



Marsha  
Rivkin Center  
for Ovarian  
Cancer  
Research™

# Scientific Scholar Award *Guidelines*

# SCIENTIFIC SCHOLAR AWARD GUIDELINES

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## **Marsha Rivkin Center Scientific Scholar Award Guidelines**

### **PURPOSE**

The Marsha Rivkin Center Scientific Scholar Award is intended to assist promising laboratory and clinical scientists in pursuing a career as an independent investigator in ovarian cancer research. Research funding for ovarian cancer is comparatively low, which discourages talented laboratory scientists and physicians from directing their careers toward ovarian cancer. The Scientific Scholar Award provides the funds for the best and brightest minds to have an opportunity to begin a career in ovarian cancer research.

The program will strive to support the scientific growth and academic success of awardees. The goal is to attract junior investigators as well as established investigators into ovarian cancer research and to develop their potential as leaders. The Scientific Scholar Award program will produce leaders in multiple areas of ovarian cancer research.

Under the guidance of a mentor(s), the Scholar will explore diverse scientific approaches to specific research objectives and develop the skills required of an independent investigator. A successful candidate will provide a convincing argument for why the Scientific Scholar Award will substantially enhance his/her career and development and how the mentor(s) will contribute toward the Scholar's development as an independent researcher in ovarian cancer. The timeline given in the proposed research plan must be sufficient to support completion of a novel or promising study with proven research objectives.

The Scientific Scholar Award program will support opportunities for junior investigators to interact with senior scientists both locally and nationally. Ultimately, awardees are expected to complete the proposed research plan by the end of the award period and to submit an RO1-type grant that builds on the findings of the supported research.

### **OVERVIEW**

#### *Duration of Award*

Scientific Scholar Awards will have a duration of 1 calendar year (12 months) unless otherwise negotiated with and agreed to by the Marsha Rivkin Center.

#### *Amount of Award & Allowable Expenses*

The Scientific Scholar Award will fund multiple awardees per year contingent on funding availability and the scientific merit of applications. The maximum budget for each project is \$60,000. The funds provided are considered an award, and therefore institutional overhead and indirect costs will not be funded.

Applicants may budget up to 50% salary support, as well as materials, supplies, consumables, travel costs for scientific meetings, and other expenses as justified. Budget and budget justifications must be included with the application.

It will be the responsibility of the candidate and mentor(s) to provide laboratory (or office) space and funding to support the proposed research plan.

### *Eligibility*

Potential candidates will have an MD, PhD, or equivalent degree with career goals focused on ovarian cancer. Clinicians will have completed their residency. Candidates should be at the post-doc/fellow, instructor, research assistant, or assistant professor level with no more than 3-4 years in any of these positions. Established, outstanding scientists without prior focus in ovarian cancer but looking to focus in this disease area are also encouraged to apply.

Foreign and non-resident post-docs are not excluded from applying for the Scientific Scholar Award. However, commitment from a mentor for the duration of the project is required to accompany the letter of intent.

### *Mentors*

Successful candidates will need to identify 1-2 research mentors who are willing to dedicate resources to support a proposed research plan and laboratory/office space that fits his/her short and long term goals. It is recommended that Scholars present their progress to their mentor(s) on a regular basis.

### *Application Format*

Applicants should submit a proposal to the Marsha Rivkin Center (MRC) including a cover letter, mentor's statement(s), career development plan, scientific proposal on MRC-modified PHS 398 forms (see below), and a 100-word lay abstract.

### Research Plan

Applications should be submitted using MRC-modified PHS 398 forms found on our website (Arial or other acceptable font, 11 point minimum, 8.5" x 11" paper, 0.5" margins). Required forms, downloadable from the Marsha Rivkin Center website [www.marsharivkin.org](http://www.marsharivkin.org), include Face Page, Table of Contents, Detailed Budget, Entire Budget with Budget Justification, Biosketch (2-page limit per individual), Other Support, and Continuation pages for scientific plan and lay abstract. The scientific plan should be no more than five pages in length addressing each of the following areas: Specific Aims, Background and Significance, Preliminary Results (if available), and Research Design and Methods. All tables, figures, and images must fit within the five-page limit. References, human subjects approval, and vertebrate animals approval should be included as necessary and are not included in the five-page limit. Additional materials (e.g. published papers, submitted manuscripts, etc.) will not be considered. *Mentors should participate in the development of this section. Please include sources of funding that can be used to cover research costs, outside of the salary support needed to conduct the research.*

### Cover Letter:

A cover letter must accompany the application and should include:

- Name of candidate, current title, and institution
- Prior training/experience in ovarian cancer
- Short and long term research goals
- Suggested mentors

### Mentor's Statement(s):

Please include a letter(s) of support from your mentor(s) including information on relevant experience and commitment to your research plan and nature of the supervision that will occur during the award period.

### Career Development Plan:

A systematic plan should be presented for obtaining the necessary research experience to launch an independent ovarian cancer research career. The plan must detail additional training and/or classes needed to meet goals.

The career development plan must be specifically tailored to the applicant's needs and with the ultimate goal of achieving independence as a researcher. Describe how the award will contribute to your ability to fulfill both short-term and long-term goals.

The plan should identify 1-2 mentors and include a justification for 1 year of mentored research experience. Describe each mentor's areas of expertise and responsibilities and the rationale for your choice of mentors. A convincing case must be presented to demonstrate that the support will substantially enhance your career and/or will allow the pursuit of a novel or promising study with research objectives.

### *Application Submission*

Four hard copies of all application materials plus 1 electronic copy (Adobe PDF) must be *received* by **the application due date** to the address indicated on the most current "Request for Applications" document.

## **REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS**

### *Process of Review*

Scientific Scholar applications will undergo initial review by the Marsha Rivkin Center Directors to confirm that the applications are complete and to assign appropriate and qualified reviewers. Each application will be assigned a minimum of two reviewers with applicable expertise who will each provide anonymous written reviews. All reviewers will meet to evaluate proposals and provide recommendations for funding.

Reviewers will use the NCI scoring system to review proposals. Reviewers will abstain from reviewing or scoring any proposal that presents a conflict of interest.

### *Evaluation*

The following review criteria will be applied during the evaluation.

#### Candidate

Reviewers will evaluate the strength of the candidate in terms of his/her prior training and scientific accomplishments and potential for research leadership. Outstanding scientists who have demonstrated leadership qualities but who have minimal research experience in ovarian cancer will be given high priority.

#### Career Development Plan

The reviewers will comment on the appropriateness of the content, phrasing, and the proposed duration of the career development plan for achieving scientific independence and leadership. They will also consider consistency of the career development plan with the candidate's career goals and the likelihood that the plan will contribute substantially to the achievement of goals. In addition, the reviewers will evaluate the candidate's commitment to a career in ovarian cancer research.

#### Research Plan

Reviewers will evaluate the scientific and technical merit of the research question and its relevance to the candidate's career objectives. They will also comment on the appropriateness of the research plan as a vehicle for developing the research skills described in the career development plan.

#### Mentor(s)

The reviewers will evaluate the appropriateness of each mentor's research qualifications in the areas related to this application as well as the quality and extent of each mentor's proposed role in providing guidance and advice to the candidate.

### **CONDITIONS OF AWARD**

#### *Start Date*

The annual start date will be April 1 unless otherwise specified by the Marsha Rivkin Center.

#### *Carry Forward*

Carry forward of funds is not available. However, a written request for a no-cost extension period may be sent to the Marsha Rivkin Center 30 days prior to the completion of the funding year.

#### *Reporting*

A final report, lay abstract, and final financial report must be provided within 90 days after the completion of the funding period. Forms may be found on the Rivkin website at [www.marsharivkin.org](http://www.marsharivkin.org). Any unexpended funds must be returned with the final reports to the Marsha Rivkin Center unless otherwise directed by the Center. A letter of reminder will be sent 60 days prior to the completion of the funding period.

### *Presentation of Work to the Marsha Rivkin Center*

In addition to all annual and/or final reports, award recipients will be required to present at the next forthcoming MRC Symposium following the completion of funding. The Marsha Rivkin Center will provide travel in addition to Scholar Award funding unless travel funds remain as part of the award.

### *Publications and Presentations*

Award recipients are highly encouraged to publish and present the results of their Rivkin-funded projects. Recipients are required to acknowledge funding support by the Marsha Rivkin Center for Ovarian Cancer Research in all papers, presentations, exhibits, press releases and/or proposals that reference Scientific Scholar-funded work using the following statement or its equivalent: "This research was supported (in part) by a grant(s) from the Marsha Rivkin Center for Ovarian Cancer Research."

Copies of publications, news releases, articles, and other published materials which are developed in connection with the award must be provided to the Center prior to publication, or as soon after as is practical.

Award recipients are also encouraged to use research study results into full-scale funding applications to outside agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense.

### *Additional Recognition*

The Marsha Rivkin Center should be recognized as an award-granting organization in public documents such as annual reports and websites, where applicable.

### *Transfers*

#### Change of Institution

If the Scientific Scholar moves institutions, a request to transfer the grant must be submitted in writing. The request should include the following:

- Reason for departure
- Effective date and period of change
- Plans for the continuation of the project and commitment of new mentor(s)
- Letter from the current institution stating its willingness to relinquish the grant.
- Name of new institution along with letter stating its willingness to accept the grant and conditions of the award

The funds may be transferred only after approval of the Center. Otherwise, funds must be returned to the Center with a final accounting within 30 days of the principal investigator leaving the institution.

#### Change of Principal Investigator

As the Scientific Scholar program makes awards on the basis of the individual candidate, the grant will terminate if the Scholar is unable to continue the work and be mentored.

### *Termination*

Awards may be terminated before the end of the project based on any of the following:

- Scholar requests in writing that the award be terminated
- Scholar is unable to carry out the research
- Scholar changes significant aspects of the award from its original intent without prior approval from the Center
- Annual report/final report not received in timely manner as specified in conditions of award
- Scholar or associates found to have committed scientific misconduct or fraud

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### *Website & Newsletter*

The Marsha Rivkin Center retains the right to feature Scientific Scholars and their funded studies on its website and in related newsletters.

#### *Post-Funding Monitoring*

The Marsha Rivkin Center retains the right to follow-up with each award recipient once a year for 5 years after funding is complete to request a brief report on recent career progress and ovarian cancer research objectives. This mechanism will help the Marsha Rivkin Center monitor its success.

#### *Non-Discrimination Policy*

The Marsha Rivkin Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, or sexual orientation in administering its scientific, research, and educational programs.