

Faculty Scholars Program Information

2016 Faculty Scholars Competition

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A. Faculty Scholars Program Sponsors

A1. What organizations are supporting the Faculty Scholars Program?

The Faculty Scholars Program is supported with funds from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Simons Foundation.

A2. What is Howard Hughes Medical Institute and what does it do?

A nonprofit medical research organization, HHMI was established in 1953 by the aviator-industrialist Howard Hughes. The Institute, headquartered in Chevy Chase, Maryland, is one of the largest philanthropies in the world, with an endowment of \$18.6 billion at the close of its 2014 fiscal year. HHMI spent \$714 million on biomedical research and \$77 million for support of a variety of science education and other grants programs in fiscal 2014.

A3. What is Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and what does it do?

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, founded in 1994 and guided by the belief that all lives have equal value, aims to promote the opportunity for all people - regardless of where they live – to lead healthy, productive lives, in part by harnessing advances in science and technology to create novel solutions for unmet needs in low resource settings.

A4. What is the Simons Foundation and what does it do?

The Simons Foundation was established by Jim and Marilyn Simons in 1994. Its mission is to advance the frontiers of research in mathematics and the basic sciences, and the foundation sponsors a range of programs that aim to promote a deeper understanding of our world. Its life sciences division supports research on fundamental questions in diverse areas of biology. Current programs include multi-institutional, interdisciplinary collaborations investigating the origins of life, neural coding and dynamics, and the biology, ecology and biogeochemistry of microbial processes in the ocean. The foundation also encompasses an autism research initiative, which studies the causes of autism in the hopes such knowledge will lead to treatment.

B. Eligibility Criteria – General

B1. What are the eligibility requirements?

- Ph.D. and/or M.D. (or the equivalent).
- As of July 28, 2015, tenured or tenure-track position as assistant professor or higher academic rank at one of the eligible U.S. institutions, or, if at an eligible institution that has no tenure track, an appointment that reflects a significant institutional commitment. Federal government employees are not eligible.
- More than 4, but no more than 10, years of post-training, professional experience. To meet this requirement, the applicant's post-training, professional experience must have begun no earlier than June 1, 2005, and no later than July 1, 2011. (See D1 for definitions)
- Held a nationally competitive grant with an initial grant term of two or more years during the past two years. To meet this requirement, at some time during the period from April 1, 2013 through July 1, 2015, you must have been the Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator on an active, nationally competitive grant with an initial grant term

of two or more years. Career development grants qualify. Multi-investigator grants may qualify. (See section E for additional information)

B2. How do I know if I am eligible to apply?

Register at the [online competition site \(http://www.hhmi.org/research/application/fs2016\)](http://www.hhmi.org/research/application/fs2016) and complete the Eligibility section as early as possible. Individuals appearing to meet the eligibility criteria will be notified immediately and given access to the full application. We reserve the right to verify any information you provided at any time during the application review process.

B3. Can two or more scientists apply jointly for a single grant award?

No. Applications are accepted only from individual investigators meeting the eligibility criteria.

B4. Can one scientist submit more than one application in the current competition?

No. Individuals are permitted to submit one application only.

B5. Are there any restrictions on the age of an applicant?

No. There are no age restrictions for applicants. You are welcome to apply if you meet all of the eligibility criteria.

B6. Are scientists eligible to apply if they previously received research funding from HHMI, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and/or the Simons Foundation?

Yes, except current HHMI employees and those previously appointed as HHMI Early Career Scientists or HHMI Investigators are not eligible to apply to the Faculty Scholars competition.

B7. What is your policy with regard to eligibility of faculty members with administrative responsibilities?

Individuals with administrative responsibilities are eligible to apply, but those selected to receive Faculty Scholars grants must devote at least 50% of their total professional effort to the direct conduct of research. Note:

- The permitted 50% of non-research activities include administrative duties, teaching, faculty service, and consulting.
- Faculty Scholars may serve in leadership positions (e.g., department chair, director of a departmental division, head of a research center or a graduate program, etc.) provided that the duties are compatible with devoting at least 50% of their total professional effort to the direct conduct of research.

C. Eligibility Criteria – Tenure Track & Eligible Institutions

C1. I'm an adjunct professor at one of the eligible institutions and a tenured or tenure-track faculty member at another institution that is not an eligible institution. Am I eligible?

No. Your tenure or tenure-track faculty position must be at an eligible institution.

C2. I am employed at a government laboratory and am also on the faculty at an eligible institution. Am I eligible?

No. Federal employees are not eligible to receive Faculty Scholars grants.

C3. What makes a position equivalent to tenure track at an institution without a tenure track?

Applicants at institutions without tenure track positions are required to have a position that is the most similar to a tenure-track appointment (i.e. equivalent in terms of institutional commitment to the employee, etc.). If you are uncertain about whether your appointment meets this eligibility requirement, provide information about the terms of your position to facultyscholars@hhmi.org prior to submitting an application.

C4: Am I eligible if I have a non-tenure track position with strong institutional commitment at an institution that has both tenure and non-tenure track faculty?

Individuals at an institution with a tenure-track must be on the tenure-track to be eligible.

D. Eligibility Criteria – Experience Window

D1. How are post-training positions defined for determining years of post-training, professional experience?

The following positions qualify as post-training for calculating years of experience:

- Tenure-track Assistant Professor or higher rank positions.
- Positions at institutions without tenure track positions that are most similar to a tenure-track appointment (i.e. in terms of institutional commitment to the employee, etc.).
- Research (non-tenure) track faculty positions if the scientist:
 - controlled his/her own research direction and laboratory space and
 - received a start-up package or research grant funding as a Principal Investigator.
- Industry positions not identified as postdoctoral training positions.
- Full-time clinical positions without a training component.

In contrast, time in the following types of positions is not included when determining years of experience:

- Fellow positions made through programs providing financial support for early career scientists to run independent groups.
- Postdoctoral positions, regardless of position title.
- Medical internships, residencies, and fellowships.
- Research (non-tenure) track faculty positions that do not meet the criteria listed above or other positions in which the scientist works within a mentor's laboratory even if leading projects, guiding students, or being a P.I. on a research award.

D2. Am I eligible if my first post-training, professional experience started before June 1, 2005 but I have less than 10 years of experience due to one or more periods of leave?

Circumstances such as military service, family medical leave, or approved tenure-clock extensions may justify an exception when consistent with and authorized by a policy at your institution. Request an exception by sending official documentation describing your institution's leave or tenure-clock extension policy and the signed and dated approval authorizing your leave of absence or tenure-track extension to facultyscholars@hhmi.org.

D3. Am I eligible if my first post-training, professional experience started days after July 1, 2011?

No, you are not eligible. For this competition, no exceptions are being made to the requirement that applicants must have started their first post-training, professional experience no later than July 1, 2011.

E. Eligibility Criteria – Grant Requirement

E1. Am I eligible if my only funding during the period from April 1, 2013 through July 1, 2015 is as a co-principal investigator on an NIH R01 grant?

Yes. Co-principal investigator status fulfills the eligibility requirement.

E2. Am I eligible if my only funding during the period from April 1, 2013 through July 1, 2015 is a career development grant?

Yes. Career development grants fulfill the eligibility requirements for the Faculty Scholars competition.

E3. Am I eligible if my only funding during the period from April 1, 2013 through July 1, 2015 was as a subcontractor on an NIH grant award?

No, grants on which you lead a subproject but are not identified under ‘other principal investigators’ do not meet the eligibility criteria.

E4. Am I eligible if my only funding during the period from April 1, 2013 through July 1, 2015 was as a project leader on a multi-investigator award?

Maybe. If you are the principal investigator or a co-principal investigator on a national peer-reviewed multi-investigator research grant you are eligible. If you are one of several equal investigators, please discuss your roles in the grant-funded project with Faculty Scholars Program staff through an inquiry to facultyscholars@hhmi.org.

F. Types of Research Supported

F1. What types of research will be supported by Faculty Scholars grants?

We welcome applications from basic researchers and physician scientists who bring innovative approaches to the study of biological problems. Scholars will apply molecular, genetic, computational and theoretical approaches to fundamental problems in diverse areas of biology. Those conducting research at the interface of the biological and physical sciences are especially encouraged to apply as are physician scientists and others studying biological questions emerging from and applicable to global human health problems, including malaria, tuberculosis, HIV, and other diseases that disproportionately affect individuals living in low resource settings. Clinical trials and research on health education, health care delivery, or health services are not eligible fields.

F2. Will Faculty Scholars grants be awarded for specific projects?

No. Scientists selected to receive Faculty Scholars grants will have the freedom to explore, and if necessary, change directions in their research program provided they conduct research within the scope of the Faculty Scholars Program (see F1).

F3. Can Faculty Scholars grants support clinical trials or public health initiatives?

No. This program is designed to support research into fundamental problems in diverse areas of biology (see F1) and can't be used to support clinical trials or public health initiatives.

G. Review Process

G1. How does the review process work for the Faculty Scholars grants?

The review process will include evaluation of applications by distinguished scientists, leading to the selection of semifinalists by early 2016. A final advisory panel will review the semifinalists' applications and make recommendations to the management of HHMI, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Simons Foundation.

G2. Who are the reviewers?

Reviewers include distinguished scientists selected by HHMI, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Simons Foundation. These may include current and past members of the organizations' advisory boards, and other scientists, including current HHMI investigators, and scientific staff from the organizations partnering to provide Faculty Scholars grant awards.

G3. Can I get a list of potential reviewers who might be assigned to my application?

No. The roster of reviewers for the Faculty Scholars competition will not be made public. Mechanisms have been put into place to ensure that reviewers who have a conflict of interest with an applicant do not review that application.

G4. How will Faculty Scholars be selected?

The [Program Announcement](#) provides information regarding the goals of the Faculty Scholars Program. Applicants selected to receive Faculty Scholars grants will most closely meet these goals.

G5. Will preference be given to applicants who are already at institutions where scientists are supported by HHMI, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, or the Simons Foundation?

No. Our goal is to identify and appoint the best candidates from any eligible institutions.

G6. When will I know the status of my application?

Early in April, 2016, semifinalists will be notified of their selection to enter the final phase of the competition. Other applicants will also receive a notice at that time.

G7. Will I receive written comments on my application from the reviewers?

No. Written comments on applications submitted for this competition will not be provided.

H. Award Information

H1. How much time are Faculty Scholars grant recipients expected to devote to research?

If awarded a Faculty Scholars grant, you must devote at least 50% of your professional time to the direct conduct of research.

H2. My institution allows me to consult or engage in other outside activities for up to one day per week. Do the Faculty Scholars grants impose a different limit on outside activities?

No. As noted earlier, Faculty Scholars grant recipients must devote at least 50% of their total professional effort to the direct conduct of research.

H3. If I move to a new institution after the application deadline or after I am awarded a grant, could my grant be awarded or transferred to the new institution?

Maybe; these situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

H4. Is this grant expected to cover 50% of my effort since the grant requires I devote at least 50% of my total professional time to research?

No. Effort reporting in connection with the Faculty Scholars grant awards is not required. Grant recipients will determine how much of their effort to associate with their Faculty Scholars award.

H5. How many Faculty Scholars grants will be awarded?

Up to 70 awards will be made.

H6. How much money will each grant provide?

Awards are for five-years and will provide from \$100,000 to \$400,000 per year of the grant term for direct costs. Award amounts will be determined by HHMI, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Simons Foundation based on several factors including award recipients' level of external funding at the time of the award. Each award recipient's institution will be given an additional 20% of the yearly grant for indirect (or administrative) costs.

H7. Can I use the grant funds to support my salary?

Faculty Scholars award recipients may support their own salary for up to three months annually and up to \$70,000. The terms and conditions governing the use of the grant funds will be detailed in the grant agreement between the sponsoring organization and the award recipient's institution.

H8. Are the grants renewable?

No.

H9. Are individuals applying to this competition permitted to apply again to a future Faculty Scholars competition?

Award recipients are restricted to one 5-year term through this program. Applicants not selected through this competition may apply to future competitions provided they meet the eligibility criteria which may be altered for future competitions.