

Call for Applications: Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists at Duke

Junior faculty members often face the challenge of working to establish academic careers while simultaneously managing significant caregiving responsibilities. These competing demands make it challenging to succeed in an increasingly competitive grant funding environment, and indeed can be an obstacle to retaining physician scientists at research-intensive academic institutions. To support junior faculty at this critical tipping point in their careers, the Office for Faculty and Office for Physician Scientist Development are pleased to offer the Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists at Duke. Supported by awards from the American Heart Association, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and Dean Mary Klotman, the Fund provides supplements of up to \$30,000-\$50,000 per year to physician-scientists with significant caregiving responsibilities. Exact award amounts will be dependent upon the availability of funds in a given year.

Applications are now being accepted for the funding period July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.

Applications are due May 15, 2023. A brief, no-commitment, e-mail stating your intent to apply is due May 1.

Eligibility

Supplemental funds are available to physician-scientists, regardless of gender, who:

- Demonstrate a compelling need for the supplement that is related to being a caregiver; typically, this would be childcare, partner care, and/or eldercare.
- Are regular rank faculty members at the Medical Instructor or Assistant Professor level. Associate Professors are eligible only if they have been at the position for one year or less. Applicants must be full-time faculty members with a primary faculty appointment in a School of Medicine department.
- Hold an MD, PhD or DO degree
- Have a career development award or research project grant with annual direct costs sufficient to provide both research and salary support. The FRCS awards are intended to supplement research projects; eligible faculty members must have active support for their research projects.
- Have at least 50% protected time for research
- Show evidence of strong research training and productivity
- Are conducting an original and rigorous research project that has the potential to address a health issue that poses a significant clinical burden (with considerable morbidity and mortality, whether it is a rare or common condition).
- This program is funded by distinct grants. Applications selected for funding may be supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation FRCS grant, which may **not** support animal research, or by the American Heart Association COVID-19 FRCS grant, which supports **only** individuals with caregiving responsibilities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic—and **may** be used to support animal research. Selections for funding will take into consideration available funds from each grant and requirements for eligibility for each. Projects funded through DDCF funds must meet the definition of clinical research below*.

**Definition of Clinical Research: For research projects supported in connection with the Fund, clinical research is defined as the scientific investigation of the etiology, prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of human disease using human subjects, human populations, or materials of human origin. Included in the definition are studies that utilize tissues or pathogens only if they can be linked to a patient.*

Possible Uses of Funds:

Applicants may request funds to be used in a variety of ways, for example:

- 1) Research support personnel* (e.g. clinical research coordinator or technician)

- 2) data extraction and analysis
- 3) image processing and analysis
- 4) assisting in grant or manuscript preparation
- 5) bio statistical support
- 6) buyout of clinical time
- 7) other “extra hands” support as proposed by the applicant

Funds cannot be used for research costs such as supplies or sequencing costs that would not directly help Scholars reclaim their research time. Such costs would be expected to be covered by a Scholar’s main research grant.

*Applicants conducting clinical research are strongly encouraged to consult the [Duke Office of Clinical Research](#) (DOCR) prior to application to discuss possible uses of funds. DOCR provides support for personnel performing clinical research across the Duke organization and offers a wide array of services within that spectrum. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to consult with DOCR about potential availability of resources for this program.

Application and Selection Process

Applications are online and consist of the following components:

- Application form including project title, description (<200 words), contact information and % professional effort devoted to research.
- Statement of individual need, including a description of caregiving responsibilities and how an award from the Fund would improve the balance between caregiving and professional responsibilities. Details such as the number of children/parents requiring care, any special needs of children/family members, spouse/partner career if applicable, proximity to family support, cultural expectations from family, and a clear explanation of how funds will benefit the faculty member will be helpful for the review.
- Research plan in the NIH format of Specific Aims, Significance, Innovation and Approach (no more than 3 pages, including figures, images, tables, etc., but excluding references), written so that it can be readily understood by reviewers outside of the applicant’s research field. The research plan should give reviewers an understanding of the research that will benefit from this award.
- NIH-style Biosketch (5-page limit) that contains information about the training history, faculty position, a personal statement, scientific impact of research to date, publications and current research support (source, type, summary of goals, PI and role) as well as the amount of current research support and the individual’s percent effort dedicated to each award listed.
- Proposed budget for the supplemental award, using the NIH detailed budget format. Budgets must outline direct costs and include a budget justification for each requested person or item. The budget should be page 1, and the justification should follow. Requests for salary support must include fringe benefits. The total request (including fringe) must not exceed \$50,000/year. More guidance on the NIH detailed budget is available at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/developing_budget.htm. A sample budget justification is available for download [here](#). If a particular section does not apply to your application, please leave this section blank on your budget.
- Letter of support from the individual’s Department Chair, Division Chief, or Center/Institute Director. Departmental support for the faculty member is expected, and applications should outline planned matching funds and any additional support being provided to the faculty member. Matching funds will be reviewed favorably by the selection committee. The letter should identify the applicant’s primary research mentor/mentoring team.

Please e-mail the Office of Physician-Scientist Development no later than May 1, 2023 to let us know if you plan to apply. This e-mail can be very brief and will help us gauge resources needed to facilitate the selection process.

[Click here to access the online application now](#). If you already have a MyResearchProposal account, please login with your username and password and type “SOM” as the access code in the upper right-hand corner. Please do NOT create a new account. For further instructions about how to setup your account and begin your application, [click here](#). For any questions or concerns with the MyResearchProposal system, please contact Anita Grissom at 919-668-4774 or

via email at myresearchproposal@duke.edu.

Selection Criteria

Fund applications will be competitively selected through an internal peer-review process. Applications will be evaluated based on the following selection criteria:

1. Quality of the research plan
2. Strength of letter of support
3. Evidence of strong training and productivity
4. Personal need

Applicants should clearly outline plans to begin using awarded funds on or close to July 1, 2023.

Award Administration

Applicants will be notified of their funding status no later than June 15. Funds will become available July 1. Awards will be for 1 year. Currently funded scholars who are interested in applying for a no-cost extension or renewal of their award should contact their program administrator for detailed instructions ([Jessica Schonberg](#) or [Terri Taylor](#)). Grants awarded this cycle will not be eligible for renewal.

Selected Fund scholars will be connected with a variety of mentoring resources, including up to 4 executive coaching sessions, priority registration for popular faculty development programs, and mentoring meetings with Associate Dean for Physician-Scientist Development Rasheed Gbadegesin, MD, MBBS. All scholars and applicants will be encouraged to enroll in the Office of Physician-Scientist Development Scholars program to receive concierge mentoring services and access to an array of professional development seminars. The School of Medicine's Office of Research Development will prioritize Fund scholars for editing and critical review of their external grant application materials 5-6 weeks in advance of submission.

Questions?

Please contact the School of Medicine Office of Physician-Scientist Development at opsd@dm.duke.edu or 919.668.5028.