

W. M. Keck Foundation
Distinguished Young Scholars in Medical Research Program Guidelines
By Invitation Only
(Revised 2007)

Overview

The W. M. Keck Foundation has a long history of supporting distinguished, innovative biomedical research in emerging fields at the forefront of science. The Foundation is continuing that tradition by identifying and fostering the careers of some of the nation's brightest young scientists, those with the promise to become our nation's research leaders. Toward that end, the Foundation has established an award program to promote the early career development of a select group of young investigators in cooperation with leading research institutions across the United States.

The W. M. Keck Foundation will award a maximum of \$1,000,000 each to five sponsoring institutions to support the research activities of a selected candidate for a period of five years in accordance with each candidate's own research plan and budget. Because this program is intended to "jump start" the nominees' career, their research should be creative and carry the potential for having a high impact in their respective fields. Progress will be measured by annual reports to the Foundation. Annual symposia attended by the awardees will provide the Foundation with additional ways to judge and track the progress of grantees.

Ten candidates will be selected as semi-finalists. The 10 institutions sponsoring the semi-finalists will each receive a \$10,000 Research Excellence award to support the candidates' research activities. The \$10,000 will be considered part of the award for the five finalists.

The purpose of the finalist and semi-finalist awards is to foster the research of the candidate. The institution should maximally protect the candidate's time for research, and should provide sufficient institutional resources and support to ensure the success of the investigator's program of research. The award is for direct research expenditures and excludes institutional overhead and indirect costs.

Program Guidelines

(Revised 2007)

Program Emphasis

Innovative research into the fundamental mechanisms of human disease.

Solicitation of Applications

- A maximum of 30 institutions (identified by the program's Scientific Advisory Committee and by Foundation staff) will be invited to nominate one candidate each. This list will be reviewed annually, as it is the Foundation's intent that the awards be spread among leading research institutions across the United States. Each year, the list of invited institutions will be reviewed by the Scientific Advisory Committee, a group of distinguished scientists elected by the Foundation board and staff but not employed by the Foundation. The membership of this Committee will revolve on a regular basis.
- Nominees selected by the institution must exhibit extraordinary promise for independent basic medical research and the potential for academic leadership.

Grant Application

- Formal application is to be made only by invitation, following this outline, and must be accompanied by a letter of nomination signed by the invited university's President or Chancellor, or a private research institution's Chief Executive Officer/Director.
- Nominees may be from any school or department of the institution.
- Applications will be accepted no later than 4:30 p.m. PST on December 1 (if this date falls on a weekend, the deadline is extended to 4:30 p.m. on the following Monday). Awards will be announced in June of the following year.
- Reviews from referees are due by December 31 at 4:30 p.m. PST.
- The effective date of the awards will coincide with the date of notification.
- As many as five awards of up to \$1,000,000 each will be made each year. Duration of the award payout will be a maximum of five years.

Faculty Eligibility

- On the December 1 deadline for submission of applications, the institution's nominee must:
 - 1) be holding his or her first full-time, tenure-track faculty appointment (or equivalent), and
 - 2) have held the faculty appointment (or equivalent) for at least one year and for no more than four years.
- United States of America citizenship or permanent residency status is required.
- Once funded, the Keck Scholar is encouraged to seek additional, outside competitive research funding.
- Awards are intended to have a lasting impact on the nominee's career and not to be merely additive to existing funding. Therefore, the Foundation's directors will favor, at their discretion, nominees who are not yet substantially funded by other major granting institutions.

Grant Data

- Grants are awarded to the institution on behalf of the Keck Scholar.
- The amount of each grant will be a maximum of \$1,000,000 to be paid over a five-year period, according to an approved budget.
- The sponsoring institutions for the 10 applicants chosen as semi-finalists will each receive a \$10,000 Research Excellence award to be used for the semi-finalists' research. The \$10,000 grant is considered a part of the award to the five finalists.
- All Keck Scholars are required to attend an annual meeting (cost of attending this meeting should be included in your budget). During this meeting, the Scientific Advisory Committee will formally review the research progress of Scholars who are in the third year of their award. Results of this review will determine the level of continued funding for the fourth and fifth project years for these Scholars.
- Up to 70% percent of the Scholar's base salary may be paid from the grant. (No fringe benefits for the Scholar will be covered by funds from the W. M. Keck Foundation.)
- Indirect costs may not be paid from the grant.
- Funds are to be used at the discretion of the Keck Scholar following appropriate institutional procedures and may be spent on personnel, supplies, equipment, and travel to scientific meetings related to the Keck Scholar's area of research. Major alterations or additions to the original budget, including equipment items that cost in excess of \$25,000, require prior approval from the Foundation.
- Annual progress and financial reports are required. Forms and instructions are available on the website.
- Unspent funds in any grant year may be carried forward throughout the five-year period of the grant. The funds being carried forward should be incorporated into the next year's budget. Carry-over and expenditure of funds beyond five years will be permitted with prior approval of the Foundation.
- Funds are not transferable to another institution. If a Keck Scholar transfers to another institution, unspent funds will remain with the grantee institution and expenditure of any such funds by the grantee institution will require prior Foundation approval. No additional funds will be paid by the W. M. Keck Foundation to the institution. Any equipment that has been purchased with grant funds also remains with the original institution.

Institutional Requirements

- The institution will provide a full-time, tenure-track faculty appointment for the period of the grant, and will assume the funding of the balance of the Scholar's salary not paid by the award, and all fringe benefits.
- The institution will provide adequate facilities for the proposed research. The institution is required to provide the following specific assurances:

- 1) The Keck Scholar's time will be maximally protected for the research outlined in the grant proposal. The Foundation does not, however, intend for this award to relieve the Keck Scholar of teaching or grant-writing responsibilities;
- 2) The Keck Scholar's research will comply with institutional policies and procedures; and
- 3) The institution will cooperate with the Foundation in the timely submission of progress and financial reports and in the evaluation of the program's effectiveness.

Review Process

- Applications will be evaluated both on the basis of scientific merit and on the nominees' potential for academic leadership.
- Nominees will submit their narrative proposal to four reviewers who are experts in the specialty field of the nominee and who would not benefit from the possible granting of this award. While these reviews are submitted directly to the Foundation, it is the responsibility of the nominee to verify that they have been received. Applications will not be considered complete if the reviews are not received by 4:30 p.m. PST on December 31.
- The W. M. Keck Foundation will receive all applications and confirm that they are complete and consistent with the Foundation's application procedures.
- The Scientific Advisory Committee will review the complete applications and select the top 10 applications for final review. The Foundation reserves the right to seek additional references if the Scientific Advisory Committee considers such additional information necessary to make an informed decision.
- The final 10 nominees will be invited to an interview session on May 5, 2008 at the Foundation's offices for a presentation of their research. The interviews will be conducted by the Scientific Advisory Committee and attended by Foundation staff.
- The Scientific Advisory Committee will prepare a rank order listing of the institutions' nominees for submission to the Foundation's Medical Research Committee, which will take these rankings into consideration when selecting the five Keck Scholars.

Application Instructions

Applications are due by December 1 at 4:30 p.m. PST

(if this date falls on a weekend, the deadline is extended to 4:30 p.m. on the following Monday).

Please note: Institutional information should be submitted only in hard copy; nominee information should be submitted in hard copy to the address below as well as in pdf format to scholars@wmkeck.org.

A completed application containing all of the information listed below must be submitted to the W. M. Keck Foundation by the sponsoring institution's President, Chancellor or Chief Executive Officer. All information, with the exception of the institution's tax letters, nominee's CV, publication reprints, and reference letters, must be printed in 12 point type or larger on 8½ by 11 inch paper with 1 inch margins, and must comply with the space limitations outlined below. Please do not staple or bind the application. *Applications not following these guidelines will not be considered.*

Institutional Information: *Send one hard copy of each item in this section to the address listed below. Please do not send materials listed in Institutional Information via e-mail. Please note: all tax-exempt and audited financial statements should be in the same, current, and full name of the qualifying organization.*

- A copy of the institution's most recent full, certified, audited financial statements** prepared annually in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. An accountant's review or compilation does not suffice.
- Copy of the Institution's most recent determination letter(s) from the United States Internal Revenue Service** stating that the institution is:
 - exempt from federal taxation as defined by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
 - a public charity (and not a private foundation) as defined by Section 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) or 170(b) of the Internal Revenue Code
- If the institution is located in California, a copy of the confirmation letter from the State of California Franchise Tax Board** stating that the institution is exempt from California State Franchise or Income Tax under Section 23701(d) of the Revenue and Taxation Code.
- A statement** of how the institution will exercise oversight of the Keck Scholar's expenditures, based on standard institutional practices.
- Checklist** completed by the institution's appointed liaison to the Foundation. (This liaison is cc'd in the program invitation letter). A copy of the checklist is available at www.wmkeck.org/programs/scholars.html.

Information to be Supplied by the Nominee: *Send one hard copy along with the Institutional Information to the address below. Additionally, one pdf format copy of all information listed below must be submitted via e-mail to scholars@wmkeck.org.*

- Letter of nomination** signed by the university's President or Chancellor or a research institute's Chief Executive Officer/Director.
- Summary of proposed research:** Do not exceed two paragraphs of 60-80 words each.

- Description of your project** that would explain your work and its importance to the general public (40-50 words).
- Description of most interesting or significant research to date:** Do not exceed two paragraphs of 60-80 words each.
- Statement of personal goals:** Discussion may include, but is not limited to, these topics: Where do you see yourself in five, 10 or 20 years from now? What would the receipt of this award mean to you? Do not exceed one page; approximately 600 words.
- Discussion of proposed research**, including an estimated timetable. Do not exceed five pages, including tables, figures, and a brief bibliography. Do not attach appendices. Remember that the members of the Scientific Advisory Committee and Foundation staff have different backgrounds and come from a variety of fields, and write accordingly. (Pages should be no more than 600 words each.)
- Curriculum vita:** Please identify the senior author and his/her relationship to the candidate on major papers.
- Current mailing address** and contact information of the candidate.
- References:** A list of the four references to be requested should be submitted with your application. (See "References" section for further information).
- Reprints** or copies of one to three of your most significant publications.
- Budgets for years 1 to 5:** Budget for year 1 must be detailed and include justifications; years 2 through 5 may be estimates. Please note that the budget need not be allocated in equal amounts over the five years. Please include the following:
 - Base salary of applicant up to 70% (No fringe benefits will be covered. This figure does not necessarily denote the percent of effort for the project.)
 - Other salaries (may include fringe benefits)
 - Equipment (estimated costs)
 - Consumable supplies
 - Services (mail, printing, etc.)
 - Travel
 - Other costs directly related to the proposed research not included above. (Please remember indirect costs are not allowed.)
- Sources of support:** *Additional awards received after submission must be reported to the Foundation in writing.*
 - Committed research support (direct costs broken down by year) and named awards received from other sources. A suggested tabular format is provided below. Include:
 - name of funding organization,
 - total amount of award,
 - annual payment of award,
 - active dates, and
 - purpose of the award.
 - Other pending requests for research support
 - Other support

Suggested format for Other Sources of Support:

Active or Pending (please specify)	Funder	Type of Award (e.g. R01, R21, scholarship, startup, etc.)	Project Title	Active Dates	Award Total (direct cost only)	Annual Payment (direct costs per fiscal year)
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References

We require an assessment of the proposed project by four knowledgeable experts in your field who can describe the potential of your research and who would not benefit if your institution receives this award. One letter must be from your Ph.D. advisor or post-doctoral advisor. At least two of the letters must be from reviewers outside your host institution. A brief assessment form that will allow reviewers to describe your research and evaluate its potential contribution to your field is available at www.wmkeck.org/programs/scholars.html, along with instructions for the referees to submit their reviews via e-mail. Please forward this link or copies of this form to your reviewers. They are encouraged to attach a letter of reference to the forms. The deadline to receive references is December 31 at 4:30 p.m. PST. Reviewers may submit their comments along with the form to referees@wmkeck.org. An application will not be considered complete until these references are received. We will advise you as references are received.

One hard copy of the Institutional and Nominee Information should be submitted. In addition, please submit the nominee information to scholars@wmkeck.org. Both the electronic and hard copy submission must be received by 4:30 p.m. PST on December 1 (if this date falls on a weekend, the deadline is extended to 4:30 p.m. on the following Monday). Please do not bind or staple hard copies. Send to:

**Roxanne Ford
Program Director
W. M. Keck Foundation
550 South Hope Street, Suite 2500
Los Angeles, CA 90071**

If you have further questions, you may contact Ms. Victoria Murray at 213/612-2082 or scholars@wmkeck.org.