

Paul Calabresi Career Development Award For Clinical Oncology

“Bringing new investigators and ideas to bear on the challenge of patient oriented cancer research”

Purpose of RFA:

The purpose of the NCI funded **Paul Calabresi Career Development Award for Clinical Oncology (PCACO) K12** is to increase the number of clinicians (M.D.s, D.O.s, Pharm.D.s, nurses with Ph.D.s or equivalent) trained in clinical and translational cancer research, and to promote their career development as independent cancer researchers. The NCI K12 allows appointment of Scholars proposing to serve as the lead investigator of an independent clinical trial; or proposing a separate ancillary clinical trial to an existing trial; or proposing to gain research experience in a clinical trial led by another investigator, as part of their research and career development. The PCACO is not intended to train scientists for laboratory-based research.

The goal is to provide a structured mentoring program to prepare clinician trainees for careers as independent and collaborative translational researchers. Based on prior experience, Trainees will have the opportunity to complete a relevant Master degree program offered at the University of Chicago e.g 1) MSc in Public Health Sciences for Clinical Professionals (MSCP), 2) MSc in Biomedical Informatics or other relevant advanced degrees.

Applications are for funding to begin July 1, 2022 but appointments can begin as early as April 1, 2022 as positions open up. Appointments of Scholars to the Paul Calabresi K12 program are for a minimum of 2 years but in very rare circumstances individual scholars can be supported for up to 3 years.

Eligible candidates must hold a doctoral degree and must have a University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine faculty appointment at the Assistant Professor level or be eligible for a “Pathway to Independence” Instructor position during the period of support. Graduate students are not eligible but highly competitive postdoctoral fellows interested in translational research can be considered for training within the Paul Calabresi Scholars program.

Expectations of Calabresi K12 Scholars

- Candidates are expected to assemble a multidisciplinary mentoring committee of senior advisors/mentors and meet with their mentors at least twice a year.
- All K12 Scholars are expected to participate in the Cancer Focused K Scholars monthly Seminar Series, as well as other educational seminars, as appropriate to their areas of study.
- Participate in Cancer Center supported K grant writing series or R Studio. A crucial expectation of the awardees is that preliminary data will be developed which will serve as the basis for peer reviewed NIH grant application (or equivalent – ACS, ASCO CDA) in clinical and/or translational research.
- Awardees will be expected to submit reports on a yearly basis or more frequently as requested by Training Program leadership.
- Awardees will be expected to submit NIH K grant or equivalent during the 2nd year of funding

Working Definitions:

- Translational research is defined as research focused on translating interventions/approaches into real world health care settings, communities, and populations at risk;
- Patient oriented research is defined as research conducted with human subjects (or on material of human origin, such as tissues, specimens, and cognitive phenomena) for which an investigator (or colleague) directly interacts with human subjects.

Application process:

1. A full curriculum vitae (not an NIH Biosketch).
2. A one-page description of candidate’s commitment to an academic career focused on cancer research. Include a description of all professional responsibilities and show their relation to the proposed activities on the career award.
3. A one-page detailed, structured training plan to be undertaken during the appointment period.
4. A seven-page research plan including Specific Aims (1 page) and Research Strategy (6 pages),

the latter including Significance, Innovation, Approach, Impact, and Preliminary Studies. In addition (no page restriction), please include Literature Cited and information regarding Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animals as appropriate.

5. A brief letter from the Department Chair or Section Chief addressing:
 - a. The candidate's prospects for development into an independently funded clinical/translational oncologists;
 - b. The Department's assurance that at least 75% of the candidate's time will be protected for research career development and devoted to her/his role as a K12 Scholar (at least 50% for clinicians);
 - c. Names of the proposed mentors who will constitute a multidisciplinary mentoring committee for the Scholar (a minimum of two disciplines must be represented)
6. A brief letter from the candidate's mentors, indicating their commitment to the candidate and endorsement of the candidate's training plan.

Review Criteria

Applications by women, underrepresented minorities, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, and individuals with disabilities remain a high priority for funding. The academic and intellectual background, motivation, and commitment of the candidate to pursue clinical and/or translational research will be evaluated. The criteria for selecting awardees will include assessment of the candidate's potential, the dedication to clinical and/or translational research, and the degree of support from the Department.

Review criteria are as follows:

1. Quality of the candidate with an emphasis on prior productivity and potential for scientific success
2. Scientific merit, originality of the proposal, and translational applicability
3. Applicant's clarity of understanding of translational opportunities in cancer research and potential pitfalls
4. Likelihood of success in obtaining preliminary data for an independent K or R application. A competitive K12 project is expected to lead to an investigator initiated clinical trial but may include discovery science in biomarker development, immunotherapy, epigenetics, chemical biology, cancer metabolism, imaging, Deep Learning and other high priority areas of translational research interest for the NCI.
5. Inclusion of Women and Minorities in clinical and epidemiologic projects

The UChicago Paul Calabresi Scholars program is fully committed to attracting minorities and women to research opportunities and is dedicated to fulfilling all requirements of the guidelines of local and federal agencies regarding recruitment of minorities and women.

Applications Guidelines:

Proposal Format: Arial, 11 pt. font, minimum of 0.5 inch margins. Please follow NIH guidance when completing the necessary proposal materials.

The application does not need to be signed by an authorized official at this time.

The PHS 398 forms can be found at: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>

Submission Process:

- **Deadline:** 11:59:59 pm CST, December 31st, 2021
- **Process:** Submit 1 electronic **PDF version** of the completed grant application by uploading it to the Comprehensive Cancer Center online submission website: <http://administration.uccrc.org/>

Please send questions about the application process to dssmith@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu or the K12 Program Directors: Funmi Olopade, MD (folopade@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu), Sonali Smith, MD, (smsmith@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu) or Peter H. O'Donnell, MD (podonnell@medicine.bsd.uchicago.edu). Funding from the National Cancer Institute (NCI K12 CA139160-11) to The University of Chicago must be cited in relevant publications of successful recipients.