NEW JERSEY ALLIANCE FOR CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE (NJ ACTS) FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: Postdoctoral Fellows Only

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Overview
Funded by the National Institutes of Health under its Clinical and Translational Sciences Award program, the TL1 award supports predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows who are seeking a broad introduction to clinical and translational research. The goal of the TL1 training award is to provide career development, beyond that encountered in traditional pre-doctoral programs, by focusing on the knowledge and expertise needed to conduct translational team research across disciplines.

The NJ ACTS Fellowship Program
The goal of the NJ ACTS training program is to develop translational scientists who can think across systems and are skilled communicators, rigorous researchers, domain experts, process innovators, and team players who are able to cross the boundaries that traditionally separate disciplines (see figure, right). To accomplish this, and in collaboration with the TL1 Research Preceptor (defined as the primary research mentor), the fellow and the TL1 leadership will design a personalized program based on each fellow’s prior experience, current research project and future research goals. This training program will run simultaneously with the fellows’ ongoing research training, affording the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills needed to achieve their goals and the goals of the program. It will focus on both didactic and experiential learning opportunities, incorporating the clinical/translational components of the TL1 program into the fellow’s ongoing research project, culminating in a Rutgers Certificate in Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS) upon program completion.

The requirements and opportunities of the TL1 Training program include:
- Each Fellow will develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to guide training and acquisition of translational science knowledge and skills. The IDPs will include a research question, hypothesis, study design and approach and a narrative statement of longer-term career aspirations.
- Fellows will also participate in a Core Curriculum comprised of courses appropriate to
their research and level of training. Training plans include required and elective didactic programs, NJACTS-sponsored seminars/workshops, and other career development programs.

- A required **Core Curriculum** is based on an expectation that a number of core competencies will be achieved.
- We anticipate that this **Core curriculum** will require an average of ~10-15% of the fellow’s time during each year of the 3-year training period, and will require an additional 2-4 courses beyond the fellow’s prior coursework. **Required courses** include Responsible Conduct of Research, Biostatistics/Scientific Rigor and Responsibility, Grant-writing, and Team Science; prior successful participation in a for-credit course may substitute for a required course at the discretion of the TL1 leadership and mentoring committee. Each trainee, in conjunction with their Mentorship Committee, will define a personalized curriculum.
- A variety of experiential learning opportunities will also be available (for example, shadowing clinicians, participating in computational studies, community outreach) and a minimum of 24 of these contact hours (3 days) are required for completion of the program.
- Fellows will be expected to publish their findings in well-respected scientific journals and prepare applications for fellowships and/or independent funding prior to program completion.

**TL1 Award Provisions**
The NJ ACTS TL1 award will support 5-6 fellows each year. **The award provides each fellow a full first year of support that includes:**

- Full stipend/salary and benefits
- Tuition (for participation in CCTS coursework)
- $10,000 for research-related expenses.

Participation in the program **requires a total commitment of 3 years**, including an initial year of support from the TL1 award. This will afford the flexibility to schedule the didactic and experiential learning experiences to avoid a negative impact on the progress of the fellow’s primary research/program commitments; it will also provide an opportunity for peer mentoring of future fellow cohorts. The program also requires a commitment to provide follow-up information annually.

**Eligibility Criteria for Postdoctoral Applicants**
To be eligible for the NJ ACTS Trainee Program, postdoc applicants must:

- Be a postdoctoral trainee at Rutgers, NJIT or Princeton University.
- **Be a US citizen or a Permanent Resident of the US.**
- Have a strong science background, as demonstrated by performance in didactic courses, prior research experience and letters of reference.
- Have a research Preceptor or Co-Preceptor who is a member of the **NJ ACTS Academy of Mentors** (see attached list) or fulfills the requirements of an Academy Mentor and is accepted into the Academy prior to review of the applications.
- Be involved in a research project with strong translational potential, and be committed to applying the knowledge acquired during the TL1 training program to moving the current research project along the translational research spectrum.
- Have joined a laboratory and be able to articulate a mature and complete proposal of the agreed research project by the due date of the application.
- Not currently hold an externally-funded research fellowship.
- Commit a minimum of 3 years to the program (with one year funded by this award).

We strongly encourage applications from groups that are underrepresented in medicine and translational research including, but not limited to, gender and ethnic minorities and individuals with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**A complete application comprises:**

- The Application Form, which includes:
Completed applications should be sent to the Program Director, Dr. Kathleen Scotto (Kathleen.scotto@rutgers.edu) and the Program Administrator, Dr. Wayne Zhou (wz241@gsbs.rutgers.edu), by 5:00 pm EST on the application due date.

Key Dates:
- Applications due: Nov. 18, 5:00pm
- Earliest Award Start Date: Dec. 10, 2019

Selection Process
Applications will be reviewed by the Executive Committee. A subset of applicants may be contacted for in-person interviews. Final selections will be based upon the initial application as well as written evaluations from each interviewing faculty member.

NJ ACTS Academy of Mentors
All research preceptors must be members of the NJ ACTS Academy of Mentors. Preceptors who are not currently members of the Academy can apply for membership prior to the TL1 application deadline. Please contact Dr. Kathleen Scotto kathleen.scotto@rutgers.edu for details. A list of current Academy preceptors is attached.

A Preceptor is the primary research mentor (i.e. Principal Investigator) for postdoctoral trainees. Preceptors are expected to play an active role during the course of the award by fostering the applicant’s career development as a translational/clinical scientist. They are expected to act as advocates for the applicant at the departmental, institutional and professional levels and provide scientific guidance for the proposed project. In addition to his/her research preceptor, each fellow will establish a mentoring committee that includes faculty whose translational or clinical research expertise is pertinent to the research project, and will supplement that of the research preceptor.
Fellow Evaluation
Evaluation and feedback is an important component of the Program and is intended to provide positive and actionable feedback to the Fellow. Specific components include:

- The Mentorship Committee, which includes the thesis/primary research mentor, other scientific mentors as required by the academic program, and a TL1-specific mentor will monitor research and career progress biannually, utilizing student grades, research accomplishments and progress on the fellow’s original goals and activities as outlined in the IDP.
- The Fellow will submit a brief written progress report of his/her accomplishments to the Mentorship Committee biannually.
- The Fellow will also provide feedback to the Executive Committee (EC) on his/her view of the components of the training program, including recommendations for improvement.
- The Trainee’s Mentorship Committee will complete a biannual written evaluation form for submission, along with the Trainee’s self-evaluation, to the EC.
- The trainee will be expected to participate in NJ ACTS workshops and seminar series and present his/her research accomplishments at the annual retreat.
- A formal review of the Fellow will be performed annually by the EC. Further participation in the program will be based on:
  - Successful progress in the primary research project
  - Successful completion of the first-year personalized curriculum as outlined by the Fellow’s Mentoring Committee.
  - Successful presentations (oral and/or written) at designated CTSA events (i.e. seminar series, workshops, retreats).
  - Preparation of an application for additional mentored research or career development.

Please direct all questions to the Program Administrator:
Wayne Zhou, Ph.D.
School of Graduate Studies- Biomedical and Health Sciences
Rutgers, State University of New Jersey
Email: wz241@gsbs.rutgers.edu
NJ ACTS Fellowship Program

Academy of Mentors (Preceptor) List

Rutgers University Faculty

Aleksunes, Lauren M.  Freundlich, Joel  Mouradian, M. Maral
Alland, David  Ganesan, Shridar  Panettieri, Reynold
Aston-Jones, Gary  Gennaro, Maria  Pang, Zhiping
Bandera, Elisa  Guo, Grace L.  Parekkadan, Biju
Birge, Raymond  Halkitis, Perry  Pilch, Daniel S.
Brzustowicz, Linda M  Howell, Roger W  Radovick, Sally
Cantor, Joel  Hudson, Shawna  Ramasubbu, Narayanan
Chang, Theresa  Jacinto, Estela  Sadoshima, Junichi
Coups, Elliot J  Kohn, Joachim  Salgade, Padmini
Crabtree, Ben  Kong, Tony  Sant'Angelo, Derek B.
Crystal, Steven  Kotenko, Sergei  Setoguchi, Soko
DiCicco-Bloom, Emanuel  Laumbach, Robert  Silverstein, Steven
Dong, XinQi  Laskin, Debra  Stock, Ann M
Douglas, Nataki  Libutti, Steven  Thomas, Andrew
Dreyfus, Cheryl F.  Lobel, Peter  Vatner, Stephen F.
Dubnau, David  Margolis, David  Weisel, Clifford
Escobar, Javier  Matise, Michael  White, Eileen
Fine, Daniel H.  Michniak-Kohn, Bozena  Wondisford, Frederic
Fitzgerald-Bocarsly, Pat  Minko, Tamara  Xia, Bing
Foran, David, J  Moghe, Prabhas  Yarmush, Martin
  Monheit, Alan  Zheng, X.F. Steven

Princeton University Faculty

Boulangier, Lisa  Gitai, Zemer  Rabinowitz, Joshua
Burdine, Rebecca  Kang, Yibin  Salganik, Matthew
Cohen, Jonathan  McLanahan, Sara  Schwarzbaier, Jean
Currie, Janet  Murphy, Coleen  Shenk, Thomas
Daw, Nathaniel  Niv, Yael  Taylor, Jordan
Donia, Mohamed  Norman, Ken  Troyanskaia, Olga
Engelhart, Barbara  Notterman, Daniel  Wang, Samuel
Enquist, Lynn W.  Ploss, Alexander  Witten, Ilana

New Jersey Institute of Technology Faculty

Arinzeh, Treena  Pfister, Bryan