



LEE KONG CHIAN
SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE



Imperial College
London

NHG-LKCMedicine Clinician-Scientist Preparatory Programme Plus (CSPP+) INFORMATION SHEET

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The NHG-LKCMedicine Clinician-Scientist Preparatory Programme Plus (CSPP+) is a joint programme between NHG and the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine) that aims to **prepare clinicians to embark on formal research training leading to PhD** in the early phase of their research careers. The programme would also help them to build up their research experience and generate preliminary data in preparation for competitive research.
- 1.2. Awardees are required to complete the programme within one year.
- 1.3. The programme comprises of three components:
 - Project funding quantum of up to S\$30,000;
 - Salary support of up to 0.3FTE; and
 - Mentorship.
- 1.4. For Residents, the programme should be completed within the duration of their residency. Exceptions apply for those who are employed by NHG institutions post-residency exit. Residents are recommended to discuss with their Residency Programme Directors on the feasibility and recommended year to embark on CSPP+, as well as the plans to complete the programme within residency.
- 1.5. The programme is overseen by the CSPP Faculty which comprises of key clinician-researchers from NHG institutions, NHG's academic partner LKCMedicine, as well as subject matter experts from other organisations.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1. Applicants should be
 - a) **Doctors** (i.e., clinically qualified with MD/MBBS/BDS)

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- Senior Residents enrolled in the NHG Residency Programme with indication of continuation with NHG or;
- Associate Consultants or Consultants (no more than 5 years post-residency exit) with primary appointments at NHG institutions.

OR

- b) **Health science / healthcare professionals**¹ with non-medical degrees, such as nurses, pharmacists and other allied health professions listed on [MOH's website](#) in clinical practice, with primary appointments at NHG institutions and at least 3 years of clinical or relevant experience. Others may contact the CSPP Secretariat for discussion on suitability of the programme.

Applicants should have attained at least Bachelors (Hons)/Masters with an Upper Second, preferably First class honours degree in a relevant field. Experience as first or co-author of research publications is preferred but not required.

2.2. All applicants should also fulfil the following criteria:

- a) Have completed the NHG-LKCMedicine Clinician-Scientist Preparatory Programme (CSPP) with good outcomes;
- b) Able to commit up to 0.3FTE to complete their research project within the award period, with the approval of their Reporting Officer;
- c) Demonstrates commitment to pursue the LKCMedicine PhD by Research Programme².

2.3. On an exceptional basis, an applicant who has not completed CSPP could be considered if he/she is able to demonstrate equivalent level of competency in foundational research training e.g. completion of the Master of Clinical Investigation (MCI) or Clinician Scientist (CS) Residency training.

2.4. As awardees are expected to apply for research PhD training within one year from the end of their CSPP+ award period, applicants should take note of LKCMedicine PhD by Research Programme's eligibility criteria and requirements and ensure that they are able to meet them.

2.5. Applicants are to note that the proposed CSPP+ project:

- a) Must be a project with specific aims to be achieved within the allowable project funding quantum;
- b) Must be able to achieve the set objectives within the award term of 1 year, with the potential to be developed into a research PhD study;
- c) Must be laboratory-based (wet bench or dry laboratory);

2.6. Interested clinicians are strongly encouraged to contact the CSPP Secretariat for discussion on suitability of the Programme prior to submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI).

¹ Successful awardees would be funded by NHG only.

² Applicants interested to pursue a research PhD with any other local academic institutions (NUS, NTU, SUTD, Duke-NUS, SIT) may contact the CSPP Secretariat for further discussion on suitability of the programme.

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- 2.7. Applicants are required to seek endorsements for their applications from the following personnel:
- a) Reporting Officer (RO);
 - b) Head of Department (HOD);
 - c) Director/Chief/Head of Family Group (applicable for health science / healthcare professionals only);
 - d) Director of Research (DOR); and
 - e) Residency Programme Director (applicable for Residents only).

3. FUNDING SUPPORT

3.1. Each awardee will receive the following funding support under the CSPP+ award:

- Project funding quantum of up to S\$30,000, for up to 1 year; and
- Salary support for research FTE of up to 0.3FTE, for up to 1 year
 - Up to 0.2FTE* will be provided by NHG Group Research
 - Additional top-up of at least 0.1FTE will be provided by the NHG Host Institution
 - Salary support will cover the total annual compensation, inclusive of salaries, CPF, fringe benefits, as well as bonus / incentive payments.

*Annual salary cap by awardee’s clinical designation (Table 1) will apply. NHG Host institution will need to top up the difference if the awardee’s salary exceeds the applicable annual salary cap.

| Table 1: Annual Salary Cap by Clinical Designation | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Clinical Designation | Annual Salary Cap |
| Consultant | S\$200,000 |
| Associate Consultant | S\$150,000 |
| Senior Resident | S\$120,000 |
| Health Science / Healthcare Professional | S\$100,000 |

3.2. Any request for time extension beyond the 1-year award duration and/or award renewal is generally not allowable, and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

4. MENTORSHIP

4.1. Each applicant is required to nominate a mentor from NHG and a mentor from LKCMedicine (subject to approval by the review committee) to guide them in their research project. The CSPP Secretariat may assist in the nomination and matching of appropriate mentor(s) where required.

The mentor should be an established clinician scientist or clinical scientist who

- a) Is involved in research with significant impact on clinical care;
- b) Has had experience as Principal investigator (PI) in a relevant area of research;

*Information is accurate as at time of print. Please refer to www.research.nhg.com.sg for latest information.
Last updated 1 October 2023*

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- c) Has strong foundation and knowledge in research methodology and conduct;
- d) Has obtained intramural/extramural grant(s) during the past 5 years;
- e) Has an established research track record; and
- f) Has had experience in supervising or providing research mentorship to junior investigators or peers.

4.2. Nominated mentors should be eligible to be PhD supervisor / co-supervisor and at least one mentor should be medically qualified.

5. REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

5.1. Key Performance Indicators

| KPI | Description |
|--|---|
| Application for Formal Research Training leading to PhD | To enrol in the LKCMedicine Research by PhD programme or equivalent |
| Publication(s) | To build up track record for a research PhD |
| Attainment of Grant Monies | Intramural/Extramural |
| Implementation of Research Results/Findings into Clinical Practice and Health and Economic Outcomes | To be demonstrated through Final Report |

5.2. Assessment

Awardees are required to submit a Final Report within 3 months from the end of the funding period, and present to the CSPP Faculty at the end of the CSPP+ award period.

Awardees are required to report their research achievements up to 5 years after the end of the award period.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 6.1. Applicants must comply with the requirements of NHG DSRB to be the PI of the proposed project, ensure they have met the minimum training requirements of NHG Domain Specific Review Board (DSRB) and/or any other regulatory body (e.g. Health Sciences Authority (HSA)).
- 6.2. Applicants are required to submit all application documents **in softcopy** to the CSPP Secretariat at NHG Group Research through their Institution's Clinical Research Unit (CRU) / Clinical Research and Innovation Office (CRIO).

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Letter of Intent Submission:

- a) Letter of Intent (LOI);
- b) Applicant's Curriculum Vitae (CV); and
- c) Other Supporting Documents, if any (e.g. Academic transcripts / graduation certificates etc.)

Full Application Submission:

- d) Application Form;
- e) Budget Breakdown Form; and
- f) Mentors' CVs.

The Institution's CRU / CRIO will set respective internal deadlines for the above submissions. Please check with your institutions for these deadlines. The Institution's CRU/ CRIO will ensure that the respective documents reach the CSPP Secretariat by the stipulated deadlines. Applications submitted after the call closing date and time will not be considered.

- 6.3. Templates for the application documents can be downloaded from the NHG Research Website (www.research.nhg.com.sg) from the opening date of the Call of Applications.
- 6.4. Shortlisted applicants may be required to conduct a presentation of his/ her research proposal to the CSPP Faculty after submission of their application.
- 6.5. Ethics applications are to be submitted to NHG DSRB, relevant IRBs or other regulatory bodies for review after recommendation, if not already done so. The CSPP Secretariat will coordinate with shortlisted applicants on these matters.
- 6.6. Please allow 6-8 months from the closing date of application for the processing and review of all applications.

7. APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 7.1. The applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria:
 - a) Proposed project's aims, methodologies, budget, significance of outcomes and potential to be developed into a research PhD study (40%);
 - b) Applicant's level of commitment including the appropriateness of the project team structure, reasonability of requested FTE amount for the proposed project, suitability of the mentors identified (30%);
 - c) Applicant's potential for growth to be developed as a Clinician Scientist, and to embark on a research PhD (30%).

8. CONTACT INFORMATION

- 8.1. For more information, please refer to the NHG Research Website at www.research.nhg.com.sg and/or contact the CSPP Secretariat:

Ms Caslyn Chen

Tel: 6496 6200

Email: Caslyn_YX_CHEN@nhg.com.sg

Ms Syarafina Hasan

Tel: 6496 6023

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Pointers for Good Research Proposals

Good ideas are often undermined by poor proposal preparation. Take time to review and improve on your proposal. Each section of the research proposal should be tackled carefully and to the point, as evaluations are based on how well the guiding questions are answered.

Some general pointers in writing a good proposal are:

- Define the problem statement and build a compelling case for need upfront based on the research gap identified. State your aims and hypotheses clearly.
- Illustrate your understanding of the existing competition in the selected area of research, including an appraisal of current literature and any preliminary results where available.
- Elaborate on your statistical plan e.g. sample size calculation and substantiation.
- Avoid inflating the budget. Propose a realistic budget that can cater to the scope of proposed work to be accomplished. Where possible, leverage on existing equipment/facilities.
- Explain the impact of your research clearly and how you would achieve it. This should not be confused with output KPIs (e.g. no. of paper publications, no. of postdocs recruited etc.) Be specific and quantitative if possible on the research outcomes – e.g. a specific achievement, or a new concept etc.
- Explain how the proposed project would fit into institutional/ programmatic/ organisational research strategy, if applicable.
- Use clear, accessible language. Avoid insider jargon and acronyms. Use direct statement and an active voice.
- Root out inconsistencies in format, typos, misspellings, mislabelling of diagrams, grammar etc. Get another person to proof-read.