Fellowships Session Agenda

- **Fellowship Fundamentals**
- **Postdoctoral Fellowships from Susan G. Komen for the Cure**
- **Pre- and Postdoctoral National Research Service Awards (NRSAs) from the NIH**
- **break**
- **Fellowship review criteria and video of NRSA mock peer review (with examples)**
- **Panel Discussion with faculty**
Where will this information reside after today?

- The “Funding” tab on the BRET website
- Archived presentations, links to databases, handouts, resources

https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/bret/
FELLOWSHIP FUNDAMENTALS

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Fellowship Fundamentals
What are fellowships?

- Fellowships support the **training** of PhD students and postdocs
- Funded by government agencies and foundations
- Postdoctoral fellowships more widely funded than predoctoral
- $$ for stipend, training expenses like tuition, travel, and insurance
- Usually **DON’T** provide $$ for experiments (that comes from your PI’s research grant)
Fellowship Fundamentals
Fellowships are training awards.

- Fellowships are not research grants. They are training awards to help you develop the skills you need for a successful independent career in [fill-in-the-blank] research.
Fellowships are training awards. **Fellowships are not research grants.** They are training awards to help you develop the skills you need for a successful independent career in [fill-in-the-blank] research.

- Different application
- Shorter research plan
- No $$ for experiments (budget is simpler)
- “Innovation” is not (as) important
- “Training potential” is very important
Fellowship Fundamentals

Fellowships are training awards.

- Fellowships are not research grants. They are **training** awards to help you develop the skills you need for a successful independent career in [fill-in-the-blank] research.

  “training” = a mentored learning experience

  Your mentor is an important part of your application. S/he must submit a “training plan” as part of your fellowship application.
Fellowship Fundamentals

Fellowships are training awards.

- Fellowships are not research grants. They are training awards to help you develop the **skills you need** for a successful independent career in [fill-in-the-blank] research.

  “skills” = technical skills, scientific expertise, career know-how (e.g. communication skills, leadership)

  Proposal should augment your current skills and help you develop further, not be redundant with the training you have received to date.
Fellowship Fundamentals
Fellowships are training awards.

- Fellowships are not research grants. They are training awards to help you develop the skills you need for a successful independent career in [fill-in-the-blank] research.

Fellowships help ensure a pipeline of scientists to advance research in a specific area.

Know your funders’ mission! Your proposal should be congruent with funding agency goals.
Fellowship Fundamentals
Read the PA or RFA carefully.

- Agency mission
- Goals of funding

What does the funder hope to get out of supporting fellowships?

- Eligibility requirements
- Application details
- Deadlines
- Evaluation criteria
Fellowship Fundamentals
Finding Opportunities

- No master list of awards for which you are specifically eligible.

- Most fellowships based on your field of research

- Who funds research in your field?
  - Talk to colleagues! Who funds your PI? Collaborators? Other faculty or trainees in your program?
  - Professional societies and advocacy organizations
  - Pay attention to acknowledgements
We thank I. Cheeseman, A. Desai, S. Elowe and H. Yu for reagents. **E.A.F.** was supported by a Damon Runyon Cancer Research postdoctoral fellowship (DRG 1936-07) and the Charles H. Revson Foundation. This work was supported by NIH GM65933 (T.M.K.).
Fellowship Fundamentals
Tools for Finding Opportunities

- FIND, COS, Research Professional
- UCLA GRAPES
- List of previous VUMC fellowships
- NIH RePORTER and NSF FastLane
  - Who at VU has type of funding you seek
  - Which institutes fund your research area

- Expand your search
- Use disease-relevant keywords
- Think about your science broadly
Fellowship Fundamentals
Evaluation criteria

- Quality of the applicant
- Quality of the sponsor (a.k.a. your PI/mentor)
- Quality of the sponsoring institution
- Research training plan
- Training potential
SUMMARY

- Fellowships are training awards, not research grants.
- Your mentor is vitally important to your application.
- Read the PA or RFA carefully.
- Know the mission of the funding organization.
- Most fellowships are research-specific: get to know the funders in your field.
- Most fellowship applications are evaluated for the quality of the: 1) applicant; 2) sponsor; 3) institution; 4) research plan; 5) training potential.
QUESTIONS?
Fellowship Fundamentals
NIH institute vs. private foundation mission

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<th>NIDDK</th>
<th>JDRF</th>
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<td>• Endocrine and metabolic diseases such as diabetes and obesity, digestive diseases such as hepatitis and inflammatory bowel disease, kidney and urologic diseases such as kidney failure and prostate enlargement, and blood diseases such as the anemias</td>
<td>• The mission of JDRF is to find a cure for type-1 diabetes and its complications through the support of research.</td>
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