

## The National Clinician Scholars Program Invites Eligible Academic Programs to Apply to Become Program Sites

### PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

Emerging from four decades of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Veterans Affairs Clinical Scholars Program, an independent group of community, health system, policy and academic partners have come together to create and launch the new [National Clinician Scholars Program](#) (NCSP), a unique two-year, site-based post-graduate training program for physicians and nurses. The inaugural sites of the NCSP, formerly Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Program sites, are the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Michigan, the University of Pennsylvania, and Yale University.

This solicitation invites eligible applicants to become NCSP sites. Selected sites will:

- a. Recruit nationally to form cohorts of high-quality Clinician Scholars.
- b. Train Clinician Scholars as change agents who use policy-relevant research and partnerships to improve health and health care locally, nationally, and globally.
- c. Provide research training, mentorship, leadership development opportunities, community engagement, cohort socialization, and resources to support the Clinician Scholars.
- d. Ensure that the formal curriculum and training at each site is consistent with national program goals.
- e. Develop and sustain partnerships that advance program goals with institutions and agencies that similarly focus on improving the health of individuals and communities;
- f. Coordinate local clinical activities for all Clinician Scholars (limited to 20% effort) compatible with local or national NCSP activities.
- g. Plan and participate in national meetings, where Clinician Scholars present projects, network with peers and leaders from other institutions, and participate in workshops.
- h. Maintain a vibrant national alumni network for all NCSP participants and graduates.
- i. Collaborate with the NCSP and all of its sites in the stewardship of this national program.

### BACKGROUND

The NCSP is designed to foster critical thinking, data-driven inquiry and scholarship to transform the practice of health care. The program trains future health system leaders in rigorous research methods, implementation science, communications, and leadership skills for roles in systems innovation, policy leadership, and academic research. The NCSP offers a unique platform for interprofessional scholars to become health system change agents who leverage policy-relevant research and professional partnerships to create new practice models that reduce disparities, improve quality, and reduce costs. Its nurse and physician scholars are positioned to drive change in academic health centers, healthcare systems, government

agencies, foundations, and think tanks around the world.

Each site uses a multi-institutional and interprofessional leadership/faculty structure with innovative training and strong mentorship to train Clinician Scholars in state-of-the-art methods for patient-centered outcomes research, policy analysis, and evaluation of private and public health system innovations. Each site funds and works directly with Clinician Scholars to identify and develop projects to cultivate their research and leadership skills. As a core training experience in the program, Clinician Scholars are immersed in community-based initiatives that aim to tackle real-world health problems in the state, the region, or the neighborhood.

Interprofessional training is a pillar of the program. Integration of physician and nurse researchers in training to advance the field of health care will shape the future of health and health care in ways that we have not seen before. Clinician Scholars who have completed their medical degree and residency training<sup>1</sup> and doctoral training in nursing will share this important experience, enhance each other's career trajectories, and build a network of health professionals to lead change in the nation.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The minimum requirements to become an NCSP site include an established institutional commitment to interprofessional collaboration, including the following:

- a. A School of Medicine and a School of Nursing capable of attracting and training talented scholars toward program goals. Ideally, to promote interprofessional education, the School of Medicine and School of Nursing will be part of the same university, health system, or other organization. If not part of the same organization, the Schools will need to describe how they have established an effective partnership that will successfully facilitate the goal of interprofessional education.
- b. Affiliation with and proximity to a Veterans Affairs Medical Center.
- c. Links to hospital or community-based clinical sites capable of supporting Clinician Scholars' clinical engagement activities.
- d. An established master's-level program in a related area tailored to the needs of scholars (e.g., health services research, health policy research, public health, etc.) or a proposal for program development and milestones to implementation. The ability to confer a degree is required.
- e. Explicit commitment from a cadre of qualified interprofessional faculty who will serve as mentors to Clinician Scholars.
- f. Explicit commitment from at least two experienced individuals—one physician, and one nurse, at a minimum—to serve as program directors.

---

<sup>1</sup> Details on scholar eligibility is provided at [nationalcsp.org](http://nationalcsp.org).

- g. Commitment of workspace for Clinician Scholars and staff.
- h. Written commitment from senior leadership stating institutional support of no less than five-years, supporting no fewer than four two-year cohorts of no fewer than five Scholars per cohort (see **Timeline** below).
- i. Agreement to adhere to all NCSP policies and procedures.
- j. Contributing to common costs at a level equal to other sites, via tithing or expense-specific payments to the common fund, as established by the National Program Board.
- k. Agreement to participate in the national application process, including collaborating with other program sites in the selection, interviewing, and ranking of applicants.

**TIMELINE:** This timeline is based on a new site’s first cohort beginning on July 1, 2019. Depending on a new site’s readiness, as determined from the site’s own self-evaluation or the judgment of the selection committee, its first cohort could begin later.

|                  | <b>Summer</b>                                                | <b>Fall</b>                                    | <b>Winter</b>                               | <b>Spring</b>                                                                                                                  |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2017-2018</b> | Aug 25, 2017: RFA application deadline                       | Nov-Dec 2017: Site visit to finalists          | Jan- Feb 2018: New site selection announced | Feb-May 2018: New site preparation begins<br><br>May 1, 2018: Application opens for Cohort 2019-21; new sites join recruitment |
| <b>2018-2019</b> |                                                              | Dec 2018: Announce Scholars for Cohort 2019-21 | Jan 2019: Cohort 2020-22 recruiting begins  |                                                                                                                                |
| <b>2019-2020</b> | July 2019: Cohort 2019-21 begins                             | Dec 2019: Announce Scholars for Cohort 2020-22 | Jan 2020: Cohort 2021-23 recruiting begins  | Site Visit                                                                                                                     |
| <b>2020-2021</b> | July 2020: Cohort 2020-22 begins, program is fully populated | Dec 2020: Announce Scholars for Cohort 2021-23 | Jan 2021: Cohort 2022-24 recruiting begins  |                                                                                                                                |
| <b>2021-2022</b> | July 2021: Cohort 2021-23 begins; cohort 2020-22 continues   | Dec 2021: Announce Scholars for Cohort 2022-24 |                                             | Site Visit – Assessment to continue to be a site beyond Cohort 2022-24                                                         |
| <b>2022-2023</b> | Cohort 2022-24 begins. Cohort 2021-23 continues              |                                                |                                             |                                                                                                                                |
| <b>2023-2024</b> | Cohort 2022-24 continues                                     |                                                |                                             | Site Visit                                                                                                                     |

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The following elements are **required** for all proposals:

1. Cover page (at the end of this document).
2. Proposal Narrative: Limit to 25 pages, using one-inch margins, Times New Roman 12-point font, single spacing:
  - a. Provide a rationale for each school's wish to participate in the program and the strengths of each school and institution that relate to their ability to launch a two-year fellowship program. Multi-institutional proposals should provide evidence of and a concrete plan for ensuring meaningful, in-person engagement across the sites.
  - b. Describe history/experience with post-doctoral/post-residency health policy/health services research leadership training programs for clinicians.
  - c. Describe the depth and breadth of interprofessional collaboration between the Schools of Medicine and Nursing and other institutional partners, such as schools of public health, public policy, etc., and provide evidence of support for and commitment to future engagement. Outline plans to incorporate interprofessional education and collaboration into all elements of the training program, including curriculum development and delivery, mentorship, trainee assessment, and program evaluation.
  - d. Identify proposed interprofessional program co-directors (minimum of one physician and one nurse), core teaching faculty and faculty research advisors and mentors, and plans for faculty collaboration and development. Describe each person named, as well as his or her role(s) in the training program, and provide their NIH biosketches. Note: co-directors should each be prepared to devote a combined effort of 40-50% to the program when fully implemented. (NIH biosketch for each named faculty member included in appendix)
  - e. Describe institutional affiliations with a VA Medical Center, including health services research carried out there and potential VA faculty liaisons.
  - f. Describe the research infrastructure and resources available at each school and institution to support the Clinician Scholars' training; provide examples of research opportunities for Scholars' engagement.
  - g. Describe record of community-based participatory research and meaningful, stable community partnerships for project collaboration. Describe relationships with community organizations and groups that have or could partner on research projects that could engage Scholars. Discuss how ties and relationships to community groups will assist in the development of community-based participatory research experiences and provide continuity to help overcome the limitations of the time constraints of a two-year fellowship in developing and conducting meaningful partnered research.
  - h. Provide evidence of accredited degree-granting authority for a master's degree in a

- related field.
- i. Describe the program philosophy and proposed plans to meet the curricular training goals, including:
    - List of courses with brief descriptions and two-year degree plan. Course syllabi may be included in the appendix.
    - Curricular/training experiences that augment formal coursework, including leadership and policy experiences. For example, describe potential off-site policy electives at local, state, and national government levels for Clinician Scholars to gain hands-on research and policy experience matched with appropriate on-site advisors.
    - Individual Scholar outputs and mentoring, including the process of identifying, developing, and facilitating Scholar project selection, completion, and impact; initial mentor assignments, accessibility of program directors and the cultivation of mentorship teams for Scholar research and career support; and evidence of a rich HSR mentor base.
    - Program evaluation activities for all items above.
  - j. Describe plans for cohort-building activities.
  - k. Describe your site's unique contribution to the national NCSP program, including how your site will supplement, strengthen, and/or enhance the NCSP.
  - l. Describe plan for clinical engagement for Clinician Scholars at 10-20% time per Scholar. Clinical engagement can occur at a range of settings that include community partners as well as formal healthcare systems, and Scholar engagement may range from direct patient care to involvement in broader system change, such as participation in a quality improvement team. Provide information on potential clinical sites for both physicians and nurses, such as population served and job description, and, where applicable, document malpractice/tort coverage provisions at participating institutions.
  - m. Describe the space that can be provided to the program, including leadership/staff space, conference space, and Scholar offices.
  - n. Describe plans for marketing the program, recruiting high-quality candidates, and the candidate selection process. Discuss how your site will help attract underrepresented minority applicants and applicants from geographic areas of the country disproportionately underrepresented in the program, including the Southwest, South, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Midwest.
3. Provide a timeline for program development and planning year between notification in January 2018 through the start of application season in May 2018 for Cohort 2019-21. (As noted above, it may be determined that a new site's first cohort will begin later than Cohort 2019-21. For initial planning purposes, however, please assume your first cohort will be Cohort 2019-21.)
  4. Provide a detailed budget and budget narrative describing revenue and expenses from application through full program implementation, including: planning costs, including

application fee, site visit, and program launch; standard stipend and benefits, tuition, training, research, and travel for Clinician Scholars in each of four Scholar cohorts; program administration costs, including contribution to National Program Common Fund at a level equal to other sites. (See Budgetary Requirements)

5. Include the following appendix materials: a) NIH biosketches for program directors and key faculty responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program, as well as selected members of the teaching and mentorship teams; b) budget table and budget narrative; c) letters of support from the VA Medical Center, as applicable; from community partners; from the deans of Schools of Medicine and Nursing that include the total revenue and its sources that will be committed; and d) from the master's-level degree-granting department or school.
- \* Additional supporting appendix material can be submitted but cannot substitute for any explicit requirements or page limits above. Such material can include: curricular material and syllabi, additional letters of support, testimonies from prior trainees on related programs, media materials, floor plans or other dedicated workspace details, highlights from programming at related research centers/departments, and other related items.

## **BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS**

Below please find the budgetary requirements for the application process and joining the NCSP.

**Application fee:** The application fee covers the cost of application review and travel for site visitors. A check in the amount of \$4,500 must accompany the application. The check should be made payable to The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania. If your site does not receive a site visit, a prorated portion of the fee will be returned to you (approximately \$4,000).

**Program Planning:** Provide a planning strategy including curriculum, recruitment of faculty, and allocation of space, and describe needed budget to execute the plan. Include a timeline for activities, a line-item budget, and budget narrative.

**Program Funding:** Funding must be secured for 5 program years, comprising four two-year cohorts of five Scholars: Cohort 1-2019-21, Cohort 2-2020-22, Cohort 3-2021-23, and Cohort 4-2022-24. While we are hopeful, we cannot confirm VA stipend support for a number of Scholars at each site at this time. We therefore ask that applicant sites budget for stipend support, benefits, training, and research funds for at least 5 Scholars per cohort. We also request budgets for five core administration years 2019-24 (approx. \$2.7M), and five National Program Common Fund years 2019-24 (\$200,000). The total commitment over 5 years is approximately \$8.0M. A budget table is provided in the application materials with guidelines for completion.

## Budget Guidelines

**Scholar Positions.** All Scholars must be funded at the same level and afforded the same support regardless of funding source. Funding for the following must be secured for each Scholar over their two-year training program.

Stipend: The stipend for Cohort 1 is \$69,000 in Year 1 and \$71,000 in Year 2. For subsequent cohorts, new sites should adhere to the pay schedule outlined in the table below. We have estimated a 35% fringe benefit rate; this rate should be adjusted according to each institution's specific fringe benefit rate.

|                         | FY<br>2020 | FY<br>2021 | FY<br>2022 | FY<br>2023 | FY<br>2024 |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| First-year<br>Scholars  | \$69K      | \$71K      | \$73K      | \$75K      | \$77K      |
| Second-year<br>Scholars |            | \$71K      | \$73K      | \$75K      | \$77K      |

Research and Training: For the inaugural cohort, each Scholar should be provided with \$25,000 of research and training support per year. This support includes: tuition/books, operations (such as phone, software, supplies, printing, postage), travel, and research project expenses (such as research personnel, subject incentives, data sets, transcription services). The anticipated cost of travel to the NCSP meeting (required of each Scholar) is \$2,500 per Scholar per year. Scholars must also be provided an additional \$1,800 per year for travel to scientific meeting(s) to present their work or for networking experiences. Research and training costs should be increased 3% per year. Note: expenses for board review preparatory courses, travel to board exams, clinical training, and clinical licensing should be absorbed by the individual or institution and should not be included here.

**Core Administration.** Program administration is essential to the success of the Scholars and the program. Core administration provides the central infrastructure for all program operations, and dedicated personnel time and space are needed for: coordination of day-to-day operations; scheduling and coordination of meetings and events; liaisoning with the degree-granting programs and clinical credentialing and appointment offices; financial management and tracking; mentorship and training; travel to the national meeting; research project coordination, including hiring staff, review of IRB applications, as well as report writing. The estimated requirement for funding support for core administration expenses is approximately \$500,000 per year; required expenses are listed below. Core funding must be available for the full two years of each cohort. Core administration costs should be increased 3% per year.

Personnel: Salary support information for program faculty and staff should include base

salaries, percent effort, and fringe benefits. Sufficient faculty and administrative FTEs should be included in the core administrative budget, including support for a liaison for community partner activities. Support for 1.5 FTEs for faculty and 1.5 FTEs for administrative staff are suggested. Any effort paid to mentors or instructors for seminars that fall outside the degree program for which tuition is paid should also be included in the budget. Year-to-year salary increases should not exceed 3% annually.

Core Travel: Travel should be included for at least 5 team members, including faculty, administration, and partners, for attendance at the annual national meeting. This is expected to be \$2,500 per person in the inaugural year, with an anticipated increase of 3% per year.

Meeting expenses: Facility rental and food and beverage costs for events are permissible for cohort and partnership building. Permissible events include welcome events for new cohorts, graduation celebrations, receptions for visiting speakers, research-in-progress meetings, and orientations for Scholars and partners. Include calculations for the number and type of events, anticipated number of attendees, costs per person, estimated facility rental fees, etc.

Community Partnership: Funding must be devoted to supporting and maintaining community partner engagement. Permissible expenses include honorariums, support for individual community partners/consultants/liaisons, costs associated with creating and hosting joint training opportunities (seminars, symposiums, short-term institutes), and contributions to community partner organizations for their participation in Scholar projects.

Office operations: Supplies, computers, network access, postage, printing, and phone are essentials for program operations.

**National Program Common Fund:** For the functions provided by the central administration of the national program, each site must contribute annually to the common fund provided to the site that houses the the chair of the executive committee of the national program. For 2016-2021, that site is the University of Pennsylvania. The common funds provide support for national recruitment efforts; central administration of the application system and national selection; perpetuation of the NCSP partnership with the VA Office of Academic Affiliations; maintenance of the national website; coordination and travel for annual site visits; tracking of bylaws; operations; and all meetings, such as national monthly program director conference calls and other committees; and coordination of the national meeting, among other national functions. New sites should plan to contribute \$40,000 per year to the common fund initially, with the understanding that this amount may increase over time.

**Note:** Any indirect costs charged by the recipient or funding institution must be over and above the listed amounts below.

## **Required Budget Materials**

Complete Table 1 Budget Template provided in the application materials and a detailed budget narrative addressing each item according to the budget guidelines provided here. Include all revenue sources for the proposed budget and demonstrate full and committed support for 5 program years.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Applications are due by **August 25, 2017, at 5 PM ET**. Visit our website at <http://nationalcsp.org/new-site> to download additional copies of this document and Table 1 Budget Template. Completed applications must include all proposal and budgetary requirements outlined above.

Please express-mail one hard copy of your completed application and an electronic PDF version on a USB drive to:

National Clinician Scholars Program – RFA  
c/o Ivelys Figueroa  
Central Administrative Director  
423 Guardian Drive, Blockley 1312C  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6021

## **DUE DATES AND TIMELINE**

- March 31, 2017: Release of RFA
- Spring 2017: Webinars for prospective applicants
- August 25, 2017: Application due at 5 PM ET
- November 1-December 15, 2017: Site visit to finalists
- January-February 2018: Site selection announced
- February-May 2018: Selected site preparation
- May 1, 2018: Recruitment begins, and application opens for Cohort 2019-21
- July 1, 2019: Cohort 2019-21 begins

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Finalists and awardees will be selected by the NCSP National Program Board (NPB). The NPB comprises the Deans of Nursing and Medicine from the four current sites, national VA representation, community representatives, and prominent external leaders in health care.

All applications will be reviewed and scored using the following criteria. Specific feedback and

scores are for internal use only; overall scores only will be shared with applicants upon request.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Evaluation Criteria and Scoring System</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>1) Strength of Affiliations and Commitment to Program Goals: 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p>1.1. Strength of commitment from Schools of Medicine and Nursing to program goals; strength of capacity to attract and train high-quality interprofessional Scholars to meet program goals.</p> <p>1.2. Strength of affiliation with Veterans Affairs Medical Center.</p> <p>1.3. Links with health system or community-based clinical sites capable of supporting Clinician Scholars’ clinical engagement activities.</p> <p>1.4. Schools’ commitments to and success with interprofessional training, faculty and trainee collaboration, and faculty development.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>2) Strength of Curriculum and Training Resources: 25 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>2.1. Breadth and strength of research infrastructure and availability of interprofessional research projects, experiences, resources, and funding opportunities for Scholar training and research collaboration.</p> <p>2.2. Depth, scope, and diversity of research expertise among the cadre of qualified interprofessional faculty who will serve as research mentors to Scholars.</p> <p>2.3. Ability to provide a tailored educational experience through an existing master's-level program in a related area (e.g., health services research, health policy research, public health, etc.) or one being developed for the application.</p> <p>2.4. Strength of interprofessional integration in all elements of the training program, including curriculum development and delivery, mentorship, trainee assessment, and program evaluation.</p> <p>2.5. Established record of community-based participatory research and meaningful, stable community partnerships to support community-engaged projects.</p> |
| <b>3) Strength of Leadership, Instructors, and Mentors: 20 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p>3.1. Explicit commitment from a cadre of qualified interprofessional faculty who will serve as mentors and instructors to Clinician Scholars.</p> <p>3.2. Explicit commitment from at least two experienced individuals—one physician, and one nurse, at a minimum—to serve as program directors.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>4) Strength of Ability to Meet Program Operations Requirements: 15 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>4.1. Demonstrated commitment to and sufficiency of institutional support of no less than five years, supporting no fewer than four two-year cohorts.</p> <p>4.2. Commitment of workspace for Clinician Scholars and staff.</p> <p>4.3. Commitment to adhere to all NCSP policies and procedures.</p> <p>4.4. Agreement to contribute to common costs at a level equal to other sites as established by the National Program Board.</p> <p>4.5. Agreement to participate in the national application process, including collaborating with other program sites in the recruitment, selection, interviewing, and ranking of applicants.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>5) Capacity to and experience with recruiting and mentoring diverse pool of Scholar candidates, in particular underrepresented groups. 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>6) Contribution of the site to advancing the national NCSP program. 5 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>7) Overall assessment that site will offer innovative interprofessional research and leadership training guiding Scholars to become leaders and change agents in health care. 10 points</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Total Available Points: 100 points</b> |
|-------------------------------------------|

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct any inquiries to [admin@nationalcsp.org](mailto:admin@nationalcsp.org) or (215) 746-3840.

