

PEDIATRIC YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD PROGRAM

Department of Pediatrics



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GOALS

The Pediatric Young Investigator Award Program aims to support highly promising junior faculty members and senior fellows toward the development of an independent academic career by providing selected junior investigators with protected time and resources to complete ongoing research projects. The overall goal is to enhance research productivity, thereby preparing the junior investigator for submission of a successful national-level career development grant. Research productivity is defined as acquisition of a new grant, such as a K award, publication of one or more original, high quality, first-author papers, and other indicators of national and international recognition.

AWARD OVERVIEW

The Pediatric Young Investigator Award Program supports two years of research-dedicated time for selected junior investigators across the Department of Pediatrics. The purpose of this program is to assist talented, promising, and motivated junior investigators during the transition to academic junior faculty positions with the ultimate goal of developing an independent academic career. The program is designed to allow additional time for selected individuals to finalize an ongoing research project, to prepare and submit resulting publications, to expand their research experience, and to submit applications for extramural support.

The program supports junior faculty members who are conducting research (basic, translational, clinical, educational, or outcomes research), and have a commitment to follow a research faculty track in the future. The investigator's effort commitment must be a minimum of 75%, and this level of protected time must be confirmed by the Division Chief in a separate letter of commitment.

We will accept applications from across the entire research spectrum that encompasses clinical, basic, translational, educational, and health services investigation.

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KEY DATES

April 2021	Call for Applications
June 30, 2021	Application submission deadline
September 17, 2021	Applications reviewed and awards announced
July 1, 2022	Program start date
October 31, 2022	Progress Report and Scholarship Oversight Committee (SOC) Review 1
February 28, 2023	Progress Report and SOC Review 2
June 30, 2023	Progress Report and SOC Review 3
October 31, 2023	Progress Report and SOC Review 4
February 28, 2024	Progress Report and SOC Review 5
May 31, 2024	Final Progress Report and Final SOC Review

AWARD TERMS

Performance period: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024

Funding: Funding will provide up to 75% annual salary (commensurate with committed effort) plus applicable fringe benefits for a period of two years. In addition, \$7,500 per year will cover the costs of travel, publications, and computer or software purchase/maintenance.

Funding for second year of the program will depend on adequate progress in year one, as evident from the three progress reports, training record, and SOC review.

Time commitment: Candidates are expected to commit a minimum of 75% effort for the full 12 months to the program.

Number of awards: It is expected that the program will fund one or two Pediatric Young Investigator Awards per year.

ELIGIBILITY:

- Junior faculty members who are within the first three years of their faculty appointment in the Department of Pediatrics and who have demonstrated a strong interest in research and can document their previous research efforts.
- Clinical Fellows in their second year of fellowship may apply for funding starting from year one of their faculty appointment. The funding is not transferrable to another institution or department within the WCM.
- Strong candidates will have spent at least one full year in research activities during their training or post-training career and will have an active ongoing research project that requires more time and effort for completion.
- The Primary Mentor must have a primary appointment at the tri-institutional institutions (WCM, HSS, RU, or MSK) Or Columbia.
- The research must be based at the tri-institutional institutions (WCM, HSS, RU, or MSK) Or Columbia.

MENTORING TEAM:

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At least 2 mentors are required for each project. These mentors will form a Scholarship Oversight Committee (SOC) that will meet at least three times per year (at roughly 4-month intervals) as a group with the awardee to discuss the progress and development of the proposed work.

- Candidates must identify a research mentor who is familiar with the subject of the research and who agrees to mentor the candidate for the duration of the award. In most cases, the research mentor will be the individual in whose lab the candidate is already working.
- It is strongly recommended that candidates enlist a second mentor, which may be the division chief or another clinical subject matter expert.

REQUIRED CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING:

- Awardees are expected to attend relevant career development classes, webinars, and workshops as suggested by the SOC, and to participate in a grant writing program aimed at K-award development. (See the Suggested Training section below.).
- Coursework toward a Masters in Clinical Research degree is encouraged for clinical research awardees. These individuals are encouraged to apply for additional funding to support that effort, e.g. through the WCM Clinical & Translational Science Center (CTSC).
- At least two career development events are required each year. Scholars can select from the suggested activities, or identify their own (to be approved by the SOC). Career development events will be included in the annual report summaries.

MILESTONES:

Awardees are expected to submit an externally-funded career development grant, such as a K award, by the third quarter of year two of their award.

FOLLOW-UP:

Mentees should expect to be contacted for at least 10 years past their graduation from this program to obtain information about their present position, research funding, and publications.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Description: Candidates will submit a 3-page description of the proposed research, including the central hypothesis to be tested, brief background on the research problem, significance of the work, previous work already accomplished by the candidate with preliminary data, and work proposed for the funding period.

Milestones: Candidates will submit a 1-page list of achievable milestones within the projected timeline for the period of the award.

Career Plan: Candidates will submit a 1-page outline of future career development plans with specific milestones

CV or Biosketch: Candidates will submit a CV or NIH-style biosketch for him/herself and for each Mentor

Division Chief Letter: A letter of commitment from the Division Chief must include the following:

- confirmation of protected time of at least 75%,
- an explanation of how clinical time will be assigned (if applicable),
- a description of other support and resources available to the candidate, such as lab space, facilities, and travel funds, and how these will be used to advance the project.

Mentor's Letter: Letter of commitment from each Mentor (or a joint letter from both Mentors) with a detailed description of the mentoring plan. The mentoring plan should include:

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- the frequency of informal meetings with the Mentee,
- list of seminars and conferences the applicant is expected to attend,
- any relevant coursework that the applicant will take to further the project,
- any other training modalities.
- The primary mentor must confirm that s/he has sufficient funding to support non-personnel costs for the research and provide mentoring history of past trainees and their present positions.

HOW TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION:

All applications must be submitted as a **single PDF file** via email to Veronika Hostiuk

(veh2002@med.cornell.edu) by **5:00 pm on June 30, 2021**. The application should be formatted as a single PDF following the Application instructions above.

REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS:

The application will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- The candidate's past research experience and dedication to a career in academic pediatrics
- The primary mentor's training record and the quality of the research environment
- The scientific merit of the research project
- The anticipated quality of career guidance and support from the sponsoring Division

PROGRESS REPORTS:

Progress Reports will be **due three times per year** (at 4-month intervals), according to the schedule referenced in the **Key Dates** section above.

- Each report should be approximately 2 pages in length.
- The progress report should demonstrate that project milestones are being met, and indicate whether adjustments to the timeline or overall research plan are necessary.
- The progress report should also document that the candidate has been meeting with the primary mentor on the schedule outlined in the Mentor's Letter, and at least three times per year with the mentoring team as a group.
- It should contain a paragraph indicating specific feedback from the mentoring team, including changes in approach or direction, recommendations regarding the pace of progress, targeted meetings, grant submissions, and manuscript preparation, etc. The report should include any major milestones such as manuscript acceptance, grant submission, invited presentations, etc.
- The 3rd (annual) report must include information on the career development training and other relevant activities during year one of the award.
- The first report will be due 4 months after initiation of the award.

FINAL REPORT:

This 1-2-page document will describe the principal outcomes of the project, focusing primarily on whether the original milestones have been met, any changes in direction or timing of the work, and any tangible outcomes, such as.

- Publications, grant application submissions, or major national or international presentations made by the Investigator should be listed.
- Information on career development training and activities during the tenure of the award.
- The Investigator's next steps in terms of future career development.

RECOMMENDED CAREER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING:

- Multi-session grant writing seminar sponsored by MSKCC.
Offered April – May every year.

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<https://education.mskcc.org/oset>

- Annual CTSC Grant Writing Workshops presented by WCM CTSC – “Planning and Writing Successful Grant Proposals”
Offered in May every year
See broadcast email for more information
- Annual CTSC Grant Writing Workshops presented by WCM CTSC – “Planning and Writing Successful K Award Proposals”
Offered in April every year
See broadcast email for more information
- Society for Pediatric Research (SPR), Grant Writing 101 Program.
 - <https://www.societyforpediatricresearch.org/awards-funding/#toggle-id-11>
 - Six-month workshop facilitated by SPR. Participants will write a complete K grant and review a peer’s K application.
 - Application submission time: February 1/YY – March 1/YY