

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the Transformative Educational Advancement and Mentoring Network (TEAM)

R25: RFA-CA-23-013

1. What title/career level is the training champion?

We envision the training champion as a full-time equivalent, which may encompass more than a single individual, that provides boots to ground support to scholars. This individual should have good networking skills, protected time to commit to scholars, and be well-versed in the NIH grantsmanship process. We do not envision it being a full-time PI, as this person will likely have time constraints. However, we could see this being an essential employee from the dean's office or outreach core that has the qualifications mentioned previously to engage and promote the advancement of scholars.

If one person cannot fulfill this role, then multiple staff can be leveraged, if the percent effort equals 1 full-time equivalent or more. For example, a site may have one, hand-on, training champion who can commit 50% time and two others (at 25% effort) who may be more senior with ample connections and experience to contribute to the role.

2. Should the training champion be someone already working at the institution, or should they be new hires?

We cannot say exactly what staff is available, as each institution is different with different infrastructures in place. However, if we account for the effort required, it may be challenging for someone already in the role with competing responsibilities. Where possible, NCI would support hiring an additional individual(s) to support this effort.

3. Do the applicant(s) only have to pick one scholar career stage, or should they be required to propose all?

Applicants should select one or more levels depending upon their strengths and institutional capabilities. The selection will also be dependent on the institution and its mentoring strategies. For example, not every institution has postdoctoral fellows, so they may choose not to support scholars at this level (for example). Also, the collaboration and partnership commitment will play a large role. Perhaps institutions such as large academic medical schools or NCI designated Cancer Centers can help address this issue. The goal is to identify models and implementation strategies that are effective.

4. What institutions are eligible to apply? Can I apply if I am not a Minority Serving Institution (MSI)?

The purpose of TEAM as noted in the FOA is to “pilot test the use of training champions (TCs) at minority serving institutions (MSIs) (as defined in Section III), to support the development of educational activities and scientific career development programs and promote the diversity of the cancer research workforce.” The TEAM FOA is intended to support institutions that:

“Have a documented historical and current mission to educate students from any of the populations that have been identified as underrepresented in biomedical research as defined by the National Science Foundation (NSF), see <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/wmpd/>) (i.e., African Americans or Blacks, Hispanic or Latino Americans, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, U.S. Pacific Islanders, and persons with disabilities) or has a documented record of: (1) recruiting, training and/or educating, and graduating underrepresented students as defined by NSF (see above), which has resulted in increasing the institution's contribution to the national pool of graduates

from underrepresented backgrounds who pursue biomedical research careers and, (2) for institutions that deliver health care services, providing clinical services to medically underserved communities.”

These eligible institutions are encouraged to partner with other institutions such as medical schools, cancer centers, academic institutions (including other MSIs), and other groups (e.g., industry, community-based organizations, non-profits, etc.).

Therefore, if your institution does not meet this definition then partnering with an eligible institution is allowable. However, the funds should be primarily located at the eligible institution, where the participant pool should receive most of their training navigation support and educational courses.

5. What is “training navigation” and is there more information available?

Training navigation is defined by NCI and is described in the FOA <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-CA-23-013.html> as the following:

“Training Navigation aims to facilitate scholars' successful entry, transition, and advancement through the cancer training pipeline to independent research careers. Training Navigation leverages strategies, resources and stakeholders to 1) increase scholars' knowledge of NIH and other federal funding announcements, 2) improve scholars' awareness of career development and professional enhancement opportunities, and 3) provide additional mentorship and opportunities for supported engagement in career development training and networking. Optimal stakeholders for training navigation include a variety of personnel at the host institution and program staff at NIH/NCI that provide scholars with resources and networking opportunities to strengthen research rigor, professional development, and peer-to-peer interactions. Hence, training navigation is most effective when supporting the scholar at multiple levels. One level includes direct, hands-on support via training champions (TCs) who assist scholars with their educational and career development activities, providing the foundation for training navigation. Another level involves support at the institution via PIs, faculty, and mentors who offer scholars core curriculum, mentorship, and resources that can further their goal(s) towards independence. Lastly, NCI-based program staff, serving as the training navigator team, will provide overarching technical guidance and oversight by supplying TC's with pertinent grantsmanship related information, funding opportunity announcements (FOAs), and resources to disseminate to scholars.”

For more information on how training navigation has been leveraged in the past, please see a program spotlight of training navigation on the NCI page linked here: <https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/crchd/blog/2017/training-navigation>

6. Can I have Multiple PIs participate on this application?

Yes. Considering potential partnerships and collaborations, we expect that many applications will have multiple PIs.

7. Can I fund scholar research with this award?

No. We expect that the scholars will already be engaged in research activities. These funds are intended to support training champions, mentorship, networking opportunities, and associated activities.

8. What are the anticipated numbers of trainees for each Team grant?

The number of trainees will depend upon several factors, including the proposed scholar career-level. Based on data from our other CRCHD supported training programs, such as iCURE and PACHE, we expect that in any given year the level of engagement for trainees by scholar group will consist of the following:

Scholar Career Level	1 Site/Year	5 Sites/Year	Estimated Total Number over 5 years (all 5 sites)
Predoctoral/Graduate Students	50-80	250-400	1,250-2,000
Postdoctoral Fellows	20-30	100-150	500-750
Early-Stage investigators	10-20	50-100	250-500

9. Can I compensate scholars that participate in the TEAM program?

Participants may be compensated for participation in activities specifically required by the proposed research education program, if sufficiently justified. Participant costs must be itemized in the proposed budget.

Allowable participant costs depend on the educational level/career status of the individuals to be selected to participate in the program.

However, while individuals supported by NIH training and career development mechanisms (K, T, or F awards) may receive, and indeed are encouraged to receive, educational experiences supported by an R25 program, as participants, they may not receive salary or stipend supplementation from a research education program.

10. Where should I send questions that I have for the TEAM announcement?

Additional questions related to this FOA should be sent to NCITEAM@mail.nih.gov