

PHYSICIAN-SCIENTIST INSTITUTIONAL AWARD

**Increasing Opportunities for the M.D.
Interested in a Research Career**

Planning Grant Proposal Deadline:

September 28, 2017

BURROUGHS
WELLCOME
FUND 

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KEY DATES

Grant application portal available	June 20, 2017
Planning grant proposal applications due	September 28, 2017, 4:00 p.m. (Eastern)
Planning grant award notification	November 1, 2017
Full proposal deadline	April 3, 2018

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund announces a new award program providing support to institutional programs designed to increase the number of M.D.'s who enter careers in research (physician-scientists). Initially the Fund will provide \$30,000 for each of 20-25 institutions to develop full proposals for the award. Up to 10 institutions will receive awards of \$2.5 million (\$500,000/year over 5 years) to institute their proposed activities.

BACKGROUND

Because of the small participation of physicians in the biomedical research environment (less than 1.5% of total U.S. M.D.'s) and the aging of these investigators, new opportunities to attract, engage, and train M.D.'s need to be developed. M.D./Ph.D. programs successfully train about 600 individuals annually, but few of the approximately 20,000 remaining medical school graduates pursue research careers. One source of potential physician researchers is the "late bloomer" who has gone through postgraduate clinical training and then decides on a research career. Some medical schools offer research residencies and fellowships that range from a few months to 3 years or more to train these M.D.'s, but even with these programs fewer than 1.5% of physicians nationwide are research scientists.

This is not a new situation; James Wyngaarden drew attention to it in 1979 when he labeled physician-scientists an "endangered species." Subsequently many

have highlighted the low and dwindling number of M.D.'s conducting research. In 2009, a book edited by Andrew Schafer and entitled *The Vanishing Physician-Scientist?* examined the issue. Most recently an editorial entitled "Dangerous cut" in *Nature* (544:393-394 (2017)) drew particular attention to the decline in surgeon-scientists.

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund considers the low and declining number of physician-scientists a serious issue if we are to improve the health of all citizens. The personal experience of caring for patients can bring a different and novel perspective to the discovery of new treatments of diseases. Physicians, either individually or as part of a team, are important in advancing the science of medicine and must be involved and engaged in the alleviation of disease and human suffering not just through care, but also through research.

PROGRAM

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund is requesting proposals from U.S. or Canadian degree granting institutions or consortia of institutions to engage and train talented individuals with only M.D. degrees to enter careers in biomedical research.

To support and encourage ideas to tap this large group of potential researchers, the Fund will initially provide pilot funding of up to \$30,000 to institutions to be used to develop innovative proposals as to how they would increase the number of M.D.'s entering research. The institutions will be selected to receive these planning grants based on a cover letter, in a PDF of no more than four pages, demonstrating institutional support for the project and a summary of their initial ideas for a program that outlines their plans of how and who they will engage to develop a full proposal. A brief budget of how the up to \$30,000 will be expended and NIH biosketches of key personnel will also need to be included.

The institutions that receive the planning grants will then develop full proposals that outline their ideas and plans as to how they would utilize a \$2.5 million grant from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund to increase the number of M.D.'s who enter research. These full proposals will include the creative ideas that will make this program successful, the structure of the program, its underlying philosophy, support from the submitting institution, and how outcomes will be measured over time.

A Burroughs Wellcome Fund advisory committee will review these proposals and select several of them to receive the large institutional grants (\$2,500,000 in five \$500,000 annual installments) to provide opportunities and support for M.D.'s to pursue the training and preparation that will enable them to begin (and we hope continue) successful research careers. In the initial round of awards three or four institutions will be funded. If there is an indication of continued interest and the existence of additional creative

and novel approaches to increasing the number of M.D. physician scientists, subsequent funding cycles will be conducted that will provide up to a maximum of ten total awards. It is expected that institutions will provide programs that not only train researchers, but also assist them in launching their research careers through counseling and preparation in grant writing and laboratory leadership.

Careful evaluations of these funded programs, including extensive feedback from the M.D. researchers and their mentors, will be gathered to provide information about how the programs might be strengthened and expanded both within the institutions participating and in other institutions. These insights will be extensively disseminated in both a written form and at meetings. We hope that these positive strategies will be adopted at a number of medical schools, resulting in an increase in the number of physician scientists.

Selections Factors for the Planning Grant:

- It will be important to focus program proposals on how M.D.-only researchers are engaged and trained.
- A plan for continuation after BWF funding ends will need to be detailed.
- The program's plan for recruitment of student participants will be an important aspect of any submission.
- Institutional commitments will need to be outlined.

Proposal Deadlines:

The planning grant will be due on September 28, 2017.

Full proposals from the recipients of the \$30,000 planning grants will be due on April 3, 2018.

TERMS OF THE GRANT/USE OF FUNDS

Indirect costs may not be charged against BWF grants.

Awards are made to degree-granting institutions in the U.S. or Canada. The institutions are responsible for disbursing the funds and for maintaining adequate supporting records and receipts of expenditures. BWF does not support indirect costs. Salaries of support personnel and materials appropriate to administering the program should be included as direct costs.

Institutions must provide a progress and financial report within 30 days of the conclusion of the grant. Both reports must be submitted on forms that are on our website at www.bwffund.org. Continued funding will depend on the favorable review of these reports by BWF and its program advisory committee.

Any unused funds (greater than \$500) held by institutions when awards expire or are terminated must be returned to BWF, unless BWF has granted prior permission to retain the funds.

Scientific publications or presentations that result from these awards must acknowledge the institution's receipt of a Burroughs Wellcome Fund Physician-Scientist Institutional Planning Grant. Copies of journal articles and other publications should be sent to BWF along with the annual progress report.

BWF will not retain any rights to published results or patents that result from the research. Awarded programs should follow their institutions' patent, copyright, and intellectual property policies regarding discoveries that result from research conducted under these awards.

BWF expects the appropriate federal, state, and local guidelines with regard to scientific misconduct are in place and enforced at all institutions. Institutions are expected to adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations regarding the participation of human subjects, and the use of animals, radioactive or hazardous materials, and recombinant DNA in their research projects.

Scientific findings should be shared in a timely manner via the standard means of scientific communication, including publications and/or presentations in scientific forums.

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

Application Process

Planning Grant Application. A proposal consists of data entry fields submitted through the online Internet Grant Application Module (IGAM). Applications are due **September 28, 2017 by 4:00 pm (Eastern)**.

How to Submit an Online Proposal Application

To begin a planning grant submission on or after June 20 use this link: [proposal](#)

To return to a proposal already in progress you must use this link: [saved proposal](#)

It is recommended that applicants bookmark this page to return to a proposal in progress.

Proposal Elements

A complete proposal consists of fields submitted through the online IGAM application.

Online application form – available through IGAM (see links above):

- Applicant Information
- Applicant Demographics
- Institutional Information (degree-granting only)
- Signing Official Information (degree-granting only)
- Proposal Information [Download Forms and Templates](#)

Single PDF Attachment:

Prepare in advance the following required documents. Combine and order the supporting materials and upload into one (1) PDF file. Name the file using this format only: Last Name, First Name – PSIA 2018

A. Cover/Signature Page

Using the template provided, enter the requested information and complete entire form, including applicant signature.

B. Planning Grant (maximum of four pages)

There is no set template for the planning grants. Applicants should summarize their initial ideas for a program and outline their plan of how and who they will engage to develop a full proposal.

C. Budget

Please use the template provided. Use a standard 11- or 12-point font for the text, and no smaller than a 9- to 10-point font for figures, legends, and tables. The font size requirement for the text will be strictly enforced. Text must be single spaces, with one-inch or larger margins on all sides. Number the pages of the research plan.

D. Biosketches of Key Personnel (five-page limit)

Provide the current NIH biographical sketch. A five page CV may be substituted for applicants at Canadian degree-granting institutions.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Upload the combined file of supporting documents as one attachment on the Attachments tab of the online application. Click the “Review Your Application” on the Attachments tab to see if any errors are identified in your application. All information and required attachments must be provided before the “SUBMIT” button is available. Click the “SUBMIT” button to transmit the application. An automated message will confirm that the application was successfully submitted.

Note to Applicants:

Proposals will not be accepted after 4 p.m. Eastern Time on September 28, 2017. The online application system shuts down automatically at the deadline and the SUBMIT button will no longer be available. Plan to submit your application well in advance of the grant deadline to allow adequate time to troubleshoot any issues. NO EXCEPTIONS OR EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED.

After the deadline, applicants with incomplete proposals and those not adhering to instructions will be disqualified without prior notice.

Only grant proposals submitted through BWF online application website IGAM will be accepted.

Questions?

Eligibility and other inquiries should be directed in advance to BWF program staff by contacting:

John E. Burris, Ph.D., President,
jburris@bwfund.org, 919-991-5121

Rolly L. Simpson, Jr., Senior Program Officer
rsimpson@bwfund.org, 919-991-5110