



Yale Center for Clinical Investigation

Date: February 8, 2023

To: Deans, Chairs, and Yale Faculty

From: Marcella Nuñez-Smith, Co-Director, Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists
Keith Choate, Co-Director, Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists

Re: Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists (FRCS)

2023 Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists (FRCS)

We are writing to announce a request for applications for supplemental research support from early-career physician-scientists and scientists who face significant caregiving demands. The goal of the program is to retain such scientists in the research enterprise. Funding is provided by the Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists at the Yale School of Medicine (FRCS), funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and the Yale School of Medicine. Our process will consider the degree of demonstrated caregiving burden and prioritize applicants with limited access to other resources, such as institutional support packages. Funds can be used to “buy out” clinical obligations or to hire additional research staff to optimize research activities.

Applicants must have a compelling, time-sensitive need for the funds to regain research momentum because of increased family caregiving responsibilities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, another disease, or hardship. Typically, this would be childcare, partner care, and/or eldercare, but applicants may make a case for other reasonable family caregiving responsibilities.

Key Dates

Application due date: **Friday, March 17, 2023**

Earliest anticipated start date: **Monday, May 1, 2023**

Eligibility

- Applicants must have a full-time faculty appointment at the Yale School of Medicine as Assistant Professor or Instructor at the time of the award.
- Faculty at the Yale School of Public Health are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants may not have been a faculty member for more than ten years by the anticipated award start date of May 1, 2023. The 10-year period is cumulative and includes all appointments as Assistant Professor, Associate Research Scientist, Lecturer, or Instructor at any institution (any part-time appointments and leaves of absence should be described and will be considered in calculating the total time at a faculty rank).
- Applicants with an MD or a DO degree must have a current US medical license.
- Applicants with a PhD degree are eligible.
- Applicants must demonstrate a compelling need for the supplement related to being a caregiver.
- Applicants must have an active intra or extramural career development award or research project grant with annual direct costs sufficient to provide both research and salary support. Internal start-up funds do not satisfy this requirement.

- Applicants must have a minimum of 50% effort allocation to research at the time of application.
- Applicants must show evidence of strong research training and productivity.
- Applicants must be conducting an original and rigorous clinical research project that has the potential to address a health issue that poses a significant clinical burden (with considerable morbidity and mortality, whether it is a rare or common condition) and that has the potential for societal benefit. Clinical research is defined as the scientific investigation of the etiology, prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of human disease using human subjects, human populations, or materials of human origin. Included in the definition are studies that utilize tissues or pathogens only if they can be linked to a patient.
- Previous awardees may request a second year of support in select circumstances if well-justified and if previously awarded funds have been expended by the anticipated start date.

Budget

- Applicants are eligible to request up to \$40,000 for research support for a one-year period. The final funding amount will be decided by the review committee based on the statement of need, how support will alleviate, in the short term, the impact of caregiving responsibilities on the research program, and available funding.
- Applicants or their departments are encouraged to provide matching funds for 25% of the requested amount; these funds can come from startup funds, departmental funds, or other unrestricted discretionary funds.
- Funds must be used to further research. Examples include technical support, grant-writing support, or buy-out of required clinical time so that more time can be spent on research. The funds may not be used for the following:
 - Childcare or other caregiving costs directly,
 - Research costs that would not directly help Program Scholars reclaim their research time, or
 - Travel
- Funds may not be used to support experiments that utilize animals or primary tissues derived from animals.

Evaluation Criteria

- Need for additional support is the critical driver. We evaluate the need for additional support as a function of what is needed and what is already provided by the institution or other research grants. For example, candidates with a high level of need and limited access to other institutional resources will be given higher consideration than candidates with access to resources that could be used to achieve the same purposes as this funding mechanism. Candidates who demonstrate a high level of caregiving burden will be ranked higher than individuals who demonstrate low levels of caregiving burden.
- Salience of Support. How likely is it that funds provided by the funding mechanism will allow the candidate to achieve their research goals? Will the award substantially increase the likelihood that the candidate will continue as an academic researcher?
- Academic achievements to date. Does the candidate have rigorous training in clinical research? Is the candidate's academic, clinical, and research record of high quality?
- Academic potential. What is the likelihood that the Career Development and Mentoring Plan will contribute positively to the scientific development of the applicant? Do letters of support indicate confidence in the applicant's career potential? What is the likelihood that the applicant will achieve scientific independence?

Application Process

- The application package with detailed instructions is available for download on the YCCI website.
- Applications must be submitted by Friday, March 17, 2023, using the online form available on the YCCI website.

Other Terms and Conditions

- Recipients must provide a proposed start date (no earlier than May 1, 2023). All required approvals (IRB, IACUC, etc.) must be obtained by the proposed start date.

Examples of Significant Caregiving Demands

Example 1: An assistant professor in Pediatrics is the PI on a K08 award in which she is assessing the use of school-based clinics to increase immunization rates with the HPV vaccine. She has two young children who attend daycare and another in elementary school. She is reaching a point in her study where she will need to be at school late in the afternoon two days a week and needs to spend more time working on the analysis of the qualitative component of the study. She plans to apply for the Doris Duke award and will use the funds to buy out the two afternoons of clinical time. This will allow her to spend the time needed to conduct her study and still be able to pick up her children some afternoons.

Example 2: An assistant professor in Neurology has been traveling frequently to support his father, who was recently diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. His mother passed away several years ago, and he is in the process of moving his father to Connecticut to enable him to care for his father more closely. This situation forced him to take time away from his research study in which he sees patients in follow-up and recruits new patients. He is applying for the Doris Duke award to hire a research assistant to see the patients in follow-up. The extra help will enable him to catch up with recruitment to complete the study on time.

Example 3: An assistant professor in Psychiatry recently initiated her K23 award. Her research project involves formative research to lay the groundwork for an intervention to prevent opioid addiction in young adults. Her husband has been diagnosed with Hodgkin Lymphoma. The prognosis is good, but she needs to attend to increased childcare duties while her husband is in treatment. She plans to use Doris Duke funding to hire an analyst to assist her in coding and analyzing qualitative interview transcripts.

Contacts

Administrative Contact

Christine A. Costantino, MBA, PMP
Project Manager for Education and Training, YCCI
christine.costantino@yale.edu

Scientific Contacts

Marcella Nuñez-Smith, MD, MHS
Co-Director, Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists at Yale School of Medicine
marcella.nunez-smith@yale.edu

Keith Choate, MD, PhD
Co-Director, Fund to Retain Clinical Scientists at Yale School of Medicine
keith.choate@yale.edu