CLINICAL RESEARCH FUNDING

Mission

The mission of the GCRC’s MMSCR program is to introduce and support early career development of clinical researchers among medical students. The goals of this program are:

- To develop medical student knowledge of clinical research through exposure to a mentor well versed and experienced in the patient oriented research.
- To enhance the current medical school curriculum through didactic coursework focused upon patient oriented research topics.
- To encourage future physicians to focus on investigator-initiated, externally funded clinical research and become the next generation of clinical researchers.

Students would take time off from medical school (3rd or 4th year) to work on the GCRC for up to one year in a supervised program of clinical research that includes:

- Supervised participation in patient-oriented research
- Didactic coursework related to patient-oriented research
- Acquisition of laboratory skills that can be applied to patient-oriented clinical research efforts.

The GCRC provides the necessary infrastructure to provide examples of the protocol design and the conduct and analysis of clinical research. The GCRC also demonstrates to the medical student the research and communication skills necessary to conduct patient oriented research in an interdisciplinary and collaborative team research setting. The GCRC research environment is team-oriented and highly collaborative, and through this program, will also provide the mentorship and dedicated time of interdisciplinary faculty in order to sustain effective interactions.

Funding

Up to one year of support for up to two medical students. Funding includes:

- Up to $20,000 in salary at 100% effort
- $5,000 for other research-related expenses (travel to research related conferences and seminars, tuition for coursework that is necessary for continuing education in patient-oriented research, supplies, tests, assays, textbooks, and other pre-approved expenses).

Please consult with the GCRC Administrative Manager for expenses allowed under this award.

Eligibility

Student:

- Successful completion of 2nd or 3rd year of medical or dental school
- Preference will be given to Weill Cornell medical students; however, medical students from other schools may apply.
Medical students and mentors must be citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States, or must have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (i.e., in possession of a currently valid Alien Registration Receipt Card I-551, or other legal verification of such status). Individuals on temporary visas are not eligible.

**Mentor:**
- Current or past peer reviewed (federal or foundation) funding in patient-oriented research
- GCRC research currently approved or pending approval
- Documented commitment of time and expertise to assist a medical student with his/her project. It is expected that the mentor(s) will allot adequate effort to supervise the medical student during the year of research on the GCRC. This time commitment and level of expertise should also be discussed in the mentor's letter of support.

If there is more than one mentor for a medical student, a lead mentor must be identified. The lead mentor will be the principal investigator for the grant award and must be affiliated with the GCRC.

**Application Process**

Applications must be submitted by March 1.

The application should include the following:
- Candidate’s CV
- Letter outlining the candidate's goals and career development plan including a clear statement of purpose
- Letter of support from the mentor describing commitment of time, and listing protocol(s) currently utilizing GCRC resources, emphasizing which protocol(s) the MMSCR candidate will be involved with.
- Biosketch and other support for mentor that follows the PHS 398 3-page format
- Copy of each GCRC protocol that the medical student will work on, including IRB approval letter and stamped consent forms. If IRB approval has not yet been granted for one or more of the protocols in which that medical student will participate, evidence that IRB application is in progress should be provided. The medical student can only be a co-investigator on an existing protocol.
- Brief proposal submitted by the mentor, of a specific project to be completed by the student within the one-year timeframe, not to exceed 3 pages in length, to include:
  - Hypothesis and specific aims, significance of research
  - Mentorship Plan
  - Responsibilities of candidate on the project
- Core curriculum including scheduled coursework
  - Training in the protection of human subjects and vertebrate animals
  - Training in the ethical conduct of research
  - Didactic courses (GCRC courses, institutional seminars)
  - Development of basic science skills (supervised training in a laboratory)
Selection Process and Criteria

Applications are reviewed by the Weill-Cornell Student Research Committee, which nominates candidates to the GCRC Advisory Committee (GAC). The GAC reviews the nominated candidates according to the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of the medical student's project and feasibility of completing project within the 1-year timeframe
- Clinical significance and scientific merit of mentor's research
- Qualifications of mentor and availability to work with medical student
- Likelihood that medical student will pursue a clinical research career path that allows him/her to acquire peer-reviewed funding

Written review of applications will be provided to all applicants. Applicants who are not funded may reapply during the next funding cycle by resubmitting a full application packet that includes a response to previous critiques. (The committee can provide this information to the applicant.). **Note:** Since the applicant must be a medical student at the time of application submission, an applicant who applies and is not funded at the end of his/her 4th year of medical school may not reapply for funding.

Evaluation of the Clinical Research Training Plan

Mentored medical students are required to:

- Work closely with his/her mentor and submit a GCRC protocol application and IRB application on which the student will be a co-Principal Investigator with the mentor. The student will have access to the full range of GCRC resources and assistance from GCRC staff. IRB and GAC approval of the protocol is required before the student begins work on the project.
- Meet with his/her mentor at a minimum of three times per week, preferably daily
- Attend all GCRC courses and other available didactic programs pertaining to clinical research.
- Provide periodical progress reports and at the end of the year, if appropriate, publications submitted (in preparation or in press).
- Submit a 1-2 page interim report after 6 months that discusses progress, to evaluate success of program and determine if any additional assistance is needed.
- Submit a final report to the GAC that includes: (1) Project Summary (Title of the project and project period; Trainee's name and mentor's name(s); Specific aims of the project; Introduction and Background; Subjects; Results of the project); (2) Courses attended (Didactic training); (3) Other training; (4) Experience of IRB and GCRC application processes; (5) Description of research experience including: (a) Problems encountered, (b) Changes required in protocol and reasons, (c) Interaction with subjects; (d) Analysis
(e) Interaction with GCRC staff, (f) Interaction with mentor, (g) Personal experience and suggestions, (h) Conclusions.

- Submit at least 1 abstract to a major scientific meeting and/or one paper for a peer-reviewed publication with student listed as first author on the abstract.
- Any publications resulting from the mentor's research that involved the Mentored Medical Student must cite the GCRC grant and MMSCR Program as a source of support, and a reprint of each publication must be submitted to the GCRC.

**Funding Period**

MMSCR funding is for one year beginning July 1. Awardees are not eligible for continued support under this program after completion.

**Applications should be submitted to**

Yuan-Shan Zhu, MD, PhD, Associate Program Director  
Weill Cornell GCRC  
525 East 68th Street, F233/ Box 149  
New York, NY 10021

**For any questions related to the program you may contact:**

Dr. Yuan-Shan Zhu  
212-746-8348  
yuz2002@med.cornell.edu