

The following is a template for requesting a reagent from another lab. Goals are to be specific, courteous, brief, and include all required information. Ideally the person will simply forward the email to someone in the lab for shipment. Please check with your PI as to how they might modify this template. Note that the most variable part of the email is the level of detail to include about what you will do with the reagent. The balance is between giving enough detail that they are convinced you will really use it and toward a useful and interesting end yet are not a direct competitor. Also, note that NIH requires all investigators to include a Resource Sharing Plan in grant applications that at a minimum promise to share these reagents. And journals typically require authors to share any reagents used in publications, to allow others to replicate the results. I urge you not to accept any reagent that comes with a requirement that the provider is included as an author, based solely on reagent access. But, like in all aspects, consult with your PI.

[Sample email]

Dear Dr. [X],

As a graduate student in Dr. [X's] laboratory at Emory University, I greatly enjoyed reading your article in the [Journal] (vol, pp, year). My thesis work is focused on [general statement of project] and thus appreciate the value of the [plasmid, strain, antibody] described in this article. I am writing to request an aliquot of [detail here by name used in the publication] to allow me to perform a few tests of aspects of my model. [If an antibody include here an indication of how much you will need to perform your study, with details such as X western blots at Y dilution will require an Z ul aliquot]. In order to make optimal use of your reagent I would appreciate any recommendations on use learned from use in your laboratory (at a minimum you want to know dilutions of antibodies, conditions, buffers – this could save lots of time and mean the difference between working and not—you'd be amazed at what this simple statement can turn up!)

Your reagent will be used in our laboratory only and not given out to others without your prior written approval. Should the use of your reagent result in publishable results we will also acknowledge your contribution as the source of the reagent, with appreciation.

If you are willing to provide us with this valuable reagent please ship to me at:

Richard Kahn
Department of Biochemistry
Emory University
1510 Clifton Rd; Room G-217
Atlanta, GA 30322
Telephone 404-727-3561

Please bill all shipping charges to our FEDEX account: x-xxxxx-xxxx internal reference x-xxxxx

Sincerely,
Rick Kahn

Related things:

- 1) If no answer to your email after one week, it is ok to follow up with a reminder.
- 2) Only send from your Emory account, less likely to go to spam
- 3) When the reagent arrives, send an email acknowledging receipt and thanks.
- 4) Enter in the lab list of reagents the source, the reference citation, so that anyone using it should know and acknowledge. If reagent used by your lab for years it should always be acknowledged as the source, you should not cite your own paper as the source.