guidance

Additional Guidance: USMLE scores are preferred but not required.

¹ Even if an applicant's home institution has a program in your specialty, are completing away rotations in the specialty optional, strongly recommended, or required for applicants?: Optional, Not Expected (to gain additional exposure or confirm interest in specialty before applying); Strongly Recommended (important to being considered, but not always required given certain circumstances); Required (will not be considered without it)

² Does your specialty require that DO applicants submit USMLE scores in addition to COMLEX-USA scores?: Yes, USMLE scores are required for all applicants; No, USMLE scores are not required for DO applicants

Application Process

Application Process Details	Specialty Recommendation
Main Residency Match Season	AAMC Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)
Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP)	AAMC Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)
When programs start reviewing applications ³	Date applications are released to programs by the application service
Application materials accepted after the deadline ⁴	No specialty guidance

Additional Guidance: None noted.

Program Signals

Program Signals Details	Specialty Recommendation
Number of signals	8
Signal home institutions?	Yes
Signal programs where they completed away rotations?	Yes

Additional Guidance: None noted.

³ Which best describes when programs will start reviewing applications for this application cycle (2026-2027)?: Date applications are released to programs; Other

⁴ Is it acceptable for applicants to submit some application materials after the initial application?: Yes; No

Letters of Recommendation or Evaluation

LOR Details	Specialty Recommendation
Required number of LORs	At least 3
Required letter writers ⁵	No specialty guidance
Is there a specialty-specific standardized letter? ⁶	No

Additional Guidance: Letters of recommendation can be variable, but generally it is advised to include at least one letter from an Interventional Radiologist, whether that be from an away rotation or from your home institution.

Guidance for Applicants from Transitional Year/Prelim Programs: None noted.

Guidance for IMG Applicants: None noted.

Research/Scholarly Activity

Involvement in variable activities including research, societal leadership, or community service projects demonstrates commitment to excellence and bolsters the application during review.

Supplemental Information

Supplemental Application Materials	Specialty Recommendation
Supplemental application materials required? ⁷	No

Additional Guidance: None noted.

Applicant Communications

Pre-Interview Communication Guidance: No specific guidance.

Post-Interview Communication Guidance: No specific guidance.

⁵ Who is required to submit letters? (Select all that apply): Someone within the specialty (e.g., faculty, attending); Department chair; Program director; Physician preceptor at an away rotation (e.g., program director, faculty); Other

⁶ Does your specialty have a specialty-specific standardized letter of evaluation or standardized letter of recommendation?: Yes; No

⁷ Does the specialty require applicants to submit supplemental application materials (e.g., use of other assessments, supplemental videos or essays)? Yes; No

Interviews

Interview Details	Specialty Recommendation
Universal interview offer date(s)	–
Typical interview offer window	October 2026 - December 2026
Interview scheduling platform	–
Interview format ⁸	In-person

Additional Guidance: The Association of Program Directors in Interventional Radiology (APDIR) recommends that programs return to in-person interviews for the 2026–2027 recruitment cycle. APDIR recognizes that interview format is a program-level decision and affirms that in-person interviews are appropriate and consistent with the unique characteristics of IR training and recruitment. Virtual interviews or a hybrid format remain fully acceptable options for programs whose institutional context, resources, or applicant pool considerations make that format preferable. Programs that determine a virtual or hybrid approach best serves their recruitment needs remain fully supported in that decision.

Open Houses / Second Looks

Open Houses: No guidance.

Second Looks: Second look days can be held by institutions, but typically only AFTER rank lists have already been submitted in order to limit selection bias by the program.

NRMP Voluntary Rank Order List (ROL) Lock Pilot Initiative: No

Match Platform

Interventional Radiology participates in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) and Military Match (i.e., Joint Service Graduate Medical Education Selection Board, Military Selection Board).

Additional Guidance: None noted.

⁸ Which interview format does the specialty recommend that programs use?: Virtual; In-person; Hybrid (an applicant chooses either an in-person or virtual interview format); Hybrid (an applicant completes both virtual and in-person interviews)