**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**Application due date:**  
September 28, 2022

**Selection notification:**  
March 2023

**Appointment projected to begin:**  
September 2023

[www.hhmi.org/fhs](http://www.hhmi.org/fhs)
Freeman Hrabowski Scholars Program

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A1. What are the eligibility requirements?

- Degree(s): PhD and/or MD (or the equivalent).
- Academic position: Tenure-track faculty position (or equivalent; see A8 below) at one of the eligible US institutions. Federal government employees are not eligible.
- Eligibility window: The first post-training position (see A10 below) and the first tenure-track position must have begun on or after July 1, 2018, and no later than July 1, 2023. For applicants who have accepted an offer for a tenure-track position that will not begin until after the September 28, 2022, application deadline, the institutional offer letter must be signed by both the faculty member and the institutional official before September 28, 2022.

A2. How do I know if I am eligible to apply?

You may establish your eligibility by registering at the HHMI Application and Review Channel website (ARC) and completing the Eligibility section of the application.

A3. Why does the program prioritize mentorship and support of trainees from races and ethnicities underrepresented in biomedical research in the US?

HHMI is deeply sympathetic and supportive of all individuals in society and our community who are marginalized and experience racism and/or exclusion. As a biomedical research institution, HHMI has determined that its resources can have the greatest impact in addressing racial and ethnic underrepresentation in biomedical research by creating more equitable and inclusive lab environments. It is anticipated that the mentorship skills and efforts to create equitable and inclusive lab environments will benefit trainees from all races and ethnicities and other groups that have been discriminated against or excluded in science and society.

A4. Is the program restricted to applicants of certain races and ethnicities?

No. The Freeman Hrabowski Scholars program is an employment-based program, and HHMI is committed to equal opportunity employment. All qualified applicants receive consideration without regard to sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, protected veteran status, disability, ancestry, genetic status or characteristic, citizenship, or other legally protected status. We encourage applications from individuals who are members of groups underrepresented in biomedical research in the US.

A5. Which races and ethnicities does HHMI consider to be underrepresented in biomedical research in the US?

HHMI seeks Scholars who can serve as outstanding mentors for trainees from all races and ethnicities, especially trainees underrepresented in biomedical research in the US, and who can build equitable and inclusive labs that support the racial and ethnic diversity of biomedical science in the US. This includes races and ethnicities that have been formally designated as underrepresented by the National Institutes of Health (https://diversity.nih.gov/about-us/population-underrepresented). However, we recognize that many ethnicities not specified in the NIH designations are also underrepresented in science, and we seek Scholars...
who can support representation to the broadest extent possible through their mentorship and creation of equitable and inclusive labs.

A6. What fields of research are supported by the program?

HHMI’s community of basic researchers, including physician scientists, brings innovative approaches to the study of biological problems in all areas of biomedical science. This includes all core biomedical science areas, such as biochemistry, cell biology, physiology, immunology, neurobiology, etc., as well as plant biology, evolutionary biology, biophysics, chemical biology, biomedical engineering, and computational biology. See HHMI scientist profiles for an overview of the research conducted by current lab heads. There are no preferred fields within the broad range of fields supported by HHMI. However, clinical research and research on health education, health care delivery, health services, ecology, and environmentally focused areas are not likely to be considered favorably.

A7. Is US citizenship a requirement?

No. If you require US work authorization and you are selected as a Scholar, HHMI will sponsor you for an appropriate visa. All offers and HHMI employment are contingent on receipt and maintenance of authorization to work in the US throughout the appointment period and provision of documents that satisfy the identity and employment authorization requirements of USCIS Form I-9.

A8. 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 at their institution that is the most similar to a tenure-track appointment at other institutions (i.e., equivalent in terms of institutional commitment to the employee, etc.). If you are uncertain about whether your appointment meets this eligibility requirement, please send information about the terms of your position to FHScholars@hhmi.org prior to your application submission.

A9. I have a faculty-in-residence appointment that is non-tenure track at an institution that also has a tenure track. Am I eligible?

No. If your institution has a tenure track, you must have an appointment in that track by July 1, 2023.

A10. How are post-training positions defined for determining the start date for the first post-training position?

We provide the following guide to help you self-assess how to classify your career position. The following positions are generally considered to be post-training:

- 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 researcher has independence exceeding that of a postdoctoral fellow. Evidence of independence includes:
  - institutionally assigned space independent of a mentor’s space
  - a start-up package to create an independent research program
  - senior-author papers
  - designation as principal investigator on federal grants
• Industry positions not identified as postdoctoral training positions.
• Full-time clinical positions without a training component.

In contrast, the following are considered training positions:
• Postdoctoral positions, regardless of position title.
• Medical internships, residencies, and fellowships.
• Fellow positions made through officially designated programs that provide financial support for early career scientists to run an independent lab while also providing institutional mentoring or oversight.
• Research (non-tenure) track faculty positions that do not meet the independence criteria listed above or other positions in which the scientist works within a mentor’s lab and under a mentor’s guidance.

A11. Do periods of leave provide exceptions to the eligibility window?

Circumstances such as military service, family or medical leave, or tenure-clock extensions may justify an exception when such leave or tenure-clock extension has been approved by your institution and is consistent with and authorized by a policy at your institution. That is, you may be granted an exception if you started your first post-training, professional position before July 1, 2018, but have fewer than four years of experience due to one or more periods of leave. To request an exception, please send the signed and dated approval authorizing your leave of absence or tenure-clock extension and a copy of the relevant policy to FHScholars@HHMI.org.

A12. Does an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic provide exceptions to the eligibility window?

No. The goal of the program is to support early career faculty, and the eligibility window has been set in recognition of the broad and substantial impact of the pandemic on most early career faculty and trainees.

A13. Can I transfer my application to an institution different from the one I indicated in my application?

No. No transfers are allowed during the review phase of this competition or the first five-year term of a Scholar appointment.

A14. I’m an adjunct professor at one of the eligible institutions but on the tenure-track at another institution that is not an eligible institution. Am I eligible?

No. You must hold your primary appointment at an eligible institution.

A15. I have my principal research space and/or am employed at a US federal government lab, although I am also on the faculty at an eligible institution. Am I eligible?

No. Federal employees are not eligible for appointment as Freeman Hrabowski Scholars. If your principal research location is at a federal facility, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a US Department of Agriculture facility, a US Department of Energy lab, or US Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital, you are not eligible for this competition.
**B1. How do I prepare and submit my application?**

Your application must be submitted electronically at the [HHMI Application and Review Channel](https://arc.hhmi.org) (ARC) website. The application components, formatting guidelines, required bibliography template, and instructions are provided on the ARC website. The full application can be accessed at any time, but the application cannot be filled out until eligibility is established by completing the initial eligibility section.

Responses entered in the application and uploaded documents will be assembled into an application PDF. You can view your application PDF at any time while preparing your application by clicking on “View PDF” in the menu shown on the left side of the screen. We recommend reviewing the application PDF closely before submitting your completed application.

**B2. What types of articles or materials may be used as scientific contributions?**

Any of the following are acceptable to include among the three scientific contributions submitted in the application:

- peer-reviewed articles published in a scientific journal;
- peer-reviewed manuscripts accepted for publication by a scientific journal;
- articles deposited in a publicly available preprint server, such as BioRxiv;
- contributions that are publicly available but have not been reported in a published article or preprint, including software, datasets, technological advances, etc.

**B3. Will I be asked to provide reference letters?**

Yes. You will be asked to enter the name and contact information for two individuals who have extensive knowledge of your research, your research skills, and your research training. Additional information about the references can be found on the application site, which sends notifications to your designated references to submit their letters. The reference will receive an email from HHMI with instructions on how to provide the requested information. You will be able to monitor the submission status of your reference letters and re-notify individuals if needed. References must submit letters by October 5, 2022. The application site also requests contact information for your department chair and dean. We will contact these individuals in early January 2023 for applicants who become semifinalists.

**B4. Can I send updates to my application?**

No.

**B5. Can work supported by active grants or described in submitted grant applications be included in the Research Program Description?**

Yes. We are interested in all of your current and planned research. You may already be supported by institutional funds or a grant for the research you describe, and you may apply for additional support for any of the projects that you describe in this application.
B6. Should specific aims be included in the Research Program Description?

Describe future goals, but not at the level of experimental detail typically expected in a research grant proposal to a federal agency, for example.

B7. Should I include background information in the Research Program Description?

Background information will likely be necessary to set the stage for the description of your ongoing and planned research program and its significance. This may include your published and unpublished research findings.

B8. Do I need a nomination from my institution in order to apply for this competition?

No. Institutional nominations are not part of the application process. Because you are applying to become an employee of HHMI, your application typically will not need to be registered with or approved by your department or any administrative unit at your institution. However, some institutions may have specific internal processes they would like you to follow.

B9. What is expected of my department and institution if I receive this appointment?

If selected as a semifinalist, we will ask your department chair to provide a letter that describes the departmental and institutional expectations for you, how the department and institution will mentor and support you, and the department’s plans for increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion. The department will also be asked to respect the 20% limit on activities that extend beyond research. Your dean will also be contacted and asked to confirm the date of your institutional appointment in the tenure track.

C

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

C1. How will Scholars be selected?

Distinguished scientists as well as leaders in diversity, equity, and inclusion advocacy will review the applications. Semifinalists will be selected by early January 2023 and invited to attend a virtual advisory panel meeting between February 27 and March 1, 2023. Semifinalists will be asked to pre-record a research presentation, which will be viewed by the advisors and HHMI scientific leadership prior to the panel meeting. At the virtual panel meeting, applicants will be asked to provide a brief overview of their research program followed by a question-and-answer period on their research. All applicants should save the dates February 27-March 1, 2023, to ensure availability.
C2. How will scientific strength and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as described in the Climate and Culture statements be weighted?

All Scholars will have outstanding skills, commitment, and potential in both areas, which we consider to be intimately linked, in that research success is enhanced by strong mentorship and the existence of an equitable, inclusive lab environment that attracts diversity.

C3. Who are the reviewers?

Reviewers include distinguished scientists as well as leaders in diversity, equity, and inclusion advocacy selected by HHMI. These may include current and past members of HHMI’s Medical Advisory Board and Scientific Review Board; other scientists, including current HHMI Investigators and HHMI’s scientific leadership; and diversity, equity, and inclusion leaders from HHMI and academic institutions.

C4. Can I get a list of potential reviewers who might be assigned to my application?

No. We do not disclose the reviewers for a competition. However, those applicants selected as semifinalists will learn the identity of advisors who participate in the virtual advisory panel meeting.

C5. Are there circumstances that would exclude a reviewer from handling my application?

HHMI considers current and past institution affiliation, mentoring and collaboration relationships, and other factors when determining if scientific reviewers have a conflict of interest with an applicant. Except in extraordinary circumstances, we do not entertain individual requests from applicants to exclude reviewers.

C6. When will I know the status of my application?

All applicants will be notified of their status in the competition in early January 2023. Those selected as semifinalists will be provided more information at that time regarding the requirement for a pre-recorded presentation and attendance at the virtual advisory panel meeting to be held between February 27 and March 1, 2023.

C7. Will I receive written comments on my application from the reviewers?

No. Applicants will not receive feedback in the form of written comments or scores on applications submitted for this competition.
**D1. I understand that as a Freeman Hrabowski Scholar, I would become an HHMI employee. Would this affect my faculty status at my institution?**

No. Appointment as a Scholar will not affect your faculty status at your institution. Moreover, you must retain your faculty appointment at your host institution as a condition of your appointment as a Scholar and HHMI employee. Before the start of a Scholar’s HHMI employment, HHMI enters into a collaborative agreement with that Scholar’s research institution to address the Freeman Hrabowski Scholar appointment and responsibilities of both HHMI and the institution.

**D2. As a Scholar, what is the expected effort on research, teaching, and service?**

You must devote at least 80% effort to your research, which includes directing your research program, mentoring trainees, reviewing manuscripts, writing and reviewing grants, etc. Up to 20% of your effort (a lower percentage is fine) may be used for teaching, academic service, patient care, and consulting, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts outside your lab. This reflects HHMI’s conviction that scientists of exceptional talent and imagination will make fundamental contributions of lasting scientific value and benefit to mankind when given the resources, time, and freedom to pursue challenging questions.

**D3. What are the expectations from HHMI regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts?**

HHMI expects you to focus your attention on your research, on the mentorship of your trainees, and on the creation of an equitable and inclusive lab environment. We also expect you to participate in HHMI’s professional development initiatives, focused on skills related to mentorship, lab management, values-based leadership, scientific rigor, and related topics. Finally, we expect you to become part of the HHMI community by participating in one HHMI Science Meeting per year and engaging with colleagues. The program neither expects nor requires additional participation in initiatives or programs to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion outside of the activities in your lab.

**D4. Are there other HHMI policies I should be aware of?**

Yes. We expect that many of the portions of HHMI’s research policies applicable to HHMI Investigators will apply in generally the same manner to Freeman Hrabowski Scholars. These policies are subject to periodic updates.

**D5. If I am selected to be a Scholar, are there aspects of my current academic activities that could delay or even block my appointment?**

Yes.

- This program limits the time spent on teaching, academic service, patient care, administration,
and consulting (subject to HHMI’s policies on consulting), including diversity, equity, inclusion efforts outside your lab, to no more than 20% of your total professional effort. A Scholar appointment cannot begin until your pre-existing non-research activities have been reviewed.

- Industry-sponsored research funding in HHMI labs and consulting for companies are subject to review, and continuing arrangements will likely need to be modified before you can be appointed as a Scholar. Arrangements with start-up companies can present additional considerations under HHMI’s policies (e.g., the nature of your role with the company, board of directors service, equity ownership, and interactions between the company and your lab) and will need to be reviewed and modified accordingly. (Also see Section H: Research Collaborations and Consulting)

- In some cases, the terms of other funding arrangements are not compatible with status as a Scholar. If you have funding arrangements in this category and they cannot be modified for consistency with HHMI policies, you will need to choose whether to forego appointment as a Scholar or discontinue the other funding arrangements. This is currently the case, for example, with Chan Zuckerberg Biohub Investigators and Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy Member Researchers.

D6. What will be expected of a Scholar to be renewed for a second term?

The scientific program review at the end of the initial five-year term will be based on scientific accomplishments and evidence that the Scholar’s research program is becoming well established with staff, publications, and possibly additional funding.

D7. Must I continue to work on the projects described in my application during the entire appointment period?

No. Following HHMI’s “people, not projects” model, you may change research directions and alter approaches according to your interests and findings.

D8. What happens at the end of my five- or ten-year appointment as a Scholar?

At the conclusion of your HHMI employment as a Freeman Hrabowski Scholar, you will typically continue your faculty position at your host institution. Salary and benefits will need to be obtained from institutional resources, often supplemented by extramural grant funds, and research funding will need to be obtained from external grants and internal institutional resources. Unused lab start-up funds may still be available, and your host institution may provide financial assistance with the transition. Most equipment purchased for your lab using HHMI support will be transferred to the host institution as a gift.

D9. Can I move my appointment as a Scholar to another institution?

Scholars may not change their host institution during the initial five-year appointment. However, after a successful scientific program review at the completion of the initial term and upon HHMI review and approval, a Scholar may transfer once during the second five-year appointment.
**E1. What is included in the compensation package of a Scholar?**

HHMI pays the full salary of the Scholar and offers a comprehensive benefits package, which includes access to a 403(b) retirement plan as well as health, dental, and vision coverage, to Scholars and other eligible employees. For planning purposes only, semifinalists will be provided with a current description of HHMI benefits.

**E2. How will my initial HHMI salary be determined?**

HHMI applies a non-negotiable salary scale for our Scholars. The salary in the initial and subsequent years will be determined by this salary scale, which HHMI adjusts periodically. The salary scale uses third-party benchmark data and reflects transparent and competitive salary rates for Scholars, Investigators, and our Janelia Group Leaders. Salaries currently vary by years of experience as an independent lab head, geographical location, degree (PhD or MD), and certain types of scientific recognition (specifically, membership in the National Academy of Sciences or Royal Society, or receipt of a Nobel Prize). For planning purposes only, semifinalists will be provided with their projected starting salary based on the information available when semifinalists are identified.

**E3. What is the expected salary range?**

The starting salary range for Scholars is currently estimated to be $145,000 to $219,000, with salaries determined by HHMI’s non-negotiable salary scale for lab heads (see also E2). The HHMI lab head salary scale is reviewed annually and is subject to change.

**E4. Can I receive salary supplementation from my institution for administrative or other duties?**

As a Scholar, you may receive a salary supplement from your host institution for administrative service, but not for clinical activities. The administrative effort must accommodate the requirement that 80% of your total professional time be spent on research, and any administrative activities must be approved in advance. The compensation must be comparable to that received by similarly positioned faculty.

**E5. As a Scholar, could I continue to receive housing, tuition assistance, or other similar benefits offered by my host institution?**

HHMI permits certain types of benefits that institutions make available to Scholars on the same basis as they do to other similarly situated faculty members, and that are not offered by HHMI. Most commonly these benefits include faculty housing assistance and tuition remission.
F1. What does a Scholar’s budget include?

The Scholar’s lab budget includes support for non-Scholar personnel (e.g., salary and benefits for lab staff) and for lab operations (e.g., supplies, services, and minor equipment). Scholars’ salaries and benefits packages are provided by HHMI separate from Scholars’ lab budgets.

F2. What is the support for major pieces of equipment?

Scholars may submit requests for funding of a limited number of major equipment items as part of HHMI’s intermittent capital equipment programs (capital equipment that costs more than $15,000). This support is separate from Scholars’ lab budgets, and requests are evaluated prior to approval. It is expected that each Scholar will have received lab start-up funds from their host institution that will support the purchase of equipment needed for the initial establishment of a functioning lab.

F3. How does HHMI establish a Scholar’s budget?

HHMI will set standard lab budget levels for Scholars. The initial plan is to spread the $2M of research support (independent of the Scholar’s salary and benefits) across the five years of the initial five-year appointment period, with an ability to carry forward a significant amount of unspent funds from one year to the next. If the appointment is renewed for a second five-year term, the level of support may increase. All Scholars’ lab budgets are subject to the approval of HHMI’s President and Trustees.

F4. Does HHMI pay indirect costs?

HHMI does not pay indirect costs. HHMI makes occupancy payments to the institution in connection with a Scholar’s research and office space and pays certain other expenses. These payments are paid directly to the host institution, and they are not a part of a Scholar’s budget.

F5. If I am appointed as a Scholar, can some of my lab staff become HHMI employees?

Yes. Any of your postdoctoral fellows, technicians, and other research and administrative staff could become HHMI employees (subject to the limitations of your budget, and assuming the individual meets the requirements for an HHMI position). As employees, they will receive salary and benefits. Although graduate students cannot become HHMI employees, funds from Scholars’ budgets can be used in support of students conducting research in the lab. Also, note:

- It is generally expected that you will have some HHMI employees in your lab in addition to yourself.
- Full-time and part-time (scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week) HHMI employees are eligible for benefits that include access to a 403(b) retirement plan as well as health, dental, and vision coverage. Temporary employees, such as summer students, generally are not eligible for benefits from HHMI.
- You set salaries for HHMI employees in your lab, within HHMI salary guidelines.
- A lab member’s salary cannot be split between HHMI and another entity.
- There may be certain types of positions that are not permitted for an HHMI employee (e.g., full-time grant writer).
G1. Can I continue to receive research support from governmental or other non-profit funding agencies?

Yes.

G2. I receive at least part of my salary from grant funds. Because my entire salary must be provided by HHMI, would I be required to return those funds?

Your institution cannot continue to accept any such funds for your salary after your HHMI appointment is effective. Scholars typically negotiate directly with the granting agency regarding possible reallocation of grant funds.

G3. Can I receive research funding from any other nonprofit sources?

Yes, provided the funding arrangements are consistent with HHMI policies. Upon appointment as a Scholar, you become an HHMI employee, and HHMI policies apply to the conduct of all research in your lab. There may be circumstances where the terms of a funding arrangement with another nonprofit institution are not compatible with HHMI policies. Prior to appointment as a Scholar, HHMI staff review arrangements affecting your research in order to determine whether any modifications are required for compliance with HHMI policies. In certain cases, if an arrangement cannot be modified, you may be required to choose between an HHMI appointment and maintaining one or more of your other arrangements. This is currently the case, for example, with Chan Zuckerberg Biohub Investigators and Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy Member Researchers.

G4. Can I receive industry funding for my research program?

Yes, provided the arrangements are consistent with HHMI’s policies. Your host institution negotiates the terms for industry funding to your lab under similar circumstances as other faculty. However, HHMI staff review all arrangements to ensure that the terms are consistent with HHMI policies. Any existing company-sponsored research arrangements will be reviewed by HHMI and may need to be modified before you can be appointed as a Scholar.
H1. Can I collaborate with industry?
Yes, provided the arrangements are consistent with HHMI’s policies. Funded and unfunded research collaborations with company scientists are reviewed by HHMI for consistency with HHMI policies. All collaborations with companies, whether funded or unfunded, must be documented by an agreement that has been reviewed by HHMI’s Office of the General Counsel.

H2. Are collaborations with my academic colleagues also reviewed?
Your collaborations with academic colleagues require HHMI review only when you have a significant scientific collaboration with an academic colleague who is funded for that research by a company, or when the collaborator or your host institution require any written agreement. See also G4 regarding funding from nonprofit sources.

H3. As a Scholar, can I consult for a company?
Yes, provided the arrangements are consistent with HHMI’s consulting policies. Consulting activities with companies must be documented by an agreement that has been reviewed by HHMI’s Office of the General Counsel. Information about HHMI’s consulting policies can be found on HHMI’s Policies page.
Note that service as a member of a company’s board of directors is permitted only in limited circumstances, and service as an officer of a company is never permitted. Also, a Scholar may not consult for and collaborate with or receive funding from a company at the same time.

H4. Can I have equity ownership in a company, including a start-up?
Yes, Equity ownership in start-ups and other companies must be consistent with HHMI policies. Information about HHMI’s policies regarding equity ownership is available in HHMI’s Consulting for Companies – General Policy (see also HHMI's Policies on Consulting for and Equity Ownership in Start-Up and Other Private Companies).

H5. Can I consult for a nonprofit organization?
Yes, provided the arrangements are consistent with HHMI’s consulting policies. Consulting arrangements with nonprofit entities that include only basic terms, such as the scope of duties, time commitment, and the amount of any honorarium or other compensation, do not need to be reviewed by HHMI staff. Information about HHMI’s policies regarding nonprofit consulting is available in HHMI’s Service to Nonprofit Organizations and Government Agencies Policy.
I1. How does HHMI handle intellectual property?

As the employer, HHMI owns any intellectual property developed by its Scholars and other employees. HHMI assigns intellectual property rights to the host institution, subject to certain retained rights for research purposes, and shares patenting and licensing expenses and any royalty income with the host institution to the extent specified in HHMI’s collaborative agreement with the Scholar’s host institution. The relevant host institution’s policy applies in determining the amount and timing of distributions of royalty income to inventors.

I2. Some technology I developed in the past has been licensed to companies. Will HHMI be concerned about those arrangements?

Yes, if they affect your ongoing research. If you are successful in this competition, we will ask your host institution for copies of all active licenses to for-profit companies relating to technology developed in your lab. If any such licenses cover future improvements that might result from your research as a Scholar, we are likely to require that modifications to those licenses be made before your appointment can proceed.

I3. If I get royalties from a company that licensed technology I developed in the past, can I collaborate with or consult for that company?

Yes, assuming that the license and collaboration or consulting arrangements are consistent with HHMI policies.

CONTACTS

For further details, please see the online application site. For questions, contact HHMI program staff at FHScholars@hhmi.org.