



Howard Hughes Medical Institute Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program

PROGRAM BOOKLET | 2024 COMPETITION



APPLICATION DEADLINE

/ February 28, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. (ET)

FELLOWS NOTIFIED

/ October 2024

AWARDS BEGIN

/ January 2025

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The Howard Hughes Medical Institute

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) advances the discovery and sharing of scientific knowledge to benefit us all.

Founded in 1953, HHMI is a biomedical research organization and philanthropy with a vibrant community of researchers, educators, students, and professionals. Together, we're unlocking the fundamentals of biology and building an open, inclusive future for science.

The Institute is committed to six core values: Excellence, Collaboration, Innovation, Integrity, Inclusion, and Developing Others.

Hanna H. Gray

The Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program honors the contributions of Hanna Holborn Gray, PhD, over her 28 years of service as a trustee of HHMI.

A former chair of the trustees, she was one of the eight original trustees appointed in 1984 to govern the Institute. During her tenure, the Institute made significant changes to its process for selecting the scientists in which it invests, opening its doors to an ever-increasing pool of applicants.

Program Overview

Excellence in science depends on the development of scientists from all backgrounds. HHMI initiatives foster equitable and inclusive scientific environments where everyone can thrive.

The [Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program](#) seeks to increase diversity in the professoriate by supporting early career researchers who show exceptional promise of becoming academic scientists, which includes the potential to build and contribute to an equitable and inclusive scientific culture. Through their successful careers, Hanna Gray Fellows will move science forward and will recruit, mentor, and inspire the next generation of scientists from all backgrounds.

The competition is open to basic researchers and physician-scientists in the biological and biomedical sciences in many [scientific disciplines](#), at hundreds of [institutions](#). Following the “people, not projects” philosophy of HHMI, fellows have freedom to change their research focus and follow their curiosity for the duration of the award.

Fellows receive funding for their postdoctoral training and during their early careers as independent faculty. The program provides many opportunities for career development, including participating in the vibrant community of Hanna Gray Fellows and the entire HHMI scientific community.

Fellows in the postdoctoral training phase receive initial salary support of \$80,000, with anticipated annual increases. Fellows also receive a \$20,000 annual expense allowance. This phase is a minimum of two and maximum of four years. Fellows in the faculty phase receive research support for up to four years through an annual grant of \$270,000, allocated for research costs (\$250,000) and an expense allowance (\$20,000).

To transition to the faculty phase of the program, fellows must obtain a tenure-track (or equivalent) faculty position at any of the hundreds of [HHMI eligible research institutions](#).

The online application can be found at:

[https://arc.hhmi.org/applicant/
application/hgfellows2024](https://arc.hhmi.org/applicant/application/hgfellows2024)

KEY DATES

- // **Application opens:** January 10, 2024
- // **Application deadline:** February 28, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. (ET)
- // **Mentor materials due:** March 6, 2024
- // **Finalists notified:** September 2024
- // **Finalist interviews:** October 7 – 9, 2024
- // **Fellows notified:** October 2024
- // **Awards begin:** January 2025

ELIGIBILITY

You are eligible to apply if you:

- are a basic science researcher or physician-scientist in the biological and biomedical sciences in the many [scientific disciplines](#) that HHMI supports.
- have been accepted to join a laboratory as a postdoctoral researcher, led by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member at an [eligible institution](#) in the US, including Puerto Rico, at the time of the application deadline.
- will commit 75% of your total effort to research in a postdoctoral training position by the grant start date.
- will commit to a minimum of two years of postdoctoral training in this position after the grant start date.
- hold a PhD and/or MD (or equivalent), which is conferred by the start of the grant term.
 - » If your training institution for your graduate degree is located in the US, including Puerto Rico, you may be of any nationality.
 - » If your training institution for your graduate degree is not located in the US, you must be a US citizen or US national.
- have no more than 24 months of postdoctoral research experience by the application due date.
 - » If you are a PhD applicant, the date or anticipated date of conferral of your doctoral degree must be on or after February 28, 2022, and before January 15, 2025.
 - » If you are an MD or MD/PhD applicant in residency, clinical fellowship, or postdoctoral training you can have no more than 24 months of postdoctoral training by the application deadline on February 28, 2024.

See the [“FAQ”](#) page regarding exceptions.

Application

The Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program is designed to encourage, support, and develop promising scientists from a broad range of backgrounds, including backgrounds that historically have been underrepresented in the sciences. The program therefore encourages candidates with all backgrounds and personal characteristics to apply, including candidates with backgrounds or personal characteristics that are historically underrepresented in the sciences. This includes, but is not limited to, those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, from rural or less-resourced geographic areas, the first in their families to go to college or obtain a graduate degree, members of underrepresented racial or ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ and non-binary persons, women, and persons with disabilities. Reviewers do not evaluate a candidate's application on the basis of any protected characteristics.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- ☐ A summary of your educational and research training record
- ☐ A description of your PhD research, including up to 3 selected research articles
- ☐ A questionnaire that we will send to your PhD advisor
- ☐ Narrative statements regarding your commitment to becoming an academic researcher and building an inclusive lab culture, and how your lived experiences have informed your values, priorities, and career goals
- ☐ Your postdoctoral research plan
- ☐ A questionnaire for you and your postdoctoral mentor about the training plan and training environment
- ☐ A curriculum vitae and lab census provided by your postdoctoral training mentor

REVIEW PROCESS

The Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program supports postdoctoral fellows who show exceptional promise for a research career in academia and helps fellows to launch their successful careers as faculty. Evaluation therefore focuses on each applicant's unique career path and scientific contributions, and what each person will bring to their role as a future leader of a scientific research lab.

Applicants will be notified in September 2024 about their advancement to the final stage. At that time, finalists will have an opportunity to prepare an application update and will be invited to an online interview with a panel of reviewers and HHMI leadership on October 7-9th, 2024. Awardees will receive notification of selection in October 2024.

Applications will be reviewed by HHMI and invited experts. HHMI is unable to provide feedback on applications. Repeat applications are welcome if an applicant remains eligible.

Postdoctoral Training Phase

GRANT FUNDING

This award provides funds annually to the training institution to support the fellow's salary. The initial salary award is \$80,000. It is anticipated that an annual 3% salary increase will be provided in each subsequent training year. Salary supplementation is allowed; however, funds for supplementation must be provided by the institution and not derived from the expense allowance awarded to the fellow by this program.

This grant award provides an expense allowance of \$20,000 annually to the training institution that may be used at the discretion of the fellow for health care benefits, dependent-care costs, or expenses related to their scientific career development. These funds may also be used for standard research-related expenses including support of personnel (other than the HHMI Hanna Gray Fellow).

TERMS OF GRANT AWARD

A fellow must commit 75% of their total effort to research; therefore, no more than 25% of effort can be devoted to other activities, including clinical care.

Grants will be awarded only to [HHMI eligible institutions](#).

The postdoctoral training award is contingent upon receipt of verification of the conferral date of PhD or MD degree(s). For those applicants with residency or clinical fellowship training, a verification of the start of postdoctoral training may also be required.

Fellows may not hold other postdoctoral fellowships or mentored K-series NIH grants during the postdoctoral training phase of this award. Research funding through competitive grants or institutional awards is allowed, as permitted by the training institution.

Awards are contingent upon an HHMI Terms and Conditions Agreement being signed by an official of the training institution. This document will be provided to training institutions following the awardee's acceptance of the award.

Any immigration issues or visa applications are the responsibility of the fellow and the training institution.

HHMI will consider requests for breaks in continuity of funding; however, all such breaks may not exceed two cumulative years during the postdoctoral phase. Transfers to a new training institution or a change of mentor will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The postdoctoral phase of the award does not provide indirect costs (sometimes referred to as institutional overhead or facilities & administrative costs), or any other administrative fee.

OTHER PROGRAM COMPONENTS

All Hanna Gray Fellows attend an orientation at the beginning of the fellowship where the new cohort learns about the program and each other and is introduced to the vibrant multi-generational HHMI scientific community, including current Hanna Gray Fellows.

All fellows attend a biannual retreat hosted at HHMI, where the community learns about each other's science and participates in professional development activities. Fellows also attend an HHMI Science Meeting each year where they present a poster and participate in scientific discussions with HHMI leadership, Investigators, Janelia Group Leaders, Freeman Hrabowski Scholars, and Gilliam Fellows.

The postdoctoral training mentor may attend one HHMI Science Meeting with their trainee and is required to participate in a mentor workshop offered by HHMI during the first two years of the four-year award period.

The Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program also offers a range of professional development workshops throughout the postdoctoral and faculty phases, developed in collaboration with HHMI's [Center for the Advancement of Science Leadership and Culture](#).

Fellows submit annual progress reports related to research and other training activities with some components provided by the postdoctoral training mentor. The report includes a brief description of the use of grant funds.

Transition to Faculty Phase

REQUIREMENTS

Fellows who have progressed through postdoctoral training and have obtained a tenure-track (or equivalent) faculty position at an [eligible US institution](#) may apply for a faculty phase award.

REVIEW PROCESS

Transition to the initial two-year faculty phase requires an online application to be submitted at least three months prior to the anticipated start of the award to allow sufficient time for HHMI review and for institutional agreements to be completed.

The following materials will be required as part of the application:

- A progress report for the postdoctoral training phase, including a brief summary of accomplished research and an updated curriculum vitae
- A plan for the proposed four years of independent research
- A copy of the offer letter for the faculty position that includes details of salary, benefits, research start-up funds, dedicated laboratory space, and non-research responsibilities

Other information regarding the appointment may be requested to ensure the terms of the award are met. If not covered in the offer letter, the chair of the department will be asked to describe the salary plan for the tenure-track (or equivalent) faculty position being offered. The grant award may not be used to defray costs normally covered by the department for comparable faculty positions in the form of salary support or start-up funds.

Faculty Phase

GRANT FUNDING

This award provides \$250,000 annually to the sponsoring institution to support the fellow's research. These funds can support salary and benefits of the fellow and laboratory research personnel as well as standard research-related expenses. This faculty award may be used to cover no more than 25% of the fellow's 12-month salary.

This award provides \$20,000 annually to the sponsoring institution that may be used at the discretion of the fellow for dependent-care costs or expenses related to their scientific career development. These funds, if not used for the purposes listed above, may also be used for standard research-related expenses including support of personnel (other than the HHMI Hanna Gray Fellow).

This grant is awarded to the sponsoring institution that will administer the grant. HHMI will provide additional funds annually representing 20% of the research grant (\$50,000) to the institution, which may be used for indirect or administrative costs at the discretion of the institution.

TERMS OF GRANT AWARD

The faculty phase of the award will provide two years of funding with the possibility of two additional years following a successful internal review by HHMI scientific leadership.

Grants will be awarded only to HHMI [eligible institutions](#).

The sponsoring institution must provide a research start-up package and dedicated space to support the fellow's independent laboratory, as well as a salary with benefits comparable to other starting assistant professor (or equivalent) faculty salaries.

The sponsoring institution must have an accredited graduate training program that awards terminal degrees (PhD or equivalent) in the field of interest of the fellow. Alternatively, the fellow may have access to such a program through an affiliate-type faculty appointment.

The fellow must commit 75% of their professional activities to research for the duration of the faculty award phase. The institution must ensure that this time is protected from other institutional responsibilities, such as teaching or clinical duties.

Awards are contingent upon an HHMI Terms and Conditions Agreement being signed by an official of the sponsoring institution. This document will be provided to the sponsoring institution at the time of application for the transition to the faculty phase.

No-cost extensions of up to two years beyond the end of the faculty phase grant term will be permitted. Transfers to a new sponsoring institution will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any immigration issues or visa applications are the responsibility of the fellow and the sponsoring institution.

OTHER PROGRAM COMPONENTS

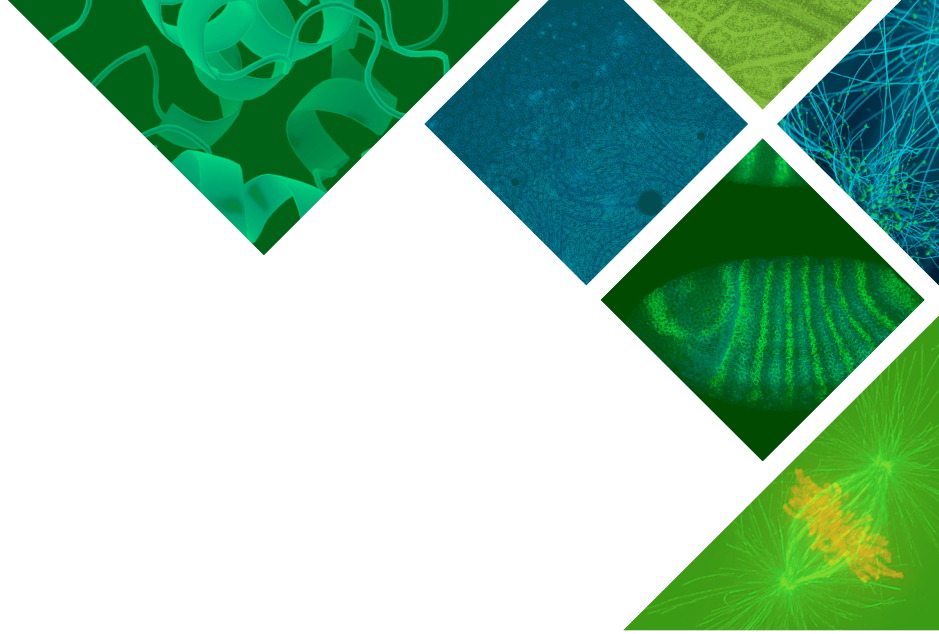
As required during the postdoctoral training phase, Hanna Gray faculty fellows attend an HHMI Science Meeting each year where they present a poster; faculty fellows have the option of giving a talk once during their faculty phase in lieu of a poster. Faculty fellows also attend the biannual Hanna Gray Fellows retreat. Faculty fellows have the opportunity to participate in professional development programming, both in a leadership role (e.g. providing their perspective to fellows in the postdoctoral phase) and to support their own development as early career faculty (e.g. participating in mentorship training).

Faculty fellows submit annual progress reports related to their research and other professional activities. The report includes a brief description of the use of grant funds.

The faculty fellow together with their department chair are responsible for identifying and enlisting a faculty-level mentor to serve as an advocate for their career.

FACULTY MID-PHASE REVIEW

During the second year of the faculty phase, fellows are eligible to apply for an additional two years of support. The application will include a short research summary, an updated curriculum vitae, and statements of support from the department chair and the mentor. Review of the application will primarily consider whether the components are in place to successfully launch an independent research program. For example, the fellow will be expected to have established a laboratory with staff and equipped space and to be active in graduate training activities. We anticipate that the majority of fellows in the faculty phase will receive the final two years of funding.



Contacts and additional information

Further details, including links to the online application site, and answers to FAQs are available at www.hhmi.org/hgf.
For questions, contact HHMI program staff at fellows@hhmi.org.

The Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program award refers to the full program, which includes support and activities during both the postdoctoral training and faculty phases.

This is an open competition and there are no limits on the number of applicants or awardees from an institution.