REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Program summary
A collaborative initiative by Weill Cornell Medicine (WCM) and Houston Methodist (HM), the Mentored Clinical Research Training Program (MCRTP) offers physicians a fast-track program to acquire the skillset to develop a clinical research project proposal and embark on a clinical research career pathway. The program is aimed at WCM and HM early career physicians who have a strong interest in clinical research but who currently lack the time to participate in comprehensive clinical research training, such as the certificate and Master’s programs in clinical investigation of Weill Cornell’s Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSC).

The MCRTP begins with an intensive, four-day workshop, to be held from Wednesday-Saturday, July 26-29, 2017 in New York City at the Cornell Club. Drawing on courses adapted from the CTSC, small group sessions, and invited speakers, the workshop will provide participants with an introduction or refresher to the foundations of clinical research, including research design and methodologies, data management and analysis, and the regulatory process (see Supporting Documents for the link to the workshop schedule).

Throughout the year following the workshop, trainees will develop their own clinical research project proposal under mentorship guidance from experienced clinical researchers at WCMC and/or HMH. The aim is to develop an IRB-submission-ready research proposal to be sent to an external funding agency for consideration, although some trainees will be able to move beyond the proposal stage and engage in a research project during the year.

It is the expectation that the trainees will devote at least 10% of their time to the program during the one-year mentored proposal development phase as well as have permission for time away from clinical and other duties for participation in the four-day workshop and two follow-up videoconference meetings. This effort allocation should be described in the Departmental/Divisional commitment letter (see Required Documents). MCRTP program costs are fully covered for the trainees, including flight and hotel expenses related to the workshop for HM participants.

Applicants should seek to identify a mentor prior to applying to the program, if possible. To encourage cross-institutional linkages, HM applicants are strongly encouraged to identify mentors at WCM, and vice versa. It is also feasible to have two mentors, for example one at each institution. The mentor(s) and trainee do not necessarily have to belong to the same
research discipline or have a similar research focus. Applicants can contact MCRTP leadership to request help in identifying possible mentors:

- Scott T. Tagawa, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, WCM (stt2007@med.cornell.edu)
- Timothy Wilkin, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, WCM (tiw2001@med.cornell.edu)
- Timothy B. Boone, MD, PhD, Co-Director, Institute for Academic Medicine, Houston Methodist (TBoone3@houstonmethodist.org)

Eligibility requirements
Those eligible to apply are WCM or HM physicians. This program is primarily intended for junior physicians who are up to seven years post residency/fellowship training when they start the program. However, physicians who are more than seven years post training or who are senior fellows may also apply. Such candidates should provide specific information to address why they are appropriate candidates in light of their career stage, and they will be considered in the context of this issue as well as other qualifications and the applicant pool.

Required documents
Notification of Intent – A completed NoI form is due Wednesday, March 29, 2017. Please email the completed NoI form to Ms. Jackie Samaan at jas2033@med.cornell.edu. Eligible applicants who have fulfilled the requirements of the NoI will be invited to submit a full application. See Supporting Documents for the link to the NoI form.

Full application package – The following documents need to be submitted as part of the full application package by Monday, May 15, 2017:

- Application form
- Applicant’s NIH biosketch/CV
- Applicant’s career development plan (1 page limit):
  - Describe career goals, plan to obtain experience and skills for an independent career in clinical research, and future coursework planned, if any.
- Applicant’s statement of interest (2 page limit):
  - Describe research idea; explain how current or planned clinical or research activities would contribute to realizing this research idea.
- Mentor’s NIH biosketch/CV, including track record of mentorship – if applicable
- Mentor’s statement of support – if applicable (1 page limit):
  - Describe track record with the applicant, information on mentors’ qualifications in the research area, experience in mentoring other investigators, plans to mentor and support the program, details of planned meetings and interactions with the applicant, resources available to the project.
- Departmental/Divisional commitment letter (1 page limit):
  - Describe the applicant’s clinical, research, educational and administrative responsibilities, and assurance that the applicant will have time allocated for participation in the program.
Timeline

Notification of Intent due: Wednesday, March 29, 2017
Invitation for applications: Friday, March 31, 2017
Application due: Monday, May 15, 2017
Award notification date: Wednesday, May 31, 2017
Four-day workshop: Wednesday-Saturday, July 26-29, 2017
One-year mentored program: July 2017 - June 2018
Presentation final proposal: July 2018

Selection criteria

Each application will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Applicant’s personal qualifications, as assessed by the biosketch/CV, and potential for academic success, as assessed by the career development plan.
- The originality, feasibility, clinical importance and scientific merit of the applicant’s research idea, as described in the applicant’s statement of interest, as well as the potential impact of the MCRTP on the career development of the applicant and WCMC/HMH programs.
- The mentor’s experience and plans for supporting the applicant, as assessed by the biosketch/CV, statement of support, and track record of mentorship.

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