

Tri-Institutional Molecular Mycology and Pathogenesis Training Program

Application for Postdoctoral Fellowship

<https://mgm.duke.edu/tri-i-mmptp>

I. Eligibility:

- 1. Citizen or Permanent Resident of the USA (This is a requirement of the NIH training grant funding mechanism.)**
2. Doctorate in a biological or biomedical field (e.g., PhD, MD, DVM)
3. Prospective applicants should contact one or more of the participating faculty members to explore training options and develop a research plan: <https://mgm.duke.edu/tri-i-mmptp/faculty>
4. Applicants with diverse prior experience and training have been accepted, including:
 - A) New PhD graduates with or without prior mycological training, who seek the first postdoctoral position. They usually complete three years of training.
 - B) Senior postdoctoral mycological researchers who require a shorter period of support to facilitate their move to independence (e.g., completing research and manuscripts, developing new projects and preliminary data for initial grant applications).
 - C) Established scientists in mycological or other fields who want to acquire fungal knowledge and/or new techniques to apply to their particular research projects.
 - D) MD or MD/PhD applicants seeking a clinical or basic research fellowship; they should have completed a residency program and be board-eligible or certified.
5. Note that the doctoral degree is not required at the time of application if the candidate's graduate institution can submit documentation that the requirements for the doctorate will be fulfilled before appointment to the Tri-I MMPTP.

II. Application deadlines and start dates:

Deadlines are rolling. As part of the application, the candidate and mentor must propose a starting date if the fellowship is awarded. The starting date can be set for the first of any month.

III. Application Packet:

The completed application should include:

1. A cover letter from the applicant, which should provide (i) a description of the applicant's overall career goals, (ii) a career development plan that indicates how the MMPTP will be used to implement and support those objectives and (iii) a proposed starting date if the fellowship is awarded.
2. The applicant's CV.

3. A letter from the prospective MMPTP mentor(s) indicating the mentor's commitment to the applicant's research and career development, as well as evidence of funding to support the proposed research project for the duration of the fellowship, which can be renewed annually for a maximum of 36 months. The mentor must affirm that discretionary funds are available to provide items currently disallowed by NIH training grants (e.g., textbooks) and to provide other institutionally required supplements beyond that which the T32 covers.
4. The mentor's biosketch in the 5-page NIH format, <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
5. A table showing the mentor's postdoctoral experience for the last 5 years. Download and use the template from the website.
6. A synopsis of the proposed research project, written by the applicant and/or the sponsoring mentor. Maximum of three pages, including any figures and tables but not counting references. Use Arial 11-point font with 0.5 inch margins on all sides.
7. A list of three people who will be submitting letters of recommendation on your behalf (no more). Please provide names, institutions and email addresses. The letters themselves should be submitted directly by the recommenders.
8. *Optional supplementary material*: Copies of up to two of the applicant's publications.

The applicant should forward all application materials, with the exception of the letters of recommendation, to Melissa Palmer (melissa.palmer@duke.edu) Email or call Melissa (919-684-2814) for further information. **Letters of recommendation should be submitted to Melissa directly by the recommenders.** Applicants will be informed when their application is complete.

For any admission questions, please contact the Training Co-Director (Admissions):
Paul Magwene, PhD at paul.magwene@duke.edu.

IV. Review Process:

1. Reviewers:
 - A) The Admissions Co-Director will create an ad hoc Admissions Committee consisting of four to eight members selected from the roster of training faculty. Faculty members who are sponsoring any current applicants are recused.
 - B) Each reviewer will score each application packet using standard NIH 1-9 scoring. Scores will be averaged in each category, and the categories will be weighted as indicated.
2. Criteria: Each reviewer will evaluate and score each application in the following three categories, using the indicated guidelines.
 - A) **Research Proposal (25%)**. The research project will be evaluated according to its:
 - (1) Significance, innovation, approach (experimental design) and feasibility.
 - (2) Appropriateness to the candidate's stage of research experience and as a training vehicle to develop the research skills described in the career development plan.

- (3) Relevance to the mycological focus of the Tri-I MMPTP.
- B) **Applicant and career development plan (50%).** Evaluation of the applicant will be based on:
 - (1) The applicant's accomplishments to date (e.g., academic and clinical [if relevant] record, awards and honors, and research productivity).
 - (2) Letters of recommendation and other data supporting the applicant's potential to become an independent and productive scientist.
 - (3) The content, scope, stages, and duration of the career development plan. (Is it realistic and appropriate for the applicant's prior experience? Does it meet the applicant's training and research goals?)
 - (4) Plans for monitoring and evaluating the candidate's research and career development progress (e.g., benchmarks, Research Advisory Committee, timetable).
- C) **Mentor(s) (25%).** Criteria for evaluation include the mentor's
 - (1) Qualifications to direct the research project and satisfy the applicant's career goals.
 - (2) Available resources to support the research project.
 - (3) Track record of training postdoctoral researchers.
 - (4) Proposal of specific plans to help the trainee with the research, grant writing, job interviews, career development, etc.
 - (5) Commitment of discretionary funds to provide institutionally required supplements, if needed, and provide items disallowed by NIH auditors (e.g., textbooks)
 - (6) The reviewers may also consider whether the mentor is located at a participating institution (Duke, UNC-CH or NCSU) currently lacking a MMPTP trainee.
3. **Optional Review Mechanisms:** After completing the evaluation process outlined above, members of the Admissions Committee may suggest any of the following:
 - A) Interviews with each applicant. This option would most likely be invoked if there is keen competition for a limited number of openings.
 - B) Seminars. Similarly, the reviewers may request that applicants give a seminar based on their doctoral or pre-application research.
 - C) Deferment. The reviewers may decide that an insufficient number of high-quality applications were received and set another deadline to encourage more applications.
4. Applicants who are not accepted are welcome to request repeat consideration, and their application materials will be retained for future evaluation.