



Translational Research Scholars Career Development Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Institute for Translational Sciences' Translational Research Scholars Career Development (ITS Scholars) Program is an early mentored research career development program and a component of the UTMB Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) from NIH. The program aims to provide a mentored research experience leading to external funding of a research program in clinical and/or translational research relevant to the mission of the ITS, which is the home of the CTSA at UTMB.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Financial support of the Scholar is shared between the ITS and the respective department or school.

- The Scholars award provides salary support for at least 75% of a university base salary, up to \$115,000 per year (plus fringe benefits), for up to three years. During the time of a Scholar's salary-supported tenure, additional support provided will include up to \$5,000 for research supplies and up to \$900 for GSBS tuition and fees for planned formal coursework. Up to \$2,500 for travel will be provided annually for mandatory attendance at the national clinical and translational research (ACTS) conference in Washington, D.C., usually held in April.
- The Scholar's department or school provides 25% of a university base salary, up to \$115,000 per year (plus fringe benefits), and may support additional base or non-base salary above that amount.

Each Scholar develops an individual development plan (IDP) with the primary mentor, which outlines plans for educational activities, research projects, funding initiatives, and publications.

Scholars are required to participate in the ITS's Translational Research Scholars Program (TRSP), which is a series of seminars and workshops for junior faculty members preparing initial grant applications. Additional members of TRSP, typically as many as 20 people, are supported by other sources such as other K12 programs or departmental funds. Many members of TRSP who do not have K12 support are strong candidates for KL2 support and are encouraged to apply.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Candidates for the ITS Scholars program are early-stage investigators with a doctoral degree and full-time appointments at UTMB at the level of Assistant Professor. Those completing postdoctoral training with a departmental commitment of a faculty position of Assistant Professor by September 1, 2017 are eligible to apply. **The faculty appointment must not be contingent upon receipt of the KL2 Scholarship award.** ITS Scholars may have primary faculty appointments from any UTMB departments and schools representing translational science, including all basic biomedical sciences, all specialties of medicine and surgery, nursing, psychology and other behavioral sciences, dentistry, pharmacy, pharmacology, epidemiology, biostatistics, allied health sciences, health services research, biomedical engineering, and other health professions.
- All applicants must provide evidence of strong academic achievement and scholarship, as well as personal attributes such as high motivation and integrity. This award is not intended for individuals making mid-career changes into clinical and translational research.
- Applicants must be able to commit at least 75% of their full-time professional effort to this Career Development Program and its related clinical and translational science research activities. 50% effort may be permitted for surgeons.

- Applicants must be native or naturalized US citizens. If naturalized US citizens, they must have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence and possess an Alien Registration Receipt (Green) Card (I-151 or I-155) or some other verification of legal admission as a permanent resident. Applications will be accepted from persons with pending residence application, but **the required residency status must be in place before receipt of the award.** Individuals on temporary or student visas are not eligible.
- Applicants must be members of an existing ITS Multidisciplinary Translational Team (MTT), as listed below:
 - Aging Muscle and Sarcopenia
 - Burns Injury and Hypermetabolic Response
 - Clinical Epidemiology of Estrogens in Asthma
 - Development of Highly Sensitive and Specific Acute Diagnostic Tests and Prognostic Markers for Vector-Borne Obligately Intracellular Bacterial Infections
 - Development of Novel Therapies for Advanced Colorectal Cancer
 - Gut Inflammation
 - Hepatitis C - Hepatocellular Carcinoma
 - Novel Biomarkers and Therapeutics in Addiction and Impulse Control Disorders
 - Novel Point-of-Care Diagnostic Tests for Neglected Parasitic Diseases
 - Obesity and its Metabolic Complications
 - Patient-Centered Outcomes Research (PCOR) in Men's Health
 - Pediatric Respiratory Infections - Bronchiolitis
 - Phenotypes of Severe Asthma
 - Reproductive Women's Health
 - Tumor Microenvironment and Cancer Immunotherapy
- Applicants may not simultaneously submit or have pending an application for any other PHS mentored career development award (e.g., K07, K08, K22, K23) that duplicates any of the award components. Applicants must not be, or have been, a Principal Investigator on a R01 award or a Project Leader on a subproject of a Program Project (P01), Center (P50, P60, U54) or other equivalent non-PHS peer reviewed research grants that are over \$100,000 direct costs per year, or a Principal Investigator of a mentored research career development (K-series) grant. Applicants may have received prior support on an Institutional or Individual NRSA grant (e.g., F31, F32 or T32, TL1) or NIH small grant (R03, R21, R43, R44).
- A mandatory letter of intent (LOI) must be received by **August 4, 2017**. This enables the program to anticipate the number of applicants and provide early advice to potential applicants and their departments. It also ensures commitment of the applicant toward the KL2 Scholars Program. For example, after the LOI is submitted, applicants may need time to discuss their need for adequate protected time with their departments before preparing a final application, which is due on **September 8, 2017**.

APPLICATION TIMELINE:

- Mandatory Letter of Intent to Apply is due on **August 4, 2017**.
- Final completed applications are due on **September 8, 2017**.
- Review of applications submitted by the September 8 deadline will be completed by the end of September 2017.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

Application materials must be submitted to the ITS Education Office, via either of the following methods:

- Email: jeruizbe@utmb.edu with subject line: **ITS Scholar Application**
- Campus mail: ITS Education Office, Route 0342

Questions regarding application submission may be directed to the ITS Education Office via email (jeruizbe@utmb.edu) or phone (409-772-1484).

APPLICATION INFORMATION AND FORM REQUIREMENTS

- **Face Page.** Must follow the linked template and include: applicant's name, school/department, contact information, mentor contact information, citizenship status, research area of interest, and membership in multidisciplinary team.
- **Abstract.** A well-articulated summary of your research interests and plans. This should include a description of the project that will be the focus of a competitive grant application, and the type of application planned.
- **Applicant's NIH 2017 Biosketch** and **Other Support Form**, following the hyperlinked templates.
- **Narrative.** Up to 10 pages total; 11 point Arial font. Summarize your career goals, career development plan, reasons for applying to the ITS Scholar Program, and the nature of your planned research during and after the period of KL2 support. More details may be found in [NIH parent application information](#) for K23, K08 or other Mentored career development "K" applications. The Narrative should include three sections:
 1. **Candidate.** Describe your commitment to a career in clinical and/or translational research, and how and why a multidisciplinary team-based training program is important for your future research career. This section should address:
 - The applicant's background, interest in and commitment to a clinical/translational science career, participation in a multidisciplinary translational team.
 - The applicant's potential to develop into a successful independent investigator as evidenced by research training and experience, scholarships, publications and presentations, and previous grant awards. (Separate letters of recommendation submitted with the application should complement this section.)
 - The basis for selection of the mentor and how s/he will contribute to the planned research and career development of the applicant.
 - Willingness to commit to at least 75% professional effort towards the objectives of the ITS Scholars Program; a description of additional professional efforts should also be provided. Letters of support should further endorse these time commitments.
 - Plans to develop and submit an extramural application for career development or other research support while in the ITS Scholars Program. Timelines toward one or more specific grant applications should be described.
 2. **Identification of MTT Membership.** Identify and describe your membership and relationship with at least one ITS MTT. You should have one primary MTT with which you are a member, within which your KL2 Scholarship Primary Mentor is also a member and active participant.
 - If you had had special responsibilities or roles within that MTT, please provide a brief description of that/those roles. For example, if you have been an MTT Project Manager, please describe the project with which you have been working, and provide some details regarding its duration, productivity, and success with translational research.
 - If you are involved with other MTTs, please list and provide some details regarding your roles/involvement and productivity with those MTTs.
 - If you are a new member of an MTT, identify the MTT, and then briefly describe (in bullet point fashion, with brief explanatory sentences) the role(s), responsibilities, and project(s) that you and your primary mentor have developed, as part of your translational research training and career plan, which is described in further detail in the "Individual Development Plan (IDP)" section below.

3. **Research Plan.** Describe the proposed clinical/translational research project/plan. The Research Plan must include separate sections on:

- Specific Aims (one page)
 - Research Strategy
 - Significance
 - Innovation
 - Approach (including Hypotheses, Rationale, Preliminary Studies, Approach, Methods, and Analyses)
 - Cited Literature (this will not be included in the page limitation)
- **Individual Development Plan (IDP).** Utilizing the [ITS KL2 IDP template](#), describe objectives of your immediate research interests/goals and how and why the ITS Scholars Program is important to and will help achieve these objectives as well as future research career success. This may include planned participation in research team and laboratory meetings, journal clubs, etc.; attendance at research conferences; formal coursework on clinical and translational science topics; participation in additional training experiences in clinical or basic science; or informal educational activities such as short courses or workshops, including training in the responsible conduct of research. IMPORTANT: As noted above, while the narrative description is important, to enhance reviewer understanding of your plan, you are required to include a timeline of plans for:
- The intended actions, activities, and accomplishments you intend to pursue over the coming 2 year period. This should include research project execution, data reduction, publication, national meeting presentations, and development of preliminary data for grant submission.
 - The development and submission of an extramural application for continued career development or other research support, within and beyond the KL2 Scholars Program.
- **Three Letters of Recommendation.**
1. **A letter of recommendation from the primary research mentor and any additional co-mentors** addressing:
 - the applicant's:
 - educational background, research skills, accomplishments and potential for a career in multidisciplinary clinical and/or translational research
 - potential as a future independent investigator
 - capability in pursuing the research project described in the application
 - career development plan towards achieving the applicant's career goals and objectives
 - the mentor's:
 - willingness to serve as the applicant's mentor in research and career development as described in the proposal
 - qualifications in the proposed research area
 - previous experience as a research mentor, including a description of the nature and extent of mentoring experience with post-doctoral trainees and junior faculty
 - supporting information from the mentor, including:
 - Their [NIH SF424 \(R&R\) Biosketch](#)
 - [PHS 398 Other Support form](#)
 - [PHS Data Table 5A – Predoctoral Trainees of Participating Faculty Members](#) [see pages 12-13 of linked instructions]
 - [PHS Data Table 5B – Postdoctoral Trainees of Participating Faculty Members](#) [see pages 14-15 of linked instructions]

2. **Two additional letters of recommendation**, addressing, at a minimum, the relationship to the applicant (the position from which they base their knowledge of the applicant), and the applicant's background and potential for a career as an independent research investigator in clinical and/or translational science.
 - One of these letters must be from the appropriate department chair and guarantee at least 75% protected time for the applicant to pursue the educational and research goals of the program.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION OF KL2 SCHOLARS

The ITS Scholar Review Committee will evaluate applications for scientific and technical merit. All applications will be scored on the [1-9 scale used by the NIH Center for Scientific Review](#).

Scholars will be selected with consideration of the following factors:

- Quality and appropriateness of the applicant for this program
 - Quality of applicant's academic, research, and publication/presentation record
 - Potential to become a successful investigator in multidisciplinary clinical/translational research
 - Commitment to a career in translational science
 - Potential to benefit from a multidisciplinary mentored research training program, including membership and interactivity/collaboration within a multidisciplinary translational team (MTT)
- Quality and appropriateness of the career development plans
 - Consistency of applicant's career goals with prior and current research experience
 - Likelihood that career plans contribute substantially to the applicant's scientific and leadership development and necessary skill acquisition to conduct multidisciplinary clinical/translational investigations
 - Evidence that the ITS Scholar program will facilitate the applicant's long-term research and career development goals in clinical and translational science
- Quality of the proposed research
 - Scientific and technical merit of the research question, experimental design and methodology
 - Relevance of proposed research to the applicant's career objectives
 - Appropriateness of the research plan to the stage of research development and as a vehicle for developing the research skills as described in the career development plan
- Identification of membership in an ITS MTT
- Effectiveness and track record of the mentor, any secondary mentors, and the team-based research environment; and the mentor's proposed role in providing guidance and advice to candidate during and after the period of KL2 support

ITS SCHOLAR PROGRAM APPLICATION TIPS

- Complete the Application Face Page, Abstract, Biosketch, Other Support Form, Narrative, and Individual Development Plan in accordance with the listed guidelines and/or templates.
- Proofread your application thoroughly for accuracy and completeness.
- Apply as early as possible, and encourage those providing letters of recommendation and supporting information to submit their letters promptly so that there are no delays in the application review process.