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**Institute for Research**

**Clinical Research Scholars Program**

Call for Applications for 2025-2026

*Sponsored by*

Professional Development Core

Northern New England Clinical and Translational Research Network

*Key dates: Letter of Intent due April 30, 2025*

*Invitations for full proposal announced May 30, 2025*

*Full proposals due July 30, 2025*

# Purpose. The Northern New England Clinical and Translational Research Network (NNE-CTR) has the goal of supporting junior faculty in becoming independent investigators leading clinical and translational research projects. Our Clinical Research Scholars Program will support junior clinicians to enable them to lead rigorous and significant research projects, publish and present their research, and be competitive for research funding. We seek to support clinicians who intend to maintain research efforts as a part of their career; this program will support 15% effort at the NIH salary cap for one year. The first round of evaluation is a one-page letter of intent, a current biosketch, and a letter of support from the candidate’s department head. The application may describe a research project or may be for time to develop a manuscript or a research grant proposal.

## Eligibility. Candidates must be NNE-CTR members who are MaineHealth junior faculty (assistant professor or equivalent) with clinically relevant degrees (e.g., MD, DO, PhD, PharmD, ScD, PsyD, NP, RN). Preference will be given to candidates with strong ongoing research programs and active MaineHealth IRB-approved protocols as applicable.

**Letter of Intent (deadline April 30, 2025).** Submit together in one PDF document the following:

* One page letter of intent (instructions attached)
* Signed letter from department head, indicating approval and support for protected research time of 15% (6 hours per week), acknowledging that funding from the Clinical Research Scholars Program is provided at the NIH salary cap, and verifying that the appropriate financial arrangements will be in place to supplement the candidate’s research salary
* Candidate current [NIH Biosketch](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm)

Please submit letters of intent to Meredith Oestreicher by March 30, 2025 to

Meredith.Oestreicher@mainehealth.org

Direct question on this program to Dr. Ivette Emery at Ivette.Emery@mainehealth.org

**Application and Submission Information**

**Letters of Intent.** Letters of intent will be reviewed by a panel consisting of members from the NNE-CTR. Strong candidates will have a track record of scholarly activity with a currently active IRB-approved research study protocol, some research training and experience, a suitable research mentor, and have a well thought-out and feasible plan for incorporating research into their career. We will also consider whether the goals of the applicant are in alignment with the overall goals of the NNE-CTR. The review of the letters of intent will be a competitive process; a subset of letters of intent will be invited to submit a full application. The application may involve the continuation or expansion of a current research project, and/or work on a manuscript or a research grant proposal.

**Invitation for Full Proposal.** Candidates will be invited for submission of a full proposal by **April 30, 2025**. The full proposal will include: Specific Aims (1 page), Research Strategy (6 pages), Human Subjects, and Vertebrate Animals sections (if applicable). For applications that describe a current research project, regulatory approvals must be in place prior to funding.

**Allowable Budget.** The Clinical Research Scholar will receive 15% protected research time (312 hours / year; 6 hours per week) at the NIH salary cap of $203,700 (the cap in effect when the grants were funded). It is important to note that the candidate’s home department will be responsible for covering additional salary over the cap for the 15% effort. There is no budget required in the application.

**Mentoring.** An essential component of the Clinical Research Scholar Program is a mentoring team consisting of at least two faculty members. One identified mentor is required for the letter of intent, and successful candidates will be provided support as needed for the identification of a second mentor. Clinical Research Scholars are required to meet formally with mentors on a quarterly basis, and the program will be initiated with establishment of an Individual Development Plan (template will be provided) to outline career, research, and professional goals, with focus on strengths and areas for additional training. Subsequent quarterly mentor meetings will document research progress, barriers, and recommendations. Submission of documentation of these mentorship meetings is a requirement of this funding.

**Research Presentations.** The Clinical Research Scholar will develop two research presentations annually, one of which will be a presentation to a broad audience, such as the MaineHealth Lambrew Research Retreat (oral presentation or poster presentation) or a similar venue. Documentation of these research presentations, as well as any attendance and research presentations at conferences, meetings, or workshops is a requirement of this funding. Opportunities for presentation include NNE-CTR-sponsored events, annual retreats of the NNE-CTR, and programmatic meetings.

**Reporting Requirements.** In addition to the documentation above, Research Scholars and their Mentors commit to submitting annual reports to the NIH that include: publications (submitted or published), external grant applications (submitted or awarded), presentations given related to research scholar’s research project, accomplishments and issues encountered related to research scholar’s research project, additional NNE-CTR assistance received, participation in professional development activities, students mentored (fellows, residents, graduate, or undergraduate), and an updated NIH Biosketch. If the project includes a human subjects protocol, annual updates regarding enrollment are also required.

**Clinical Research Scholar Letter of Intent**

*Provide this information in a 1-page format, and include the department head letter of support and candidate’s*

*current NIH biosketch in one PDF file. Submit this PDF file to Meredith Oestreicher by March 30, 2025 at* *Meredith.Oestreicher@mainehealth.org*

Please read the description of the Clinical Research Scholar program to determine your eligibility for the goals of the program. Address the following briefly in your letter of intent:

* Current position, research areas of interest, and plans for having research as part of your career with approximate total effort dedicated to research (current or planed)
* Brief description of the proposed research activities for this funding mechanism
* Description of a proposed mentor for this research and the relationship to the candidate
* Description of current resources already available for the research of the candidate
* Identification of current challenges to success of the candidate’s research
* Indication of whether a proposed research project includes human subjects and/or vertebrate animals, and confirmation that active protocols have regulatory approval
* Future plans for preparing manuscripts, presentations, or grant applications with the proposed research

Submission of the letter of intent packet indicates agreement of the candidate and the department head to abide by the institutional and NIH requirements for the Clinical Research Scholars Program.

**NOTE: The department chair letter must include the following statement: “I agree to provide protected research time of six hours per week (15% effort). I also understand that the NIH provides salary support up to the salary cap of $203,700. If the candidate’s salary is above this cap, my department will supplement any additional salary needed.**