NIH (T32) Training Grant Letter of Institutional Support

Below are instructions for creating an institutional support letter and the process for obtaining signature from the Dean of the School of Medicine. You should submit the request at least 3 weeks before the letter is needed.

IMPORTANT NOTE: once you have the signed institutional support letter it must be combined into 1 PDF document with the required letter of institutional commitment to harassment and discrimination protections. Stanford’s letter can be found at [link will be inserted].

Process

Submit a Training Grant Dean’s Letter of Support Request at: https://tinyurl.com/som-tg-letter

Ayodele Thomas, Associate Dean for Graduate and Career Education and Diversity (Ayodele.Thomas@stanford.edu) will review the letter and obtain review/approval from the Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Education & Postdoctoral Affairs. Once approved, the letter will be sent to the Dean for signature. Amy Domingo (adomingo@stanford.edu) in the Dean’s office will return the letter to you via email once signed.

Instructions for the Structure of the Training Grant Support Letter

Paragraph 1 - Introduction Paragraph

Paragraph 2 – Insert the appropriate paragraph below that describe SoM resources provided

Paragraph 3 – Provide program description and statement of impact

Paragraph 4 – Provide previous success and address any area for improvement (renewals only)

Paragraph 5 – Provide Stanford's commitment of support
REQUIRED PARAGRAPHS

Include appropriate paragraphs below as part of the introduction, reword as necessary:

**Introduction:** I am pleased to offer the enthusiastic support of the School of Medicine (SOM) for [PI NAME AND GRANT TITLE]. I want to highlight the extensive institutional support offered for training grants and their trainees in the School of Medicine:

**For Training Grants including Predoctoral slots:** The SOM covers all student expenses not provided by the training grant, including a stipend considerably higher than the training grant minimum to reflect the high cost of living in the Bay Area. There are additional funds provided to ease entry into labs where financial barriers might otherwise exist, such as students deciding to carry out research in a stem cell lab who originally entered another home program, as students should have the opportunity to pursue their passions. The School also provides a significant operating budget for all graduate programs in the Biosciences. The University offers Stanford Graduate Fellowships which covers full tuition and stipend for a significant proportion (currently approximately 20%) of our students.

Our graduate education curriculum aims to empower students both academically and professionally. The summer prior to our student’s first year they participate in an online orientation, led by faculty and senior students. The orientation is designed to help them transition from undergraduate and other pre-graduate school pursuits and to “hit the ground running” as both students and professionals in training. This level of commitment to student success continues into the first year with our innovative Foundations in Experimental Biology course designed to facilitate students’ critical first step toward becoming scientists – from being consumers of information to producers of knowledge. Throughout their training, our students have the opportunity to enroll in mini-courses - one to three week intensive workshops that give them an opportunity to learn about a specific biosciences field or develop a new skill. Additionally, our multifaceted mentoring approach allows graduate students and postdocs to be matched with peer and/or professional mentors of their choosing in additional to their faculty advisor. Trainees can opt to be matched with multiple mentors thereby increasing the breadth of advice they receive.

The SOM recognizes the critical importance of mentoring trainees and faculty, and will ensure that you have adequate time as part as your University and Division roles to direct this outstanding Training Program. Training grant faculty are also given the necessary time to excel as faculty mentors and are encouraged to participate in the various programs in the School of Medicine. In addition, the trainees have full access to the undergraduate, graduate and medical curriculums to supplement and enhance their educational and training experience.

The SOM has recently built the Li Ka Shing Center for Learning and Knowledge which brings together cutting-edge, modern education and advanced technology, by design. Researchers have instant access to the most current data without leaving their labs. The fourth floor is dedicated exclusively to students, and provides them with a variety of study, reflection, and social spaces to work, connect with their peers, work out, and relax. A lounge, kitchen, and entertainment area and a rooftop terrace create a stress-free environment to complement a large variety of study spaces. A free, fully equipped gym with locker room and showers lets students squeeze in a workout between classes or laboratories, while a project rehearsal area provides students with a state of the art space to practice key presentations. Access to this space is exclusive for medical and graduate students.
For Training grants including postdoctoral slots: Importantly, the SOM has a variety of programs to help fund postdoctoral trainees, including the Dean's fellowship program. This funding helps to provide the financial support necessary to allow trainees to extend their training and complete their research projects. The Dean's office also supports the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA), with eight staff members. OPA sponsors multiple programs addressing career skills for academic research, entrepreneurial endeavors, mentoring, and communication. Programs include talks and workshops on setting up a lab, negotiating job offers, teaching, writing grants and fellowships, and conflict resolution. Quarterly orientations, held in conjunction with the Stanford and School of Medicine career centers, provide a wide range of information on Stanford, resources available to postdocs, and career planning. The Assistant Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs meets regularly with postdocs and faculty to resolve conflicts, plan careers, and provide general guidance. Outside of the OPA, postdocs have access to all facilities on campus, including multiple gyms, counseling center, ombudsmen and women, and the international center. Postdocs can and do audit graduate courses, including our newly minted Mini-courses, which allow a deep dive into or exploration of a new area with a limited time commitment. Postdocs also have access to a range of workshop and course offerings from Lane Library and the School of Medicine Biosci Careers office.

For Training Grants including only Predoctoral slots: Stanford is committed to promoting the diversity of its students. Our Office of Graduate Education oversees pipeline programs for undergraduate students, as well as programs for current graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. A key pipeline effort is our Stanford Summer Research Program, a fully funded residential internship program for underrepresented minority undergraduates who are interested in pursuing Ph.D. programs in the biomedical sciences. Since the program’s inception, Stanford has trained over 500 talented undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds. 89% of the participants went on to pursue an advanced degree. ADVANCE, which includes an eight-week intensive summer transition program and academic year programming, supports the success and retention of incoming graduate students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds. The program strives to foster Community, Leadership, and Excellence in an interactive learning environment. Stanford has excellent centers committed to coordinating student extracurricular, professional development, and cultural activities including the Graduate Student Center and Cultural Community Centers for students from (or with interest in) the Latino, Black/African American, Native American, Asian American, International, Women’s, Islamic and LGBTQ communities on campus. All trainees in the School of Medicine have access to health insurance and counseling and psychological services. The Stanford Biosciences supports the recruitment, enrollment and graduation of students with disabilities and the Stanford Office of Graduate Admissions clearly states our policy of non-discrimination, including prohibited discrimination based on disability. The application and recruiting materials for Stanford Biosciences Program all indicate Stanford’s full compliance with the American with Disabilities Act and the webpage for cultural diversity in the Stanford Biosciences Program includes a link to the Office of Accessible Education, which provides resources to all students on campus, undergraduate and graduate, with disabilities. All of Stanford’s research facilities are fully accessible to researchers with disabilities, and we are fully committed to providing any necessary accommodations for disabled students.
For Training Grants including only Postdoctoral slots: Stanford is committed to promoting the diversity of its students. Our Office of Graduate Education oversees pipeline programs for undergraduate students, who are mentored by graduate students and postdocs, as well as programs for current graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Stanford has excellent centers committed to coordinating student extracurricular, professional development, and cultural activities including the Graduate Student Center and Cultural Community Centers for students from (or with interest in) the Latino, Black/African American, Native American, Asian American, International, Women’s, Islamic and LGBTQ communities on campus. All trainees in the School of Medicine have access to health insurance and counseling and psychological services.

For All Training Grants: The School’s Biosci Careers office supports graduate students and postdoctoral scholars with career mentoring and counseling, exposure to myriad career choices, and development of a range of scientific and leadership skills. The SOM provides an environment of personal and professional exploration, allowing students and postdocs to define and follow their own path to success. Our unique location in the middle of innovative Silicon Valley—as well as the School’s co-location with the rest of Stanford’s campus allows for diverse connections to interdisciplinary collaborations and opportunities in and out of the lab. The curriculum reflects this interdisciplinary perspective by offering access to courses in other schools, such as Engineering, Business, Education, and Law. Stanford faculty, alumni and staff offer trainees the mentoring and resources to succeed in a wide range of careers.