

# The Cancer Prevention Research Training Program Postdoctoral Fellowships in *Cancer Prevention*

**Open to Visa Holders, U. S. Citizens and Permanent Residents.**

## Program Description

The Cancer Prevention Research Training Program at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center prepares scientists and clinicians to achieve leadership roles as research investigators in the field of cancer prevention and control. The goals of this postdoctoral program are to expand the existing perspective of the fellow by strengthening their knowledge of cancer prevention research and current disciplines and to provide them with rigorous preparation in novel quantitative methods, appropriate to the proposed cancer prevention research. With a special focus on career development and interdisciplinary collaboration, we seek trainees in basic biomedical sciences, biostatistics and bioinformatics, systems biology, epidemiology, genetics, behavioral and social sciences, economics, and related population and public health disciplines. To help foster research collaborations in cancer prevention and control between MD Anderson and other educational research institutions, fellows may be appointed at MD Anderson or at UT Health (not School of Public Health), Rice University, University of Houston, or Texas A&M University, and co-mentored by faculty from both institutions.

Centered around mentored research in cancer prevention and control guided by experienced faculty mentors, multidisciplinary training will be accomplished through a robust training plan that is founded on rigorous quantitative methods, a specialized cancer prevention educational curriculum, an individual development plan, and career development activities. Trainees will participate in mentored research; attend cancer prevention science seminars; present their research at scientific meetings; participate in professional development seminars; and publish in peer-reviewed journals. Trainees are immersed in the type of cross-disciplinary research environment characteristic of cancer prevention and control research, with the objective of launching the trainee in the role of principal investigator early in his or her career.

The Cancer Prevention Research Training Program is committed to building a demographically and scientifically diverse research workforce.

## Eligibility

- **This fellowship is open to all applicants without regard to U.S. citizenship status.** Applicants must be U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or foreign nationals with valid and appropriate visas.
- Applicants must have already earned a doctoral degree (e.g. M.D., Ph.D., PharmD) **OR** must be within 5 months of earning a doctoral degree **from the date of the application deadline.**
- Applicants may be from any disciplinary backgrounds that are relevant to research in cancer prevention and control.

## Funding Support & Benefits

- Postdoctoral fellowships are funded for **two years** and paid at the NIH NRSA stipend level.
- This program is funded by a research training grant award from the **Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas – CPRIT** (Award# RP170259, Drs. Shine Chang & Sanjay Shete, Principal Investigators).
- **Fringe benefits** include health insurance, paid institutional holidays, paid vacation, & sick leave.
- **Funding support is also provided for tuition, reference books, meeting registration, travel support, and research costs.** All equipment purchased by the fellow with CPRIT research funds are property of the CP RTP and must be returned by the fellow at the conclusion of the fellowship.

## Fellowship Requirements

The postdoctoral fellowship requirements will be detailed in the fellowship requirements memo provided to **finalists** invited to Phase 2 of the application process. Required activities include, but are not limited to:

- Enrollment in two 2-credit hour, spring semester courses in cancer prevention at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.
- Enrollment in additional courses required by the CP RTP.
- Delivery of diverse oral presentations including research presentations, job talks, and elevator speeches.
- Completion of Responsible Conduct of Research training.
- Attendance at MD Anderson Cancer Prevention and Control Grand Rounds.
- Mentorship of CP RTP Summer Research Experience students.
- Participation in regularly scheduled progress review meetings with the CP RTP program directors.
- Participation in grant writing seminars and workshops and other career development activities.

## How to Find a Mentor

Applicants must apply with the support of faculty who have agreed to serve as mentors. **If you need help or are unable to identify suitable mentors, contact the CP RTP office immediately for suggestions.**

Applicants are responsible for contacting faculty directly for discussions about mutual interests and securing their support as mentors. **Requests for faculty mentor suggestions need to be made, no later than 10 business days prior to the application deadline,** although earlier is better.

- **Fellows are required to work with a minimum of two mentors of complementary research expertise.** Additional mentors may be included as appropriate.
- **Mentors must meet the following requirements:**
  - **At least one mentor** must be from the UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, Division of Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences (DCPPS), with faculty rank at the level of Assistant Professor or higher. DCPPS is comprised of five (5) departments: 1) Behavioral Science, 2) Health Disparities Research, 3) Clinical Cancer Prevention, 4) Epidemiology, and 5) Health Services Research.
  - **At least one mentor** must be conducting cancer prevention and control research.
  - **At least one mentor's** expertise must be based in quantitative methodology.
  - Mentors proposing to sponsor trainees at their home institution may be appointed at the following institutions: UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, Rice University, Texas A&M University, University of Houston, and UT Health (not School of Public Health).

## Important Information

- Please read these application instructions and Phase 1 document requirements carefully.
- **All application documents are due by the application deadline, including letters of support and letters of recommendation.** Missing items will result in an incomplete application and will not be reviewed.
- Refer to the **CP RTP Postdoctoral Fellowship FAQs** (Frequently Asked Questions) for common application questions. If your answer is not found in the FAQs, email [Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org](mailto:Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org).
- **Immunizations, tobacco and drug testing are required by the institution of all fellowship awardees.** Testing positive for tobacco or illegal drugs will result in the forfeit of the fellowship award. Immunizations must be current within one year of your fellowship start date. Since lack of immunizations can delay the fellowship start date, it is **recommended that all applicants begin requesting immunizations and health documents as soon as their application is submitted.**

## Phase 1: Application Documents

- 1) **Application Checklist & Coversheet** must be completed, dated and placed on top.
- 2) **Research & career statement:** A 2-page, single-spaced, description of your research background and interests, and your educational & professional goals. Discuss the education and research which has prepared you for this fellowship and explain how this fellowship will help you meet your goals.  
**References are not included within the 2-page limit.**
- 3) **Letters of support from each prospective mentor:**
  - Must be on letterhead.
  - Must be manually or electronically/digitally signed.
  - Must be dated within 90 days of application deadline.
  - Must briefly describe 1) relationship with other mentors (new or established), 2) planned roles and schedule for mentoring, 3) activities for developing or expanding collaborative research in cancer prevention and control, 4) metrics or outcomes that indicate successful collaboration and mentoring, 5) number of other trainees and their academic rank currently supervised, and 6) successful past trainees, including recently launched.
  - Must be e-mailed directly from mentor or support staff to [apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org](mailto:apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org) with "Letter of Support for Jane Doe – CP RTP Postdoc Applicant" in the subject line.
- 4) **Mentor's Profile Form**
- 5) **Mentor's NIH Biosketch** (from each mentor listed).
- 6) **Mentor's Other Support** (from each mentor listed).
- 7) **Three (3) Letters of recommendation:**
  - Must be from referees who are individuals other than the proposed mentors. (See FAQs.)
  - Must be on letterhead.
  - Must be manually or electronically/digitally signed.
  - Must be dated within the last 90 days of application deadline.
  - Must include referee's title, relationship with applicant, and length of acquaintance.
  - Must be e-mailed directly from mentor or support staff to [apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org](mailto:apply@cancerpreventiontraining.org) with "Letter of Recommendation for Jane Doe – CP RTP Postdoc Applicant" in the subject line.
- 8) **For applicants completing their doctoral degrees, letter from dissertation chair (required):**
  - Must be on letterhead.
  - Must written and manually or electronically/digitally signed by dissertation chair (not applicant).
  - Must be dated within 90 days of application deadline.
  - **Must specify the anticipated dissertation completion date, which must be no more than 5 months after the application deadline.**
- 9) **Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV);** be sure to include title of thesis and dissertation.
- 10) **GRE** (or MCAT scores if applicable).
- 11) **Academic transcripts from all universities attended** must be legible, include the institution name, grade point average, and any appropriate test scores. Unofficial transcript copies are acceptable for the application; official transcripts must be submitted by finalists. H.S. or other diplomas not required.
- 12) **A copy of the visa** is required for all foreign national applicants.
- 13) **A copy of the credential evaluation** if the qualifying degree was obtained from a non-U.S. institution.

### FORMATING THE APPLICATION

- **Margins:** 0.5 or 1 inch
- **Format:** Single-Spaced
- **Page-numbered format:** Lower center of each page.
- **Name & Current or Future Degree:** Top right corner of each page. *Example: Jane Doe, MD or John Doe, PhD Candidate*
- **Standard Paper Size:** 8.5 x 11
- **Font Color:** Black
- **Font Size:** 12 point font
- **Preferred Font Types:** Arial, Times New Roman, or Georgia

## Application Phases

### Phase 1: Initial Application

- All items on the application checklist & coversheet must be emailed by or before the application deadline, including letters from prospective mentors and referees.
- Confirmation of receipt and application decision date will be e-mailed within 2 business days of submission.
- The application decision will be e-mailed once the review by the Advisory Committee is complete.
- Successful applicants are deemed **finalists** and will be invited to submit a research and career proposal.

### Phase 2: Invitation to Submit Research and Career Proposal

- Finalists will be invited to submit a "Research and Career Proposal," that describes the research proposed, educational objectives, career development plan, a publication plan, and timeline. The Proposal should describe a rigorous plan that will successfully launch the finalist into an independent research career in cancer prevention and control.
- Proposals will be due on the date specified in the email (usually four weeks from date of notification).
- The proposal will be reviewed by the CP RTP Advisory Committee, external experts, and suggestions may be provided for its improvement.
- **Finalists are considered selected for the Program; however funding is contingent upon proposal approval by the Advisory Committee and Program Directors.**

## Application Review Criteria

The following criteria will be used to review applications:

1. **Relevance:** Are the career and research interests of the applicant clearly in the area of cancer prevention? Is the proposed research project original and independent from the aims of a parent project? (Applications for research not relevant to cancer prevention, such as those focusing on cancer treatment, are not accepted.)
2. **Academic merit:** Does the applicant's past academic performance suggest future success? Do the letters of recommendation indicate the author's knowledge of the applicant's capabilities? Are there specific areas or skills that the applicant needs to strengthen to achieve career success?
3. **Promise and educational benefit to the applicant's career development:** Will the fellowship accelerate the applicant's career toward becoming an independent cancer prevention investigator? Does the applicant indicate strong commitment to a career in cancer prevention research? Does the applicant have the intellectual capabilities and work ethic to benefit from the fellowship? Does the applicant have a strong interest in applying novel quantitative methods?
4. Are the **sponsoring mentors** well-funded? Can they provide adequate staff and lab assistants, ensuring that the trainees can devote their time to scientific and career development? Do they describe a robust plan for collaborative research? Is there an integrated plan for mentoring? Given how many other trainees supervised, do mentors describe a plan to provide sufficient time for mentoring?

## Submitting the Application

1. Email the application in **one single pdf** file by the application deadline to [Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org](mailto:Apply@CancerPreventionTraining.org) with **Last Name, First Name – CP RTP Postdoc Application** in the subject line.
2. The fillable pdf application components (e.g. Application Checklist) cannot be completed using the Read-Only version of Adobe. Enter data manually by hand, using a downloaded free trial version of Adobe Professional, or by typing and scanning the documents.

## Contact

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