KidneyCure

The ASN Foundation CureKidneyDiseases.org

Early Career Training Grant Pilot Program

Application Instructions

Purpose

The goal of the Early Career Training Grant Pilot Program is to increase the number of independent kidney researchers by providing protected time for senior post-docs, clinical fellows participating in research oriented fellowships, and early career faculty interested in kidney research. This grant is intended to provide protected time to awardees to help strengthen their application for a career development grant (e.g., a K grant from the National Institutes of Health or equivalent). The ideal candidate would be an individual who has completed 2-3 years of research training and needs support for the next 2 years.

Applicants interested in clinical, translational, implementation and basic science may submit a research proposal that examines any aspect of the entire spectrum of kidney biology and disease. KidneyCure invites applications from individuals whose personal backgrounds or life experiences may contribute valuable perspectives to nephrology, particularly those who have encountered barriers to entry in the field and candidates who are not eligible for federal training grants because of immigration status. KidneyCure grants are available to non-US Citizens so long as they are working in North or Central America or in the Caribbean region during the grant term.

Eligibility

This mechanism is intended for applicants who are not eligible for a Ben J. Lipps Research Fellowship and who are not ready to apply for a Transition to Independence Grant. Applicants may only apply to one KidneyCure grant mechanism per grant cycle. Please consult with KidneyCure to determine which mechanism is right for you.

To apply, candidates:

1. Must hold an MD, DO, PhD, or equivalent degree.
2. Must be less than seven years from earning an MD, DO, MD/PhD, or equivalent (excluding residency, fellowship, and any time spent earning a Masters in Clinical Research) on July 1, 2027
3. Must be less than seven years from earning a PhD on July 1, 2027.
4. Must be an active member of ASN when the application cycle closes on Thursday, November 19, 2026. The sponsor and all co-sponsors of the candidate must also be active members of ASN when the application cycle closes on Thursday, November 19, 2026.
5. Must complete research under the direction and mentorship of a sponsor.
6. Must be working in North or Central America, or the Caribbean during the grant period.
7. Must commit a minimum of 75% time to research during the award period.
8. May not hold an academic title higher than an Assistant Professor.

Review Criteria and Review Process

The review panel will assess each application based on the following review criteria:

1. The potential of the applicant to be competitive for K level funding from the National Institutes of Health (or equivalent), or other equivalent career trajectory grant if ineligible for NIH funding by the end of the grant period.

2. The qualifications of the applicant with respect to prior training, productivity, independence, collaborative spirit and a vision for impact, as well as the scientific merit of the proposed project.
3. The applicant's potential for success in building programs in the basic science, translational science and clinical science domains.
4. The sponsor's track record of developing independent kidney researchers and the institution's ability to support an independent research career will also be considered.
5. The institutions commitment to provide cost sharing and resources to grant the completion of the prosed study.

Applicants can expect to receive notice of their status in the early spring following the application deadline.

KidneyCure will make an Award solely in accordance with KidneyCure policies, payment, and schedule regulations as described in the original Notice of Award and Grant Stipulations.

Extension Requests

KidneyCure will consider extension requests to the 2nd and 3rd eligibility criteria on a case-by-case basis. Applicants must submit supporting documentation for requests, which can include family care responsibilities, medical concerns, disability, natural disasters, and active-duty military service.

An automatic 12-month extension will be applied per childbirth during the eligibility period. All parents, including those who adopt, are eligible for this particular extension.

To submit an extension request, please email grants@asn-online.org prior to the application deadline

Funding and Stipulations

- The Early Career Training Grant Pilot Program provides each awardee with $75,000 annually for up to two years, to begin on July 1 of the award year. Payments will be made to the recipient's institution and must be used only for salary support, including fringe benefits. Funds cannot be used for project costs, travel expenses, or overhead/indirect costs.
- Research must begin on July 1, 2027; **research start dates cannot be deferred**.
- Recipients cannot hold another training grant or be included on an institutional training grant concurrently with the Early Career Training Grant. Institutional support (salary and other funding) of the applicant sufficient to complete the project is permitted and expected. Additionally, applicants may receive salary support from institutional funds or from research grants (e.g., the Sponsor's R01).
- A progress report and financial report are required for non-competitive renewal of the grant for the second year. Final reports are also required at the end of the funding period. The award is for continuous support, and interruptions in the period of support will require written approval from KidneyCure.
- Recipients shall acknowledge KidneyCure's support in publications resulting from their proposed work.
- Grants may be transferred from one institution to another only with the prior approval of KidneyCure.
- Early Career Training Grants are not renewable. Applicants may only submit one application during a cycle.

Application Process

Applicants and mentors for the Early Career Training Grant Pilot Program must be current, active ASN members to begin an application. To become a member, please visit the ASN Membership webpage.

Application and Document Formatting

To apply for a research fellowship, an applicant must provide:

I. Contact Information and Project Title

II. NIH Applicant Biosketch and NIH Biosketch Supplement, produced using the NIH Biographical Sketch Common Form.

III. KidneyCure Biosketch Supplement – Applicant (only relevant if an applicant's ORID ID link does not capture all publications or if the applicant has other support)
   a. Relevant full-length publications or articles in press (not abstracts or submitted publications) of the applicant and exact order of authorship and journal name. A link to the complete list of published work in the applicant's bibliography must be included. Please test the link to be sure it is available in a public format for reviewers to access.
   b. Prior, current, and pending research support (include grant number and agency; contact PI and role; award start and end date; title; and specific aims).

IV. Sponsor(s) Biosketch and Biosketch Supplement **More than one Sponsor is permitted, so long as each sponsor's role is clearly defined and a primary sponsor is identified.**
   a. For applications with co-sponsors, please submit a biosketch for each co-sponsor

V. Current and Pending Other Support Common Form
   a. Prior (past five years), current, and pending research support (include grant number and agency; contact PI and role; award start and end date; title; and specific aims).

VI. Research Project Plan (Maximum of 7 pages total, not including references)
   a. Roadmap to Next Step in Research Career (2-page maximum)
      i. The Roadmap to Next Step in Research Career must include the applicant's career plan and goals (1 page) and sponsor's involvement (1 page). ***This must be written by the applicant.***
         1. Roadmap Prompts
            a. *How will you use funding to get you to your next career step?*
            b. *What areas are you interested in?*
            c. *Where do you see yourself going?*
            d. *How is the funding going to help you get there?*
         2. Sponsor's Involvement Prompts
            a. *How do you view your mentor's involvement in reaching the project goals and in the development of your career?*
            b. *How do the proposed research objectives differ from the research of the mentor/sponsor/principal investigator?*
   b. Abstract (half page maximum)
      i. The summary should be no more than 500 words single spaced and include a brief discussion of the proposed research and an indication of the potential benefits to a patient with kidney disease. Scientific jargon, abbreviations and complex discussions should be avoided.
   c. Specific Aims (1-page maximum)
   d. Preliminary Work, Proposed Research Strategy and Potential Problems (3 pages maximum)
   e. References (e.g., cited literature)

VII. Letter of Support from Sponsor

The letter from the sponsor should be written by the primary sponsor. The letter should:
   a. Describe the plans for the candidate both during and after the grant year(s), addressing:
      i. Whether the candidate is likely to become a faculty member at the sponsoring institution or elsewhere
      ii. Whether the candidate is likely to pursue a career in research
   b. Specify how the proposed research program will provide the applicant with the necessary skills and training to pursue an independent investigative career upon completion of the training period and the career expectations for the candidate. Describe how the candidate's proposed research objectives are independent from those of the sponsor/mentor. The sponsor must

carefully and unequivocally detail previous training of the applicant in order to allow assessment of the applicant's eligibility and potential for independence.

c. Comment on the role of the candidate in preparing the proposal for KidneyCure funding, as the process of applying for training support is itself part of the career development experience.
d. Include a mentoring statement that describes the mentor's contribution to the research plan.
e. Provide a list of previous mentees with outcomes; co-mentorship is encouraged if mentor is still establishing a training record.
f. Provide a statement of the relationship between the proposed research plan and source of funding.

VIII. Letter from the institution documenting permission to submit the application (this letter should be submitted by an institution or department official/representative, not the sponsor/mentor).

a. The letter should include a statement that the applicant's institution is aware of the program guidelines and has approved submission of the application.

IX. Two (2) Additional Reference Letters

a. Reference letters must be submitted prior to the application deadline and once submitted cannot be edited.
b. Reference letters should be written by persons familiar with the candidate's scientific interests and abilities. Letters are submitted blindly and can be addressed to the KidneyCure Grants Review Committee. Applicants cannot submit the letters.

Additionally, the proposal must follow NIH guidelines, including the following formatting guidelines:

- Font size must be 11 points or larger. Smaller text in figures, graphs, diagrams and charts is acceptable as long as it is legible when the page is viewed at 100%. Recommended fonts include Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, and Palatino Linotype. A Symbol font may be used to insert special characters. Black text color is also recommended.
- Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per linear inch. Type may be no more than six lines per vertical inch. Use standard page size (8 ½" x 11") with at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. No information should appear in the margins. Do not include additional headers or footers aside from those established in the provided templates.
- Uploaded files must be in PDF format only. Documents may be prepared using a preferred editing software (e.g. Microsoft Word), but must be converted to PDF format before uploading to the application submission site. Please note that some PDF conversion software may reduce font size. The final PDF document must comply with the font requirements listed above.
- Applications must follow the maximum page limits described in Sections II.-IV. to be considered eligible.

You must use the KidneyCure-provided Research Project Plan template. Please download it from the KidneyCure website.

Applications that do not adhere to the above instructions will be administratively withdrawn.

Notification of Award

In May, all applicants will receive an email from KidneyCure announcing that their application status has changed. The email will contain a unique link that will redirect the user to the KidneyCure Grant Submission Panel. Once logged in, the applicant can view the funding decision and download the reviewer comments. All documents in the applicant's KidneyCure Grant Submission Panel will remain live for 30 days after the funding notification.

Contact

Please contact KidneyCure with any questions at grants@asn-online.org.