

International Clinical Research Fellows (ICRF) Program

Request for Applications (updated March 12th, 2008; original release date October 24, 2007)

Amendment:

The NIH/Fogarty International Clinical Research Scholars (FICRS) Support Center at Vanderbilt University/ Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is pleased to announce a new one year clinical research training program for US citizens or permanent residents *in residency programs, post-residency clinical fellowships or in other health-related post-doctoral programs*. This new program is sponsored by the Fogarty International Center and several collaborating institutes and centers at the National Institutes of Health and managed by Vanderbilt University, with fiscal support from the Office of AIDS Research, National Cancer Institute, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and the National Eye Institute.

The ICRF Program supports one year of mentored clinical research in a developing country setting. Definitions of developing countries are those designated by the World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/classgroups.htm>) as low income, lower middle, or upper middle income. High income nations are not eligible as training sites. Applicants for the fellowship must develop a collaborative research proposal with an eligible institution overseas.

The proposed research must be clinical research related to:

- ***oncology, including radiation therapy, physiology, and other cancer-related issues***
- ***diseases of the heart, blood vessels, lung, and blood; blood resources; and sleep disorders***
- ***ophthalmology and eye-health related issues***
or
- ***HIV/AIDS-related research***

The Fellowship is an opportunity designed to immerse medical professionals and health scientists in training in issues of global health and international collaboration. Applicants must be citizens or permanent residents of the US. In addition, each field site will select a local citizen who will be a developing country counterpart Fellow (details below).

The ICRF is a post-doctoral program and is analogous to the Fogarty International Scholars program for health science students (pre-doctoral). Information on the Scholars program for health science students (rather than the post-doctoral or clinical Fellow focus of ICRF) can be found through Vanderbilt's management partner, the Association of American Medical Colleges: <http://www.aamc.org/students/medstudents/overseasfellowship/start.htm>.

Purpose of the 2008-2009 ICRF

The purpose of this program is to foster members of the next generation of clinical investigators concentrating on diseases in developing countries and to build international health research capacity in the developing world.

Mechanisms of Support

- The stipend for the U.S. Fellow is \$45,000/year to be paid monthly by Vanderbilt University.
- Additional funds are provided to the Fellow's field site to cover miscellaneous project-related costs and travel. This includes:
 - overseas travel for the Fellow up to \$5000.
 - pre-travel costs such as vaccinations and malaria prophylaxis medications up to \$1000.
 - visa and passport costs up to \$300.
 - miscellaneous transportation/arrival costs such as taxi up to \$200.
 - additional project-related costs, with justification
 - Expenses and stipend for the in-country Fellow selected by the in-country site mentor, with the concurrence of the administrative leadership of the in-country institution. The stipend for this Fellow will depend on prevailing counterpart salaries in the specific country. The overseas Fellow is selected only after the US Fellow is selected.
- Each overseas field site will receive \$5,000 for administration and infrastructure costs. No further administrative costs (i.e., "indirect" costs) are provided to either the site or the American or in-country counterpart Fellow.
- Health insurance reimbursement up to \$5,000 or acceptance of the standard Vanderbilt health insurance packages for American Fellows.
- Health insurance reimbursement of the in-country institution for in-country counterpart Fellows while attending the July orientation in the U.S.
- NOTE: Economy-class travel to July orientation will be supported by the Vanderbilt-AAMC Support Center separately for Fellows, as well as for the annual meeting in the year after the fellowship (likely March 2010) for selected Fellows.

Program Timeline

- I. **January 4th- April 30th:** Applicants will submit their completed applications on a rolling basis. Finalists will be contacted for a phone interview. Fellows will be selected and all applicants notified by mid-May
- II. **July 6-22, 2008:** Fellows will participate in a 2 ½ week orientation on the NIH campus, followed by 2-3 days at the US academic or government affiliate of the overseas research site, if any.
- III. **August 1, 2008:** ICRF awardees will begin their overseas work on-site and will be there for at least 10 months.
- IV. **After completion of the research training year:** ICRF fellows will return to Bethesda, MD, to present their findings at a Fogarty Trainee Conference in March 2010. In addition, the completion of a brief questionnaire (anticipated to be approximately four questions) about their current career decisions plus a copy of their current curriculum vitae (including training and research experiences, awards, publications, and employment history) will be required every two years for the next 20 years.

Eligibility

- Citizens of the United States or its territories or possessions, or persons lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. Resident aliens must include their green card number in their application.
- Persons eligible for this award must be engaged in clinical or research resident programs and fellowships, or persons with doctoral degrees in other health-related disciplines (human or animal) who are currently post- doctoral fellows and qualified to do clinically-related research.
- Overseas counterpart Fellows need not be selected at this time, but overseas sites must provide a plan within their Site Eligibility Form to select these Fellows through an open and transparent competitive process by May 10, 2008. Only persons with a prior health science doctoral or professional degree at the doctoral level are eligible.

Eligible Sites

Applicants must partner with an eligible developing country site willing to host and mentor the candidate during their research. The eligible site must further be willing to select a local national to also become a ICRF for the same year. To be eligible to host a fellow a site must demonstrate:

- Federal Wide Assurance for Institutional Review Board purposes
- Substantial ongoing research support from recognized funders or PEPFAR
- Peer review clinical research at the foreign site
- Prior experience in the supervision of students/fellows/post-docs

In addition, sites wishing to host a fellows should be able to demonstrate:

- Ability to aid in logistic planning such as housing, transportation, etc

- Considerable commitment to the mentoring of the fellow
- An open and competitive process to find an in-country fellow counterpart

Eligible sites are expected to provide all the information requested in the attached Site Eligibility Form. However, any site meeting the eligibility criteria may serve as an overseas host.

Submitting an Application

Application forms are currently available (see below) and applications are due electronically to fellows2008@fogartyscholars.org on a rolling basis until **April 30th, 2008**.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit the application electronically as a PDF (preferred) or as a Rich Text File or MS Word® file.

Use Arial 12 point for all text, figures, tables and figure legends. If applications do not adhere to this requirement, the application will be returned without review.

Use PHS 398 Form Pages (interim revision 4/06, available at <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>).

Applications should consist of the following:

- I. Cover Page (unique page, so do not use PHS 398 for the cover) including the following: the title of the research proposal (no more than 80 letters and spaces), name and contact details (address, email, FAX, phone) for the prospective Fellow and prospective host institution business contact (i.e., the individual with authority to receive the Vanderbilt subcontract). Common abbreviations such as HIV, AIDS, PEPFAR, TB, or STI are acceptable in the proposal title.
- II. Abstract (maximum 250 words), Key Personnel (including fellow, overseas mentor (up to two), US mentor (if any), and Project Site(s).
- III. Table of Contents.
- IV. Biographical Sketches— limit 3 persons including applicant. 2 page limit for prospective Fellows, 4 page limit per mentor including current funding.
- V. Brief site budget and justification (2 page limit) for the funds that will be in the site's purview (See bullet on "Additional funds are provided..." above). Indicate briefly how the research work will be supported.
- VI. Research Plan and Career Statement- maximum 2,500 words.
- VII. References limited to 1 page, *JAMA*-style.
- VIII. Two letters of support from mentors, no more than two pages each.
- IX. Site Eligibility Form (attached below). This includes evidence of site eligibility (U.S. Federal funding for clinical/biomedical research), provision of in-

country mentoring and arrangements for Fellow, and indication of commitment to identify an in-country counterpart Fellow.

REVIEW PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed for merit based on the following six criteria:

- i. Relevance to HIV/AIDS related research
- ii. Indication of how the future plans of a candidate relate to the ICRF year.
- iii. Scientific merit of the research
- iv. Qualifications and experience of the candidate and in-country mentor
- v. Originality and feasibility of the research within an 11 month time frame
- vi. Evidence of eligibility, appropriateness, and commitment of site to Fellow.

A Fogarty International Center-vetted Fellowship review committee will evaluate all complete applications. No specific research plan need be provided for the counterpart in-country Fellow, aside from a description of how this counterpart in-country Fellow will be chosen and what a few of the options might be, in brief outline.

Finalists will be contacted for phone interviews. At these interviews candidates will be expected to demonstrate:

- i. Ability to defend the research proposal in the face of queries.
- ii. Ability to articulate a motive for overseas work.
- iii. Clarity as to utility of the year abroad to the parent Fellowship training experience.
- iv. Likely ability to communicate US NIH research ethics values in an international setting.
- v. Cultural sensitivity for the proposed work environment.

Please submit one electronic copy as a PDF or Microsoft Word file to fellows2008@fogartyscholars.org.

It is expected that all candidates will submit electronically. However, if a candidate is unable to submit the application electronically, please contact Cat Lem, Program Coordinator, to make alternative arrangements.

Where to Direct Inquiries

Questions about the program, including issues regarding the eligibility of a given individual or suitability of a proposed research topic may be directed to: fellows2008Inquiries@fogartyscholars.org. All general-interest queries will be posted to the web site and answered therein. Please read "Frequently Asked Questions for the FICRF Program" on the following web site: <http://www.fogartyscholars.org/program/ficrf/frequently-asked-questions> to see if a given query has already been addressed.

Queries by telephone to the Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health will be abstracted such that questions and answers are also summarized on the web site. You may contact the following resource persons for this solicitation:

Catherine Lem, MPH, Program Manager, FICRS/FICRF

Tel: (615) 343-3555

Holly Cassell, MPH, Senior Program Manager, Institute for Global Health

Tel: (615) 343-2542

Sten H. Vermund, MD, PhD, PI for FICRS Support Center @ Vanderbilt/AAMC

Tel: (615) 322-9374

ICRF Eligible Site Application Form**Maximum 10 pages using this template****1. Core Information**

City, Country:
Institution in Country:
Affiliated/Collaborating Institution in USA, if any:
Responsible Administrator Name & Contact (for receipt of funds):
Website of Foreign Institution, if any:

2. International Program Director Information (remember to include NIH-style Biosketch, not included in 10 page limit):

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Fax:
E-mail:
Website of Research Program:

3. USA Affiliated/Collaborating Program Director (if any) Information (remember to include NIH-style Biosketch, not included in 10 page limit):

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Fax:
E-mail:
Website of Research Program:

4. **List Graduate Level Training Program or other educational resources and scientific strengths of the host institution and other facilities in the community that would enhance the experience of the fellow.**
5. **Describe the experience of the international site in hosting visiting trainee researchers over the past 3 years. (Briefly describe the number and types of activities.)**
6. **List US Federal-funded Research Projects that support research training opportunities for the fellows at or involving the Foreign Site. You may optionally list non-US Federally-funded Research Projects.**

Project I:

Title:
Principal Investigator:
Funding Sources:
Project Description:

Project II:

Title:
Principal Investigator:
Funding Sources:
Project Description:

(For additional projects, please copy above topics and attach)

7. Ethical Review Documentation Related to Project I:

Foreign Federal Wide Assurance Number:
US-Institution (if any) Federal Wide Assurance Number:
Foreign IRB Name and Number:
US-Institution (if any) IRB Name and Number:

- 8. Please list additional research or training activities from any funding source that you think would offer strong research training opportunities for the fellows at or involving the Foreign Site in the future; please attach additional pages if necessary. Also highlight any opportunities in *non-communicable diseases* so that we may include suitable sites for future year funding, should it become available.**

Project I:

Title:
Principal Investigator:
Funding Sources:
Project Description:

(For additional projects, please copy above topics and attach)

- 9. Please list other research or training activities that would enhance the experience of the Fellows:**

- 10. Please describe a plan for mentoring a fellow at this site (e.g. percent work time available for mentoring a fellow, involvement of the mentor in the research project, prior relationship between fellow and site mentor). For the US Fellow, do not highlight the specifics of the research itself, as this is articulated by the Fellow's application; however, indicate the process whereby a topic will be selected for the Foreign counterpart Fellow (also see #12 below):**

11. Infrastructure for U.S. Student Abroad Living:

Housing:

Although the Fellow is responsible for paying for housing through his/her fellowship stipend, sites are expected to help Fellow arrange for housing at the foreign site. Please describe the typical housing for a US visitor for 11 months, distance from the research facility, modes of transportation available, and an estimate of monthly costs (in USD) for room and board.

Health-related Issues for Fellows Abroad:

Health Care Availability:
Immunization Needs:
Medical Needs (e.g. malaria prophylaxis):

Please describe below any local considerations or issues of safety that might affect the Fellows' health or welfare during their research stint at the foreign site:

Please describe below any other features of the foreign site that should be considered in the suitability of this site vis-à-vis hosting Fellows:

12 In addition to providing support for the US fellow, the FICRF program will provide support to one fellow from the host institution for one year clinical research in the host country. To participate in the FICRF program a site must provide a competitive, transparent system to choose an appropriate trainee to be 'twinned' with the US trainee.

Describe a competitive, open system to match US fellows with similar level trainee/researchers from the international site.