

Chicago Kidney Urology Hematology network
FOR city-Wide research Training and career Development (Chicago KUH FORWARD)
Interdisciplinary Training Program (TL1) Request for Applications

Chicago KUH FORWARD is a unique NIDDK-funded institutional network and interdisciplinary training program (U2C/TL1) across 6 academic institutions in Chicago (Northwestern University, Lurie Children's Hospital at Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Chicago, Rush University, and Loyola University). More information about **Chicago KUH FORWARD** can be found at: <https://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/chikuhforward/index.html>.

Chicago KUH FORWARD is pleased to announce a call for applications for its interdisciplinary training program (TL1). The goal of the TL1 program is to provide interdisciplinary training for pre- and post-doctoral fellows in basic, translational, or clinical research in the fields of kidney, benign urologic, and benign hematologic diseases.

The purpose of this communication is to invite TL1 applications from pre- and postdoctoral trainees at any of the partnering institutions. Potential applicants to the program are encouraged to visit the **Chicago KUH FORWARD website**. For further information, determination of eligibility or assistance in identifying mentors, please contact chicago.kuhforward@northwestern.edu.

A. OVERVIEW

Chicago KUH FORWARD is designed to address key challenges related to recruitment, advancement, and retention of pre- and postdoctoral KUH trainees. Through activities of the Administrative, Network, Professional Development, and Training Cores, **Chicago KUH FORWARD** will create and implement multidimensional evidence-based interventions to prepare the next generation of research leaders in KUH research. Unique resources include cross-disciplinary mentorship; dedicated grant writers groups; facilitated peer mentoring sessions; portal with trainee-driven content and social media tools; opportunities to participate in high school, college and medical school outreach programs; cross-disciplinary seminars, workshops and journal clubs focused on cross-cutting tools; opportunities to present research in progress at outside institutions; and professional and social interactions with trainees, alumni and mentors across institutions.

Chicago KUH FORWARD and its TL1 program are committed to identifying and implementing ways to create and support a diverse and inclusive campus community. Scholars from diverse backgrounds and life experiences bring different perspectives, creativity, and individual enterprise to address complex scientific problems. Individuals belonging to groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in biomedical, clinical, behavioral and social sciences (e.g., certain racial, ethnic and gender minorities and individuals with disabilities) are strongly encouraged to apply to this program.

B. AWARD INFORMATION

Chicago KUH FORWARD intends to fund up to 5 predoctoral and 5 postdoctoral trainee awards during the inaugural year of the TL1 program. Awards provide support for up to two years at NRSA stipend levels. The second year of training is contingent on satisfactory progress during year 1.

C. ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be accepted from two types of trainees wishing to receive interdisciplinary training in KUH research priority areas at one of the **Chicago KUH FORWARD** partnering institutions:

1. Predoctoral trainees:

- a. Predoctoral trainees must have received a baccalaureate degree by the beginning date of their TL1 appointment and be enrolled in a program leading to a Ph.D. or an equivalent research doctoral degree program.
- b. Predoctoral trainees will be considered after completion of degree-required coursework and fulfillment of qualifying exams.
- c. Health-professional students who wish to interrupt their studies for one year or more to engage in full-time research training before completing their formal training programs, are also eligible.

2. Postdoctoral trainees:

- a. Postdoctoral trainees must have received, as of the beginning date of the TL1 appointment, a Ph.D., M.D., D.D.S., D.M.D., or comparable doctoral degree from an accredited domestic or foreign institution. Comparable doctoral degrees include, but are not limited to, the following: D.C., D.O., D.V.M., O.D., D.P.M., Sc.D., Eng.D., Dr.PH., D.N.Sc., D.P.T., Pharm.D., N.D. (Doctor of Naturopathy), D.S.W., Psy.D., as well as a doctoral degree in nursing research.
- b. Postdoctoral trainees will be appointed early in their postdoctoral research training. Advanced postdoctoral scientists (more than 5 years of postdoctoral research experience) should consider applying for the Mentored Research Scientist Development Award (K01).
- c. Postdoctoral MD trainees will typically be recruited at the end of their clinical fellowship, with their TL1 training coinciding with the research portion of their subspecialty fellowship.
- d. To offer flexibility, highly motivated/well-prepared MD applicants who prefer to engage in research training prior to their clinical fellowship will also be considered.
- e. Clinical trainees must commit at least 75% of their total effort to research training.

The individual to be trained must be a United States citizen or have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time of their TL1 appointment.

The two-year training period will include cross-disciplinary mentored research and activities supported by the **Chicago KUH FORWARD** Professional Development and Network Cores. All trainees supported on the TL1 are expected to submit first-author manuscripts based on their mentored research project. Submission of an individual fellowship grant (NIH or other) is a requirement for 2nd year. Trainees will participate in dedicated grant writer groups to assist them in applying for grants.

Trainees will be required to select a primary mentor and at least one other mentor from a discipline different than that of the chosen primary mentor.

Trainees will participate in an integrated didactic and mentored research program personalized to their individual needs and overseen by the TL1 Executive Committee. Oversight will include development and monitoring of trainees' individual development plans (IDPs).

D. TIMELINE

Full applications for the TL1 Training Program will be accepted on a rolling basis contingent on availability of trainee slots.

E. APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants must complete the [online Application Form](#) and upload supporting application materials. Please carefully review the RFA instructions and eligibility criteria with your mentor(s) before completing the Application Form. Once submitted, the Application Form cannot be edited.

The link to the Application Form is https://redcap.link/KUHFORWARD_apply.

Application materials for Predoctoral Trainees:

Predoctoral applications must include the following components. Each component will be uploaded as an individual file at the end of the Application Form and should follow standard NIH Format Attachment guidelines, including PDF format, font size, margin, and paper size requirements.

- NIH Fellowship Biosketch (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>)
 - Use the format for application due dates on/after January 25, 2022
 - Include section for scholastic performance
 - Selected trainees are required to have an eRA Commons account at the time of their TL1 appointment. Contact your institution's signing official or account administrator to obtain a new Commons account or affiliate your existing account with your current institution.
- Personal statement addressing reasons for applying and long-term career objectives (max 2 pages)
- Synopsis of thesis project and description of cross-disciplinary mentorship team (max 2 pages)
- Statement of commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor

Application materials for Postdoctoral Trainees:

Postdoctoral applications must include the following components. Each component will be uploaded as an individual file at the end of the Application Form and should follow standard NIH Format Attachment guidelines, including PDF format, font size, margin, and paper size requirements.

- NIH Fellowship Biosketch (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>)
 - Use the format for application due dates on/after January 25, 2022
 - Include section for scholastic performance
 - Selected trainees are required to have an eRA Commons account at the time of their TL1 appointment. Contact your institution's signing official or account administrator to obtain a new Commons account or affiliate your existing account with your current institution.
- Personal statement addressing reasons for applying, prior research experience, long-term career objectives (max 2 pages)
- Brief research proposal that outlines the applicant's specific scientific objectives and description of cross-disciplinary mentorship team (max 2 pages)
 - Suggested structure for research proposal:
 - Specific Aims and Hypotheses
 - Background and Significance
 - Experimental Approach and Cross-Disciplinary Mentorship Team
 - Interpretation of Expected Results
- Statement of commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor
- Two Letters of Recommendation, preferably from referees who can provide assessments of candidate's academic and research accomplishments

Presentations and Interviews:

- Each applicant will deliver a brief 20-minute presentation either on prior research, proposed research, or on a topic of scientific interest to the applicant
- Each applicant will be interviewed by a group of interviewers composed of Trainee Selection Committee members, TL1 co-Directors, and other **Chicago KUH FORWARD** investigators.

F. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Predoctoral Trainees

A standardized candidate review form will assess the following domains for predoctoral trainees:

1. Record of academic achievement
2. Research training plan
3. Clarity of written communication
4. Clarity of oral communication
5. Motivation for pursuit of an academic research career
6. Alignment of trainee interests with KUH research priority areas
7. Commitment of mentoring team to the candidate

The overall impact score will consider the above criteria, the impact of lived experiences on the candidate's career choices and academic trajectory and reflect the reviewer's assessment of the likelihood that the fellowship will enhance the candidate's progression to a productive independent scientific research career in a KUH research field.

Postdoctoral Trainees

A standardized candidate review form will assess the following domains for postdoctoral trainees:

1. Record of academic achievement
2. Research training plan
3. Clarity of written communication
4. Clarity of oral communication
5. Motivation for pursuit of an academic research career
6. Alignment of trainee interests with KUH research priority areas
7. Referees' assessments of candidate's academic and research accomplishments
8. Commitment of mentoring team to the candidate

The overall impact score will consider the above criteria, the impact of lived experiences on the candidate's career choices and academic trajectory and reflect the reviewer's assessment of the likelihood that the fellowship will enhance the candidate's progression to a productive independent scientific research career in a KUH research field.

QUESTIONS? Send your questions to Chicago.KUHFORWARD@northwestern.edu.