



## Interdisciplinary TL1 Mentored Research Training Opportunities for Predocs and Postdocs

### Chicago Kidney Urology Hematology network FOR city-Wide reseArch tRaining and career Development

#### REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Chicago KUH FORWARD is currently accepting applications from predoctoral students and postdoctoral trainees for mentored traineeships in nephrology, benign urology, and benign hematology research. Applications will continue to be accepted until all slots are filled.

#### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Chicago Kidney Urology Hematology network FOR city-Wide reseArch tRaining and career Development (Chicago KUH FORWARD) provides scientists and clinicians the training and resources they need to become successful independent investigators in kidney, benign urology, or benign hematology (KUH) research.

Chicago KUH FORWARD brings together some of the best researchers and clinicians at top medical research institutions in Chicago to train the next generation of KUH researchers in an environment encompassing a continuum of education, training and career development. Chicago KUH FORWARD gives aspiring trainees access to ideas, successful role models, peer trainees, scientific information, and methodological support to become successful independent investigators. This ecosystem promotes both opportunities for individual development and the growth of interdisciplinary and cross-institutional teams to address important problems in nephrology, benign urology, and benign hematology.

The six Chicago KUH partner institutions include Northwestern University, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Chicago, Rush University, Loyola University Chicago, and the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital at Chicago.

Chicago KUH FORWARD is supported by NIDDK/NIH Institutional Network Awards U2CDK129917 and TL1DK132769. Northwestern University is the primary awardee for both grants. The U2C cooperative component coordinates and provides administrative support for all Chicago KUH FORWARD activities, while the TL1 training component supports the trainees and their research training activities.

#### AWARD EXPECTATIONS

Chicago KUH FORWARD intends to support up to 5 predoctoral-level and 5 postdoctoral-level trainees each budget year of the TL1 grant (June 1 through May 31). Trainees are supported for an initial twelve-month appointment and eligible for a second year of TL1-support which is contingent on satisfactory progress during their initial appointment.

Appointments are supported by a Ruth L. Kirschstein Institutional National Research Service Award (NRSA). Trainees receive a monthly stipend, tuition support, and funds to purchase training-related items and cover travel expenses to present at scientific meetings or conferences. Trainees are eligible to request up to \$2,500 per grant budget period to defray childcare costs. Funds to support trainees who are located at a partner institution other than Northwestern will be passed to the trainee's institution through a subaward agreement

issued by Northwestern (primary awardee). Trainees are expected to comply with all applicable NIH policies and their institutional requirements associated with their appointment.

All trainees are required to pursue their research training on a full-time basis at one of the six Chicago KUH FORWARD partner institutions. Full-time is generally defined as devoting at least 40 hours per week to the program or as specified by the recipient institution in accordance with its own policies. Postdoctoral level clinical trainees must commit at least 75% of their time to research and up to 25% on clinical work.

Appointed trainees are required to engage in research relevant to the mission of the Division of Kidney, Urologic, and Hematologic Diseases (KUH) within NIDDK. This includes basic, translational, and clinical research in any of the following areas (<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/about-niddk/offices-divisions/division-kidney-urologic-hematologic-diseases>):

- **Kidney:** Chronic kidney disease, end-stage renal disease, diabetic nephropathy, polycystic kidney disease, hypertensive nephrosclerosis, acute kidney injury, kidney donation, congenital kidney disorders, IgA nephropathy, hemolytic uremic syndrome, fluid and electrolyte disorders, kidney repair and regeneration, and normal and abnormal kidney development and physiology.
- **Benign Urology:** Benign prostatic hyperplasia, urinary incontinence, urinary tract infections, stones, erectile dysfunction, urologic chronic pelvic pain syndromes (including interstitial cystitis and chronic prostatitis), congenital urologic disorders, repair and regeneration of lower urinary tract organs, and normal and abnormal lower urinary tract development and physiology.
- **Benign Hematology:** Blood and blood-forming organs, hematopoiesis, hemoglobin disorders, iron metabolism, sickle cell disease, bone marrow failure, iron deficiency, Cooley's anemia (thalassemia), and hemochromatosis.

Trainees will participate in an integrated didactic and cross-disciplinary mentored research program personalized to their individual needs and develop an individual development plan that will be updated and discussed at regular progress meetings. Each trainee will have a mentoring team comprised of a primary mentor and one or two secondary mentors who are faculty at a Chicago KUH FORWARD partner institution. Primary mentors will be accomplished KUH independent investigators who are committed to the career development of their mentees and will become NIDDK approved program faculty in Chicago KUH FORWARD. Secondary mentors are established investigators from a discipline different than that of the primary mentor and are invested in and significantly enrich the experience and development of the trainee.

All trainees supported are expected to submit first-author manuscripts based on their mentored research project. Submission of an individual fellowship grant (NIH or other) is a requirement for trainees appointed for a second year.

All trainees are expected to actively participate in professional development and network activities designed to establish a city-wide KUH training community and enhance their knowledge of interdisciplinary research, such as professional development seminars, workshops and symposia, journal clubs, research in progress, peer- and near-peer networking opportunities and program committee meetings.

## ELIGIBILITY

Individuals to be trained must be a citizen or a noncitizen national of the United States or have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time of appointment.

Trainees may include predoctoral and post-doctoral fellows with diverse backgrounds (defined as demographic and/or scientific diversity).

## Predoctoral Trainees

- Eligible students must have received a baccalaureate degree and be enrolled in a program leading to a PhD or an equivalent research doctoral degree program at one of the six Chicago KUH FORWARD partner institutions.
- Students in graduate PhD programs must complete their qualifying exam or candidacy equivalent prior to receiving award.
- Students must be in good academic standing and have the approval of their program to enroll in this TL1 program.
- Medical students wanting to take one year off from their academic curriculum to participate in full-time research training should apply for a NIDDK Medical Student Research Training Administrative Supplement ([NOT-DK-21-015](#)).
- Appointment to Chicago KUH FORWARD is expected to be full-time for a continuous 12-month period. Trainees are eligible for a second and subsequent full-time and continuous 12-month appointment.
- NIH NRSA guidelines set a limit of 5 years (6 years if dual degree, i.e., MD/PhD) of total support for predoctoral training grant funding.

## Postdoctoral Trainees

- Postdoctoral trainees must have received, as of the beginning date of the TL1 appointment, a PhD, MD, or comparable doctoral degree from an accredited domestic or foreign institution. Comparable doctoral degrees include, but are not limited to, the following: D.D.S., D.M.D., D.C., D.O., D.V.M., O.D., D.P.M., Sc.D., Eng.D., Dr.PH., D.N.Sc., D.P.T., Pharm.D., N.D. (Doctor of Naturopathy), D.S.W., Psy.D., as well as a doctoral degree in nursing research.
- Trainees must commit full-time effort to their research training with a primary mentor at one of the six Chicago KUH FORWARD partner institutions.
- Appointment to Chicago KUH FORWARD is expected to be full-time for a continuous 12-month period. Trainees are eligible for a second full-time and continuous 12-month appointment pending satisfactory progress during initial appointment.
- Doctoral level clinicians may spend no more than 25% of FTE in clinical service.
- All appointed Postdoctoral Trainees must agree to a service payback obligation incurred during initial 12 months of postdoctoral Kirschstein-NRSA support. A second appointment year in Chicago KUH FORWARD will serve to meet the payback obligation requirement.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

We are currently accepting applications from candidates who are eligible to join the TL1 training program during the current TL1 grant budget year (June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024). Applications will continue to be accepted until all slots are filled. We wish to fill the bulk of our slots (if not all of them) with early-round candidates so it's advantageous to apply early. If you are interested in becoming a Chicago KUH FORWARD TL1 trainee but are not eligible for appointment until later in the budget year (which is June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024), please let us know that and plan to apply as soon as possible.

The application process includes three stages:

1. Pre-application meeting: Declare your interest in applying by sending an email to [chicago.kuhforward@northwestern.edu](mailto:chicago.kuhforward@northwestern.edu). We will reply to schedule a pre-application meeting. Meetings provide an opportunity for applicants and mentors to receive guidance on the application process and program expectations. Pre-application meetings are brief and held over Zoom.
2. Submit online application: Applicants must submit the online Application Form which includes attaching the following proposal components:
  - a. NIH Fellowship Biosketch
  - b. Personal Statement that addresses reasons for applying, prior research experience, long-term career objectives

- c. Research Proposal that outlines the applicant's specific scientific objectives and description of cross-disciplinary mentorship team
- d. Mentor Statement of Commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor(s)
- e. Two reference letters (Postdoctoral applications only)

The Application Form is located online at [https://redcap.link/KUHFORWARD\\_apply](https://redcap.link/KUHFORWARD_apply).

Guidelines for preparing application:

- A copy of the Application Form is shown in Appendix 1 for reference.
  - Applicants may save the Application Form to return later to complete before submitting. No changes can be made to the Application Form after it is submitted.
  - Each proposal component should be submitted as an individual PDF file.
  - We recommend using the following file naming convention for each file: *level\_year\_last name\_component.pdf*, where
    - Level = predoc or postdoc
    - Year = current calendar year
    - Last name = applicant's last name
    - Component = the type of supporting document (i.e., biosketch, statement, proposal, mentor, recltr1, and recltr2)
  - The Biosketch is to be formatted according to the NIH Fellowship Biosketch instructions at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>. The section for scholastic performance is required.
  - The Personal Statement page limit is 2 pages.
  - The Research Proposal is limited to 2 pages and should include the following sections:
    - Specific Aims and Hypotheses
    - Background and Significance
    - Experimental Approach and Cross-Disciplinary Mentorship Team
    - Interpretation of Expected Results
    - References. This section does not count towards the two-page limit.
  - Predoctoral applicants: Upload your Research Proposal in place of "Upload synopsis of thesis project with description of cross-disciplinary mentorship team."
  - The Mentor Statement of Commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor(s) may be one letter signed by all mentors or individual letters from each mentor. Multiple letters will need to be combined into a single PDF document.
  - Reference letters are for postdoctoral-level applications only and should be from individuals not directly involved in the application, but who are familiar with the postdoc applicant's research qualifications, training, and interests. For example, for applicants with a PhD degree, reference letters will be from supervisors/mentors they had during graduate school training. For applicants with a MD degree, reference letters will be from residency or fellowship program directors, and or faculty with whom trainees have conducted research in the past.
    - Reference letters may be uploaded to the Application Form by the applicant. Alternatively, referees may send letters directly to [chicago.kuhforward@northwestern.edu](mailto:chicago.kuhforward@northwestern.edu). If the latter, applicants will need to upload a blank page as a placeholder in the Application Form and confirm receipt of the letters with Chicago KUH FORWARD Program Manager.
3. Proposal presentation and interview: Each applicant will be scheduled for a virtual 30-minute session on Zoom where they will present their proposed research and be interviewed by a faculty review committee. The applicant's mentors do not attend this session. Applicants will be contacted within two weeks of their application submission by a member of the Chicago KUH FORWARD team to schedule this session.
- a. Presentation: Applicants will deliver a 15-minute scientific presentation on their research proposal to the review committee.
  - b. Interview: Applicants will have a 15-minute interview with the review committee immediately following their scientific presentation. Questions will be about the applicant's scientific presentation and their personal experience and goals as a scientist.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

The review committee consists of 3 or more Chicago KUH FORWARD program faculty representing each of the KUH disciplines and different partner institutions. Committee members review each application based on the criteria listed below and consider the impact of lived experiences on the candidate's career choices and academic trajectory, and the likelihood that a TL1 fellowship will enhance the candidate's progression to a productive independent scientific research career in a KUH research field.

Evaluation criteria:

- Record of academic achievement
- Research training plan
- Clarity of written communication
- Clarity of oral communication
- Motivation for pursuit of an academic research career
- Alignment of trainee interests with KUH research priority areas
- Commitment of mentoring team to the candidate
- Referees' assessments of candidate's academic & research accomplishments (postdoc only)

## CONTACT

Chicago KUH FORWARD

Website: [chicagokuh.org](http://chicagokuh.org)

Email: [Chicago.KUHFORWARD@northwestern.edu](mailto:Chicago.KUHFORWARD@northwestern.edu)

# Application for Chicago KUH FORWARD Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships

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Chicago KUH FORWARD is accepting applications for its interdisciplinary TL1 training program for predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows in basic, translational, or clinical research in the fields of kidney, benign urologic, and benign hematologic diseases.

Prior to completing this application form, please closely review the RFA instructions and eligibility criteria with your mentor(s). The full RFA can be found on the Chicago KUH FORWARD website by clicking [here](#). Questions regarding the application process should be sent to [Chicago.KUHFORWARD@northwestern.edu](mailto:Chicago.KUHFORWARD@northwestern.edu).

Please note, all fields are required. Enter "NA" for questions that are not applicable or have no answer.

## Applicant Information

First Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Institution:

- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
- Loyola University
- Northwestern University
- Rush University
- University of Chicago
- University of Illinois at Chicago

Department/Division:

\_\_\_\_\_

Campus Street Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

City:

\_\_\_\_\_

State:

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code:

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please verify your email address is correct by re-entering it below. Upon successful verification, this notice will disappear.

Verify Email Address:

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Phone:

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eRA Commons Username (enter "NA" if you do not have a username):

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Please note: Selected trainees are required to have an eRA Commons account prior to being appointed. Contact your institution's signing official or account administrator to obtain a new Commons account or affiliate your existing account with your current institution.

 Department/Division Administrator Name (e.g., research administrator, financial assistant, or other staff member assisting with pre- and post-award management):
 

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Administrator's Email Address:

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Administrator's Phone:

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Primary Mentor Name:

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Secondary Mentor Name:

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Type of appointment applying for:

- Predoctoral Fellow  
 Postdoctoral Fellow

Name of your current predoctoral program:

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Predocral students must have completed their degree-required coursework to be eligible to apply for a KUH FORWARD Predoctoral Fellowship. Please select "yes" to confirm that you have completed your degree-required coursework. By selecting "No," you will be prompted to end this applicaton survey.

- Yes  
 No

Predocral students must have passed their qualifying exam to be eligible to apply for a KUH FORWARD Predoctoral Fellowship. Please select "yes" to confirm that you have passed your doctoral qualifying exam. By selecting "No," you will be prompted to end this application survey.

- Yes  
 No

Postdoctoral applicants may not have more than 5 years of postdoctoral research experience to be eligible to apply for a KUH FORWARD Postdoctoral Fellowship. Please select "No" to confirm that you have not completed at least 5 years of postdoctoral research. By selecting "Yes," you will be prompted to end this applicaton survey.

- Yes  
 No

Have you received prior **NRSA** support?  Yes  
 No

Per current **NIH** guidelines, **NRSA** support is limited to 5 years for predoctoral trainees (6 years for dual-degree training), and 3 years for postdoctoral fellows.

Please provide period(s) of prior **NRSA** support:

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### Demographic Information

The demographic questions below are required by the **NIH**, and will be used for reporting purposes. Please select the answer that best applies. Declining to provide information on gender, race and ethnicity, disadvantaged background, or disability does not affect consideration of an application.

Please read the **NIH** Diversity Notice for definitions and more information.

Please select your citizenship status.  United States Citizen  
 Permanent Resident  
 Neither

**NRSA** applicants must be a United States Citizen or Permanent Resident. If you are "neither" status, then you are not eligible to apply for a **KUH FORWARD** fellowship and will be prompted to end this application survey.

Country of Citizenship:

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Gender:  Female  
 Male  
 Other  
 Do not wish to provide

Race and Ethnicity (select all that apply):  American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African American  
 Hispanic or Latino  
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
 White  
 Do not wish to provide

Are you from a disadvantaged background?  Yes  
 No  
 Do not wish to provide.

Do you have a disability(ies)?  Yes  
 No  
 Do not wish to provide.

A Chicago **KUH FORWARD** team member will follow up with selected scholars to discuss any required accommodations.



## Proposal Upload

Project Title:

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### Proposal guidelines

Predoctoral applications must include the following four components: Biosketch, Personal Statement, Project Synopsis, and Mentors' Statement of Commitment. Each component should be submitted as an individual PDF file. Please use the proper naming convention provided in parentheses for each component.

NIH Fellowship Biosketch (predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_bioketch.pdf) Personal statement (predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_statement.pdf) Synopsis of thesis project and description of cross-disciplinary mentorship team (predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_thesis.pdf) Statement of commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor (predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_mentor.pdf)

Upload Biosketch: (filename: predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_bioketch.pdf)

Upload Personal Statement: (filename: predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_statement.pdf)

Upload synopsis of thesis project with description of cross-disciplinary mentorship team: (filename: predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_synopsis.pdf)

Upload statement of commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor: (filename: predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_mentor.pdf)

### Proposal guidelines

Postdoctoral applications must include the following components: Biosketch, Personal Statement, Research Proposal, Mentors' Statement of Commitment and two letters of recommendation. Each component should be submitted as an individual PDF file. Please use the proper naming convention provided in parentheses for each component.

NIH Fellowship Biosketch (postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_biosketch.pdf) Personal statement (postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_statement.pdf) Research proposal (postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_proposal.pdf) Statement of commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor (postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_mentor.pdf) Letter of recommendation #1: (postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_rec1.pdf) Letter of recommendation #2 (postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_rec2.pdf)

Upload Biosketch: (filename: postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_biosketch.pdf)

Upload Personal Statement: (filename: predoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_statement.pdf)

Upload Research Proposal: (filename: postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_proposal.pdf)

Upload statement of commitment from primary mentor and co-mentor: (filename: postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_mentor.pdf)

Upload Letter of Recommendation #1: (filename: postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_rec1.pdf)

Upload Letter of Recommendation #2: (filename: postdoc\_2021\_YourLastName\_rec2.pdf)