

Baylor College of Medicine
Children's Nutrition Research Center

Postdoctoral Training Program Handbook

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Children's Nutrition Research Center (CNRC) Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program

A. Objectives

The goal of our training program is to provide postdoctoral fellows and associates with scientific tools, professional skill sets, and breadth of knowledge about all aspects of human and animal nutrition to excel in nutritional science research.

B. Description

The program is designed for individuals with a Ph.D. and/or M.D. degree with an interest in any biological discipline that affects the nutritional well-being of mothers and children. For those with an M.D. degree, this training will usually be in conjunction with an established clinical subspecialty training program at Baylor College of Medicine or elsewhere. The program is generally two years in duration but may be extended with appropriate approval from the CNRC Postdoctoral Program Committee. A shorter program can be arranged for those wishing simply to gain expertise in a specific methodology.

C. Definitions

Fellow: An individual holding a Ph.D. or M.D. degree who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills needed to pursue a career path of his/her choosing. All CNRC postdocs, i.e., postdoctoral fellows, postdoctoral associates, and clinical postdoctoral fellows appointed in other sections but doing research in our section, are to take part in the CNRC postdoctoral fellowship training program. A successful postdoctoral appointment will include:

- Pursuit of a basic, clinical, or translational research project.
- Establishment of an individual development plan that incorporates the fellow's career and training goals with the mentor's research goals.
- Supervision by at least one senior scholar who actively promotes the fellow's professional development.
- Presentation and publication of the results of the fellow's research or scholarly activities.
- Attainment of experience in grant writing and submission.
- Transition to career independence through the development of professional skills.

Mentor: An individual who is responsible for supporting and encouraging a postdoctoral fellow to manage their own learning and to assist them in expanding their skills in research, communication, and supervision. A positive mentor-mentee partnership will be exemplified by the postdoctoral fellow contributing new knowledge to the scientific community and transitioning successfully to the next stage of their scientific career.

D. Program Requirements

1. Fellows

- a. A postdoctoral fellow is an individual who has completed his/her Ph.D. or M.D. at an

accredited institution and has been in postgraduate training for no more than five years.

- b. Every fellow, regardless of funding source, must organize a fellowship committee consisting of the mentor and two or more other individuals selected with the advice of the mentor. The names of the fellowship committee members should be submitted to the Program Director and Administrative Coordinator within 2 months of matriculation.
- c. The fellow, with assistance from the mentor, should prepare an individual development plan within the first two months of matriculation (IDP; see below) and submit this to his or her fellowship committee for review and approval. The approved document should then be forwarded to the CNRC Postdoctoral Program Director and Administrative Coordinator for review.
- d. Each individual's fellowship committee should meet at least twice a year and review the fellow's progress in research, in the objectives of the IDP, and to update the IDP, as appropriate. Status reports and updated IDPs must be provided to the Program Director and Admin twice each year, after the fellow's semi-annual Research in Progress Seminar (Status Reports; see below). Fellows should organize committee meetings in conjunction with their research presentation to the CNRC fellowship seminar series, ideally holding their committee meeting immediately following the presentation. Depending on enrollment, there may be only one research presentation per year. In such cases, fellows should schedule their second committee meeting 3 to 4 months either before or after their research presentation. The report must be signed at the time of the meeting by all those in attendance. The fellow is then responsible for providing the report to their mentor for additional comments. After receiving comments by the mentor, the fellow is responsible for sending the Progress Report and updated IDP to the Program Director and Admin. These reports will be reviewed at least annually by the Program Committee to determine the effectiveness of the fellow and mentor and may be reviewed should the fellow request a funding extension.
- e. Either the fellow or the mentor may convene a meeting of the fellowship committee to consider any matter deemed to be important outside the context of the semi-annual required meetings. Matters not resolved by the fellowship committee may be brought by the fellow, mentor or committee members to the program committee.
- f. Fellows are expected to submit at least one funding proposal to any agency within their first year in the program, and they are required to submit a funding proposal by the end of the second year. Fellows may work with their mentor or committee to decide which grant is relevant to current work. Learning the fundamentals of preparing a funding proposal teaches the trainee the importance of and mechanics of how to rationalize and justify future research. This is a critical skill for all scientific leaders, regardless of career direction.
- g. Every fellow is expected to present one to two seminars and conduct at least one journal club each year. The first seminar should be a complete description of the planned research project, including background, hypotheses, rationale, etc. The later seminars should be progress reports with only a well-justified rationale, impact, and hypotheses along with results, interpretation, and future directions. The final seminar should be a review of the accomplishments of the project relative to the original hypotheses and should provide a clear background and rationale. There may only be one research presentation due to enrollment, but fellows are encouraged to share the updates with their committee.

- h. Fellows are expected to attend and participate in all sessions of the Tuesday noon fellows' seminar series. These sessions will include formal presentations by fellows, formal didactic lectures by faculty members, and journal club. Additionally, fellows are strongly expected to attend and participate in the Thursday 12:00-1 :00pm CNRC seminar series, where faculty members in the Texas Medical Center and from across the country report on their research. Extra attendance credit may be provided for special CNRC seminars
 - i. 75% attendance is a standard for each seminar component for CNRC appointees (35% for fellows in two formal postdoc training programs). Throughout the fellowship calendar year (Fall-Spring), attendance is recorded at every event and filed. Each fellow's attendance record plays a large factor in the likelihood of program-funding extension, renewal, and future funding.
 - ii. Fellows are encouraged to check on their attendance status with the postdoc coordinator throughout the semester.
- i. For the journal club, the fellow should review one or more recent (within the last year) important publication(s) related to his/her area of research. See below for details.
- j. Fellows will invite the mentor and committee members to all their presentations at the **CNRC**.
- k. Fellows will attend periodic meetings with the Program Director and staff.
- l. Fellows are required to complete the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training for postdocs offered by the BCM Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. RCR training must be completed every 4 years while holding postdoctoral status and it is recommended that postdocs complete the training in the first year of their postdoctoral training. The training provides reinforcement of the practice of scientific investigation with integrity and involves the awareness and application of established professional norms and ethical principles in the performance of all activities related to scientific research. The RCR training typically takes place via 4 afternoon training modules. Preregistration is required. Postdocs will receive a certification of completion that should be filed with the CNRC Postdoc Program Coordinator.
- m. Fellows are welcome to attend the seminars/lectures/rounds of any department at BCM or other institution within the Texas Medical Center.
- n. With appropriate advance arrangements, fellows may enroll in any of the courses offered by the Graduate School of BCM.
- o. Clinical subspecialty fellows who choose to do research at the CNRC under the direction of a CNRC faculty member, using the CNRC space and resources, are research fellows in this program. They are required to complete the BCM application (described below) for them to gain access to the building. As CNRC postdoctoral fellows, they are expected to participate in all aspects of the program. Presumably, they will already have a research committee in place, but the assessment of their progress must be made not only by their Clinical Program Director but also by the CNRC fellowship committee. We recognize that some may have conflicting conference times or other obligations to their primary clinical training program. When these arise, they must be discussed with the director of the CNRC fellowship program

and an attempt at some reasonable compromise will be made.

2. Mentors

- a. Mentors must have an approved USDA Project Plan and have funding from the USDA cooperative agreement. Mentors who wish to be competitive for CNRC fellowship funding should have external funding.
- b. Mentors must conduct the research within the CNRC unless listed on a CNRC NIH T32 training grant or are funded by the USDA Cooperative Agreement.
- c. Mentors will ensure the fellow's participation in all the CNRC organized educational activities (including Journal Club, Thursday faculty seminars and Tuesday fellow seminars).
- d. Mentors will support the fellow in organizing a fellowship committee and an individual development plan within 2 months of the fellow's arrival. This will include a timeline with anticipated accomplishments (publications, presentations at national meetings, skills to be developed, etc.) for the duration of training (see below for details). If no IDP is submitted to the Program Director or Admin within 2 months of matriculation, the fellow and mentor will meet with the Program Director or an Associate Director to determine the potential problem(s) and solutions.
- e. Mentors will help the fellow prepare for all talks and accompany and support the fellow in his or her presentations in the CNRC. Mentors will take a supportive role in getting the members of the fellow's fellowship committee to attend the fellows' research seminars at which their fellow presents and to participate in a committee meeting following the presentation.
- f. Mentors are responsible for providing comments on the Fellow's status in the semi-annual Progress Report and ensuring that the fellow submits these semi-annual Progress Reports to the program committee. These reports will be reviewed by the Program Committee to determine the effectiveness of the Fellow and mentor and may be reviewed should the Fellow request a funding extension.
- g. Mentors should encourage and support Fellow's in applying for external funding, as presently allowed by Baylor College of Medicine, the Department of Pediatrics, and the regulations of associated funding agencies.
- h. If there is a need to change mentor during the duration of training, then the proposed mentor and fellow should submit a CV, a short letter on how this change would fit into the fellow's goals, a one-page project proposal, mentor statement, and mentor's biosketch. The current mentor should submit a letter explaining the reason behind this change and the current progress of the fellow. These documents will be reviewed by the advisory committee to ensure smooth transition. After the transition, the fellow will submit an updated IDP and the new mentor will submit a new mentoring plan.

E. Identification of Potential Postdoctoral Fellows

1. Individuals identified by the CNRC research faculty as potential fellows may apply directly

by the process outlined below:

- a. Application A: internal to BCM including clinical fellows,
 - b. Application B: external to BCM and applying for CNRC funded fellowship,
 - c. Application C: external to BCM and applying for Investigator-funded training.
2. For fellows already under the auspices of another department or program at BCM, the applicant must also forward a copy of their training program folder to the CNRC Postdoctoral Program Committee.
 3. Those who inquire with the Director of the program about postdoctoral research opportunities are provided with a description of the program. The applicant must go to the CNRC website to identify potential mentors and then should contact the faculty member(s) working in his or her areas of interest, providing them with a letter of interest and their curriculum vitae. In some cases, the Director may recommend contacting particular mentors. It will be up to the applicant and potential mentor to define their mutual interest and develop an application packet to be considered by the program committee.

F. Approval Process

1. For all applicants (whether from inside BCM or a new applicant from outside BCM), their application packet will be reviewed by the program committee. In reviewing an application, emphasis is placed on the qualifications of the applicant, the appropriateness and mentoring experience of the mentor, the nature and quality of the proposed project, the proposed role of the applicant in the project and the funding available to the mentor to sustain the fellow over the time of fellowship commitment. Once the program committee has reached a decision, the mentor will be contacted immediately.
2. For individuals to matriculate in this program, they must have good English speaking and writing skills so that they are able to communicate effectively. Per BCM policy, if the fellow did not receive a degree from a U.S. university, this fellow must submit a minimum score of 100/600 on the TOEFL or 6.0 on the IELTS exam. Exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
3. If the application is not approved, reasons will be specified in writing to the prospective mentor, and it is the mentor's responsibility to communicate with the applicant. The prospective mentor for a candidate whose application has not been approved can respond, in writing, to questions raised by the committee and request that the application be reconsidered. In addition, the mentor may request to meet with the committee.
4. If the candidate is approved, the committee will recommend the level of appointment and the CNRC administrator will forward the packet for BCM approval. The program committee assumes that the project, as proposed, will be executed by the fellow. Should the scope of the project change between the time of approval and the date of the fellow's matriculation to the CNRC, the mentor must notify both the candidate and the Program Director of this change. In addition, the mentor must provide an explanation for the change, along with a proposal for a new project. The mentor and the incoming fellows should develop a revised project jointly. The revised project will be reviewed by the Director and Associate Director.

5. Once BCM has approved the position, the CNRC administrator will send the formal offer letter, BCM postdoctoral forms, and the appropriate visa requirements to the candidate.

G. Source of Funding

1. CNRC funded fellows (Application B)

- a. To provide equal opportunities for all faculty members to compete for the limited fellowship resources in CNRC funding (or a T32, if awarded and slots are available), requests for application will be made prior to any anticipated vacancies. Approval is based upon availability of funds as well as the qualifications of the candidates and mentors, the perceived impact of the proposed projects and their relevance to the USDA mission to investigate the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating women and children from conception through adolescence. In addition, the qualifications and external funding of the mentor will be taken into consideration, the success of previous supervised fellows and the number of other fellows, volunteers, or graduate students supervised by the prospective mentor, etc.
- b. Applicants can be current CNRC fellows who have been at the CNRC for less than a year and supported by an individual PI or other source. These individuals will be reviewed with all other applications in the scheduled committee meeting.
- c. The prospective mentor should have non-CRIS extramural funding (e.g., NIH, NSF, USDA-AFRI-NIFA, DOE, ADA, AHA, JDRF, etc.; but not NIH K award funding) and previous postdoctoral mentoring experience. If the individual does not meet the latter requirement, a senior co-mentor must be appointed.
- d. If the fellow is supported by the USDA and is a US citizen or resident alien, the mentor must commit to the submission of an application for an individual postdoctoral funding proposal to the NIH (F32), the USDA-AFRI-NIFA, or equally rigorous funding institution.
- e. Among equally qualified applicants, priority will be given to those starting their first postdoctoral fellowship.

2. Investigator-funded or other source-funded fellows (Applications C and A)

- a. The prospective mentor must have peer-reviewed, non-CRIS funding (e.g., NIH, NSF, USDA-AFRI-NIFA, DOE, AHA, ADA, JDRF, etc.; but not NIH K award funding) and previous postdoctoral mentoring experience. If the individual does not meet the mentoring requirement, a senior co-mentor must be appointed. If the prospective mentor only has CRIS funding, approval from the CNRC Director will be required to fund a postdoctoral fellow from CRIS funds.
- b. If the fellow is a US citizen or resident alien, the mentor is encouraged to assist the fellow in submitting a fellowship funding proposal to the NIH (F32), the USDA-AFRI-NIFA, or equally rigorous funding institution.
- c. BCM fellows funded from outside the CNRC must provide a letter from their existing program director committing to their ongoing support while at the CNRC.

3. Other Information

- a. CNRC-funded fellows receive support (currently up to \$1,000 per year from the Center) to travel to scientific meeting(s), paid from the source that covers their stipend. After the first year of the fellowship, support for attendance at a scientific meeting must be linked to a poster or oral presentation of the CNRC-based fellow's work.
- b. Regardless of source of funding, the fellow's stipend is determined by years of research training following doctorate degree and is based on NIH guidelines published annually.
- c. Fellows are appointed for one year, with the expectation that they will be appointed for a second year following satisfactory completion of the first year. Appointment beyond the second year requires approval from the CNRC director (for CNRC-funded fellows), the CNRC program director, or the mentor in discussion with the program director (for all others).

H. Fellowship Committees and Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

a. Fellowship Committees

Each fellow committee should consist of two or more faculty members in addition to the mentor. These people may have expertise in the fellow's particular area of research, in a related area, or in biostatistics. In general, committee members can be faculty from any of the institutions from the Texas Medical Center community. The aim is to have a group of scientists who will provide feedback on all areas of the fellow's research career. The committee should meet at least twice a year and attend the fellow research presentations (and if possible, their journal club presentations). Immediately following a seminar presentation, it is strongly recommended that the fellow meet with his/her fellowship committee so that immediate feedback can be provided on all aspects of the presentation, their research progress, and to evaluate their progress on their IDP.

b. Individual Development Plans

In preparing for their IDP, fellows should consider the following questions: What do you want to accomplish in your year(s) as a fellow at the CNRC? What skills do you need to gain? What knowledge do you want to acquire? Will you be running your own lab at some point and need to know how? What will make you a better scientist? What will make you "marketable"? What kind of career do you want? Do you aspire to an academic career teaching and conducting research? Would you prefer to be a research scientist? Would you like to work in industry or for a pharmaceutical company? Upon joining BCM, you should make it a priority to seek out and meet with various faculty members to obtain their perspectives on such questions.

Answering questions such as these will help the fellows decide how best to meet their goals. This will involve learning skills from their mentor and perhaps some committee members. It may also involve taking some specific graduate or scientific courses, and it will likely involve some seminars or workshops. All this will lead to an IDP complete with a timeline. The first IDP should be submitted to the Director and Administrative Assistant within 2 months of starting at the CNRC. The IDP should be revisited twice each year, reflecting on the fellow's progress, goals, and creating an updated plan. At committee meetings, the IDP will be reviewed and updated, if necessary.

I. Training Duration

Postdoctoral training is a time-limited mentored learning experience and a key step in the career development of many scientists, typically ranging from 2 to 5 years. Other CNRC post-doctoral fellows will complete excellent training experience in 2-3 years. Other CNRC postdoctoral trainees may find it beneficial to continue training and may discuss this with their mentor and advisory committee in advance of their annual reappointment. If the mentor and mentee find this to be mutually beneficial, they may apply to the CNRC Postdoctoral Training program which will include an updated curriculum vitae, narrative of training accomplishments, rationale for additional training, a transition plan with specific activities for the trainee to complete, and a detailed mentoring plan. Applications are due 6 months prior to the annual appointment date. Applications for a fourth year of training are reviewed for approval or disapproval by the CNRC Postdoctoral Training Program Director and for a fifth year or beyond are reviewed by the CNRC Director and Training Program Director. It is expected that a 5th year of training will be very rare exceptions, granted in situations such as having accepted a job offer but not yet started, or having received training fellowship funding or career development award necessitating additional training in the postdoctoral associate/fellow title.

J. BCM Postdoctoral Association

The Postdoctoral Association at Baylor provides a collective voice for the postdoctoral scientists at Baylor College of Medicine and provides communication between college administration, faculty members, and the postdoctoral scholar population. Several resources regarding the postdoctoral program, including information on IDP development and benefits available to postdocs can be found on their website:

<https://www.bcm.edu/education/schools/graduate-school-of-biomedicalsciences/postdoctoral-affairs>).

K. Courses and Classes

- a. The BCM Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences has several courses that might be of interest to fellows (<https://www.bcm.edu/education/schools/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences>).
- b. The BCM Postdoctoral Association offers classes throughout the year held in the main BCM building on Bertner Street (<https://www.bcm.edu/education/academic-facultyaffairs/student-services/administrative-support/career-development-center>).
- c. The BCM Career Development Center offers career counseling, professional development seminars, and career planning resources pertaining to traditional and non-traditional careers in science (<https://www.bcm.edu/education/academic-faculty-affairs/student-services/administrative-support/career-development-center>).
- d. With the approval of one's research mentor, fellows may also participate in any courses or classes offered in the Texas Medical Center, although some may require the approval of the lecturer, and some may require a fee.

L. Publishing

Fellows will generally be offered first author positions on research studies for which they have

completed the bulk of the work and written the first draft of the manuscript. If the mentor feels that this should not be the case, this will be discussed and should be resolved with the fellow in their committee meetings.

M. Conflict Resolution

There may be times when a conflict or misunderstanding arises between a postdoctoral fellow and their mentor. Should this occur, the fellow is encouraged to first speak candidly with their mentor, voice their concerns, and attempt to resolve the conflict to the satisfaction of each individual. Should additional assistance be needed, the fellow and/or mentor should talk to and seek guidance from the fellow's postdoctoral committee members. Following that, the issue should be presented to the director or one of the associate directors of the Postdoctoral Training Program, asking for their advice and possible mediation. Postdocs may also opt to contact the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs or the Ombuds Office (<https://www.bcm.edu/about-us/our-campus/ombuds-office>).

N. Trainee Progress

Trainee progress will be assessed against the fellow's individual development plan. Additional areas that will be considered are:

- a. Meetings attended without giving a talk
- b. Papers presented at national and international scientific meetings
- c. Poster presentations
- d. Abstracts published
- e. Talks given in formal meetings
- f. Informal talks
- g. Journal club presentations
- h. Manuscripts published in scientific journals
- i. Grants received
- j. Awards received

O. Informal Gatherings

- a. Trainees are encouraged to socialize and network with one another. The postdoctoral representative(s) to the CNRC Postdoctoral Advisory Committee is given a list of all current postdoctoral fellows and associates training in the CNRC and will periodically schedule informal gatherings.
- b. The BCM Postdoctoral Association also serves to build a sense of community among Baylor's diverse postdoctoral population (<https://www.bcm.edu/education/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/postdoctoral-affairs/postdoctoral-association>).

P. Guidelines for the Fellows' Seminar

Effective oral communication of research to a broad, interdisciplinary audience is an essential skill to be developed and honed during postdoctoral training. Mentors play an essential role in guiding their trainees in developing these skills.

The Fellows' Seminar meets each Tuesday from 12:00-1:00pm in the months of September – June.

The first Tuesday of each month is reserved for CNRC faculty lecture given to the Postdocs and the second Tuesday of each month is reserved for journal club presentations. The remaining two or three meetings are for fellows' presentations on their research, with two people presenting at each meeting.

1. Objectives:

- a. To communicate effectively their research questions, strategy, results, and proposed next steps. At completion of the project, he or she should provide the conclusion of their results and future directions of this research.
- b. To gain the skills to convey their science to an interdisciplinary group of peers and faculty.
- c. To receive feedback from their mentor, other faculty, and peers to improve communication skills and, as a result of critiquing other fellows' presentations, gain insight into the elements of an effective presentation. By giving and receiving constructive feedback on a weekly basis, postdoctoral fellows gain practice in peer-review, an essential element of biomedical research.
- d. To obtain scientific input on experimental methodologies from faculty and fellows with different backgrounds and perspectives.

2. Frequency:

- a. Fellows present their research project progress once or twice per year, depending on enrollment. At these presentations the mentor must be in attendance.
- b. Fellows are encouraged to have the members of their advisory committee in attendance. We encourage the fellows to meet with their advisory committee following the seminar and complete their status report at that time.

3. Approach:

- a. As with any type of communication, research presentations should be appropriate for the audience. By nature, the CNRC audiences are generally very broad and interdisciplinary. All talks should start with a general introduction to the topic, and at no time should the fellow lapse into acronyms and other discipline-specific jargon.
- b. The aim is to have all audience members understand most of what is presented. All should be able to summarize the main points of the presentation.

4. Format

- a. Research presentations may be either 20 or 40 minutes long, with an additional 5-10 minutes allocated for questions.
- b. Generally, that limits each presentation to about 20 slides. Presentations cannot extend longer than 30 minutes as a matter of courtesy to the other speaker and to the audience. Presentations should contain: Background and rationale; significance, hypotheses to be tested (presentation of specific aim to be explored alone is not acceptable); method and

study design; results; conclusions; assessment of the strengths and limitations of their approach; and next steps.

5. Evaluation of the Fellow's Presentation

- a. Using a standardized form, all in attendance will complete the form and anonymously submit it to the Course Director of the Fellowship Research Seminar.
- b. The Course Director of the Fellowship Research Seminar will compile a summary of the evaluation forms. This summary:
 - i. will be sent to the fellow and mentor.
 - ii. will be reviewed with the fellow by the mentor and can be shared with the fellow's advisory committee.
 - iii. will be made available to the CNRC Fellowship Oversight Committee.
- c. Fellows will be asked to incorporate a brief, but thorough reflection to the feedback within their semi-annual status reports, indicating how they will modify future presentations in response to the feedback, and cite any other helpful feedback they received.
- d. These evaluations may be used as part of the annual evaluation process of faculty mentors as evidence of teaching quality.

6. Mentor's Responsibility

Post-doctoral mentors are subject-matter experts in their scientific discipline and, as such, are responsible for passing on their scientific skills and expertise to their fellows, in addition to teaching and coaching written and oral communication skills. As the fellow's presentation is a reflection on the mentor, of the mentor's research program activity, and mentoring ability, the mentor will:

- a. review and critique the fellow's presentation, giving the fellow sufficient time to modify their presentation, as appropriate, to ensure that a high-quality presentation will result.
- b. be cognizant of the factors that will be part of the evaluation process and prepare the fellow for mastering these objectives to improve their effectiveness in scientific communication.
- c. review and discuss each fellow's presentation evaluation and confirm that it is submitted.

7. Journal Club

- a. The first Tuesday of each month is reserved for journal club.
- b. The assigned fellow selects an appropriate article and can confer with their mentor to select a good article for review.
- c. The fellow is responsible for providing the fellowship representative with a pdf of the article 2 weeks before the meeting for circulation to the entire CNRC faculty and staff, inviting them to attend.

- d. As a guideline, the presentation should include: Identification of the type of study; rationale for the study; hypothesis(es) to be tested; description of the methodology; results and conclusions; assessment of the quality of the article and criticisms of the scientific approach; suggestions for improvement on the study design, methods of execution, analysis, statistical considerations, and overall significance of the conclusions.

Q. Administration of the Fellowship Program Committee

1. Membership: The Program Director will be appointed by the Director of CNRC. The Seminar Leader will be proposed by the Program Director and approved by the Director of the CNRC. Other members will be appointed by the Program Director and will include at least 5 CNRC faculty members. In addition, two fellows will be appointed as fellow representatives. Each new fellow appointee will be derived, when possible, from the newly appointed group of fellows and will remain as a fellow representative for their second year but will not be extended beyond the second year.
2. Review of fellow progress: At least annually, the committee will be provided with the Status reports from all the CNRC fellows for review. When problems or potential problems arise, they will be discussed at the next meeting of the Program Committee.
3. Appointments: The committee is responsible for the review and approval of all new fellows who are being mentored by CNRC faculty, regardless of funding source. This includes medical subspecialists doing a fellowship in a Baylor approved clinical fellowship training program.
4. Reappointment and extensions of fellowship training: The Program Committee will review the progress and make recommendations to the Program Director as to whether a fellow funded by the CNRC will be reappointed for a second year of funding. In addition, should a request be made for the extension of a fellow to a third year, the committee will again make a recommendation to the Program Director following review of the request for an extension of the fellowship. Requests for extension or reappointment will be reviewed in competition with new applications for funding.

R. Application to the Program

1. M.D. or Ph.D. fellows currently in a training program at BCM

Please fill in the application form A (attached). Include the requested documents in your application. The applicant should also forward a copy of their training program folder from their BCM program.

2. All others

If you do not have a position at BCM at the present time and are interested in postdoctoral research training at the CNRC, you should:

- a. Review the various research opportunities described under *CNRC Areas of Research and Faculty* and choose one or more faculty members with whom you have common interests.

- b. Contact the faculty member and ask if there are openings in his or her lab.
 - i. If the faculty member has available funds to support a fellow, complete Application Form C (attached) and send it, together with all the supporting documents, to that person. The faculty members will submit the application form and packet to the program director (see below).
 - ii. If he or she has no funds but would like to support a fellow with CNRC funds, complete Application Form B and work with the mentor to provide all supporting documents for the application process. The faculty members will submit the application form and packet to the program director (see below).
- c. All applicants must have been awarded a Ph.D. or M.D. degree prior to commencing the program.
- d. U.S. citizenship or a green card is not a requirement for CNRC-funding. However, this may be required for applicants to be funded by other sources (to be determined by the requirements of these funding sources).

3. Deadlines

- a. No application deadline exists when a fellow is to be supported on non-CNRC funds, such as an individual faculty member's research grant.
- b. Announcements will be made to CNRC faculty of pending vacancies prior to the anticipated availability of funding for CNRC positions. Specific deadlines will be provided with each of these announcements.

Address for all correspondence

Nancy E. Moran Ph.D.

Program Director, Postdoctoral Fellowship Training Program USDA/ARS
Children's Nutrition Research Center Department of Pediatrics Baylor
College of Medicine
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Attachments:

- Application Form A
- Application Form B
- Application Form C
- Individual Development Plan template
- Status Report template

Baylor College of Medicine, Children's Nutrition Research Center

Postdoctoral Fellowship Application (C)

This application form is for *Investigator-Funded* candidates who want to receive training in the CNRC.

Name: _____
Last First Middle Initial

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Are you legally authorized to work in the US?

What is the basis of your current work authorization?

Will you now or in the future require visa sponsorship for employment at BCM?

Current Department/Institution: _____

CNRC Mentor: _____ Area of Study: _____

Area of Research: _____

Application package should also include:

1. Candidate's curriculum vitae.
2. Proof of terminal degree completion (e.g., copy of diploma, transcript indicating degree conferral)
3. Letter of Interest written and signed by the candidate, explaining how this research and training fits into their goals.
4. Short research proposal (~ 1 page) developed jointly by the candidate and the potential mentor.
5. Mentor statement with: (a) an evaluation of the candidate; (b) a description of how the proposed research fits within the mentor's broader research program and identification and description of any potential scientific overlap with projects of other trainees in the lab; (c) a mentoring plan; (d) identification of funding sources available for the candidate's salary and research project, (e) confirmation of a positive reference check, either verbal or written; (f) a commitment that the candidate will participate in all CNRC postdoctoral activities (journal club, research seminar, and faculty research seminar).
6. Proposed mentor's NIH biosketch.
7. Chart of current and past trainees of the mentor.
8. If a co-mentor is needed, a letter from the co-mentor is required to confirm the co-mentorship.

CNRC Postdoctoral Fellowship Individual Development Plan

Name:		Start Date:	
Department:	Department of Baylor College of Medicine	Revised:	
Appointment:	Children's Nutrition Research Center Department of Pediatrics Baylor College of Medicine		

Mentor: (Provide signature)	_____	Mentor name
List Committee Members: (List institution, if not CNRC)	_____	

Use this form to identify your goals and develop a strategy to achieve those goals. Use as much space as you need. Postdocs are encouraged to reference specific professional development activities. Local training and development activities can be found on the BCM internet under Career Development Center, Office of Postdoc Affairs, Pediatrics Clinical Research Administration, NORC, Consortium for Translational and Precision Health, etc.

Part I. Goal Setting

A. Current career goals (long-term goals)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. Goals for the upcoming year (short term goals)

-

C. What further research activity or other training is needed before it is appropriate to start a job search?

-

D. Please indicate if there are other issues that affect your job search:

Part II. Plans for Upcoming Year

A. Training plans

- **Activities that support the development of your research project (journal clubs, conferences, seminars, workshops, wetlabs)**

*Required: CNRC Postdoc *Research in Progress* Seminar and CNRC faculty seminar series

-

- Professional development activities such as clubs, courses or workshops that will help you to achieve your goals (scientific writing, grant writing, oral communication, teaching, certifications)

*Required: FCI course or some responsible conduct of research alternative with IRB or IACUC course

-
-
-

B. How will your mentors function to facilitate the above activities and to assess your progress and improvement?

*Required: timely review of research progress and IDP at semi-annual committee meetings

-
-
-

- Proposed meetings with mentors include:

- e.g. Weekly meetings with mentor
-
-

C. Anticipated publications (indicate authors and projected titles):

In Preparation

-

Anticipated

-

D. Anticipated conferences/meetings:

List relevant local, regional, and/or national conferences/meetings listed for lab's preparation/planning purposes. Possible attendance and presentation at these meetings will be discussed and decided as the year unfolds.

Conference	Location	Abstract Deadline	Conference Dates

E. Anticipated workshops/courses at the TMC that support your technical training:

-
-
-

F. Fellowship, grant, or other funding applications planned (indicate name of award and deadline):

-
-

G. Other professional development/networking activities:

Template revised: 2025

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-
-

Part III. Research Goals and Methodologies to Learn in the Coming Year

Research goals:

- a)
- b)
- c)

Methodologies and technical skills to attain

- a)
- b)
- c)

Status Report for CNRC Fellowship Program

Fellow Name _____ Matriculation Date _____

Mentor Name _____ Date of Committee meeting: _____

Report: 6m 12m 18m 24m Final Other: _____

Review of Research Effort (summarize the progress and challenges of the project)

Review of IDP (Summarize items completed, new items and potential problems)

Comments of the mentor:

Response to Presentation Feedback:

Signatures of faculty present:

Mentor: _____

Committee Members:

- | | |
|-----------|-------|
| 1. Print: | Sign: |
| 2. Print: | Sign: |
| 3. Print: | Sign: |
| 4. Print: | Sign: |

If there is a concern from the committee about the fellow or their progress, please contact the Fellowship Oversight Committee through Nancy Moran (Nancy.Moran@bcm.edu)