ICTR KL2 Scholars Program

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: What is the KL2 Scholars Program?

A: The KL2 Scholars Program provides promising young clinical and translational investigators the training, mentoring, and protected time to develop an independent research program. This program is funded by NIH through the ICTR Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA).

Q: What is the KL2 Scholar award?

A: The KL2 Scholar award supports junior faculty at UW Madison pursuing and actively engaged in translational research and who are committed to developing an independent research program. Funded by NIH, three scholars are awarded for two years; additional time in the program is possible upon review of scholar progress and need.

Q: How is a KL2 award different from other NIH K awards?

A: The KL2 award is an institutional grant administered by ICTR, rather than an independent K award administered by institute or center of NIH or AHRQ. Funded by NIH, three scholars are awarded for two years; additional time in the program is possible upon review of scholar progress and need. The KL2 Program also comes with other research career development support, including coaching and a structured curriculum.

Q: How long is the KL2 award?

A: The KL2 award is for two years, with the possibility of institutional funding for a third and fourth year. Each year of funding is contingent upon participation in KL2 Program sessions, satisfactory progress, and submission of required progress reports.

Q: What does the 75% effort dedicated to research, training, and career development as part of the KL2 entail?

A: This effort is dedicated for conducting the multidisciplinary clinical and translational research, career development training activities (e.g., Mentored Research Scholar Seminar Series, workshops, required RCR coursework, other individual training plan-related course work), and important mentoring activities. The effort cannot include clinical service, teaching, or other activities not related to research and research career development.

Q: May I allocate less than 75% effort to the KL2 activities?

A: Certain surgical specialties may request approval for less than 75% (but no less than 50%) protected time for this program. In the application you must justify why more than a 25% clinical commitment is required and how the reduced research and career development effort will not adversely affect academic activities. Any applicant who is interested in applying while

committing less than 75% effort for the academic aspects of the project should discuss their interests with KL2 Program leadership and their departmental chair prior to applying.

Q: I am on a 9-calendar month appointment. Can I still apply for the KL2 award?

A: Yes. Applicants who hold appointments less than 12 months or full-time (e.g., VA appointments) are eligible, but still must meet the dedicated time requirement of 9 calendar months.

Q: How can I use the 25% effort not supported by the KL2 award?

A: Each scholar's 25% non-supported time must be devoted to activities related to the development of a successful clinical and translational research career. Typically, these activities include clinical, administrative, and/or teaching efforts. Applicants may take a leave of absence to work at the VA as long as they can still accommodate the 9 calendar month dedicated time on their UW appointment. Divisions/departments must not require extra duties or responsibilities that reduce the scholar's protected time and interfere with the purpose of the KL2 award.

Q: Does the program pay the Scholar's salary?

A: The KL2 award pays the Scholar's salary, with a cap of $100,000. Fringe benefits are also paid.

Q: Is travel support available for those who wish to attend scientific meetings?

A: Each scholar receives $25,000 annually for research and research career development expenses such as personnel, supplies, tuition, travel and other allowable costs. Your application must include a budget which will require approval prior to the start of your KL2 appointment.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Q: At what stage in their careers should prospective KL2 Scholars apply?

A: The KL2 award is designed for researchers who are early in their professional careers. It is not meant to serve as support for applicants already established in their field, nor is it meant to aid in a career change.

Q: I do not have a faculty appointment yet. Am I still eligible for the award?

A: Yes. To receive support by the KL2 Program, each KL2 Scholar must be an Assistant Professor (tenure-track or CHS) and have the full support of their research mentor, home department, and school / college. Although faculty positions may be pending at the time of application, departmental commitment to a KL2 Scholar's research career development is an important consideration in the review of applications. If your faculty application is "in process", please make sure this is stated in the letter of support from your department chair or division Chief. Comparable junior research investigators at Marshfield Clinic are also eligible for this award.

Q: Who can receive a KL2 award?

A: Investigators with UW faculty appointment and junior research investigators at Marshfield Clinic, conducting research or health-professional doctoral degree or equivalent, including but not limited to: MD, MBBS, DO, DDS, PhD, PharmD, OD, PsyD, DPH. KL2 appointees come from a variety of colleges, schools, departments, and fields (e.g., medicine, dentistry, nursing, the behavioral sciences, engineering, pharmacy, biostatistics, epidemiology etc.) and must conduct pre-clinical, translational and/or clinical research. UW ICTR KL2 Program selects KL2 candidates after an application process similar to the NIH grant application process is conducted.

Q: Do you accept applications from external institutions?

A: You must have an appointment at UW Madison or Marshfield Clinic at the start of the funding period to be eligible for the KL2 award.

Q: Can I apply for ICTR's KL2 award if I'm also applying for other mentored career development awards (i.e., K08 or K23)?

A: NIH policy prohibits applicants from having two career development award applications (i.e., KL2 and K23 or K08) under simultaneous review. If you wish to apply for the KL2 award but have already submitted another K-award application, you must formally withdraw your other application before submitting your KL2 application.

Q: I am a principal investigator of industry grants; am I eligible for the KL2?

A: Yes. This is allowed as long as your paid effort for the industry studies is outside of the 75% KL2-supported effort.

Q: Is there a citizenship requirement?

A: Yes. Applicants must be United States citizens, permanent residents, or have non-citizen national status (persons born in outlying possessions of the United States, limited to American Samoa, Swain's Island, or the unincorporated United States Minor Outlying Islands) at the time the application is submitted.

Q: If I have applied for permanent resident status but have not yet received an alien registration card, am I eligible for KL2 support?

A: No. All applicants must be U.S. citizens or be lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

Q: If I do not get the KL2 on my first submission, how many resubmissions are allowed?

A: There is no limit on the number of resubmissions. All resubmissions will be reviewed as new applications along with all other submissions for a given cycle. That is, although you may change parts of your applications based on comments you received from the initial review, you will not have the opportunity to include a statement detailing those changes. In short, the submission and review process are the same for new applications and resubmissions.

Q: Can I complete international research as a KL2 scholar?

A: No. NIH will only support research based in the U.S.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Q: What is the curriculum of the KL2 Scholars Program?

A: Each KL2 scholar is required to take Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course during the first year on the KL2 award regardless if they have taken RCR courses in the past.

Additionally, ICTR KL2 scholars must participate in the Mentored Research Seminar Series. The goal of this curriculum is to provide trainees the skills to become future leaders in conducting clinical and translational science through a combination of panel discussions, workshops, and online training, minimizing didactic lectures. The Seminar Series complements traditional research training in biostatics, epidemiology, study design, etc. This curriculum does not replace the individual scholar's training plan.

Q: Are KL2 Scholars permitted to take other courses?

A: Yes, KL2 Scholars are encouraged to take other courses and didactic training modules to supplement their individual backgrounds and research needs outlined in their training plans for the KL2 award application.

Q: Do I need a research mentor(s) to apply?

A: Yes. KL2 Scholars must have a research mentor(s) to apply. The qualifications and commitment of the research mentor(s) relative to the goals and objectives of the applicant is an important consideration in the review of KL2 Scholar applications. The primary mentor must be either UW or Marshfield Clinic faculty.

Q: How do I select a mentor?

A: Your mentor should be committed to helping you attain your) career goals. This may include direct support of research studies, assistance in experimental design, analysis/interpretation of research results, preparation for formal presentations, manuscripts, and grant applications. Note that additional coaching will be provided by the KL2 Program Directors. Depending on the proposed research, additional mentors in fields of research expertise may also be advisable.

Q: Could my primary mentor or co-mentor also be the department or division head?

A: Yes. All mentors should have a strong record of funded research and successful mentoring of early stage investigators to independence.

Q: Are there are special requirements for the mentor(s)?

A: Yes. Each KL2 scholar mentor is required to have completed approved mentor training.

OTHER FUNDING

Q: Can a KL2 scholar accept a small grant award?

A: Yes. Former/current PI on any grant with $100,000 or less in direct costs are eligible to apply. Please see NIH guidance for full details. However, the effort requirement of the KL2 award applies.

Former or current PDs/PIs on any NIH-funded research project grant (or equivalent federal peer-reviewed research grant) that exceeds $100,000 in direct costs per year, or project leaders on sub-projects of program project (P01) or center grants (P50), **are NOT eligible to apply**.

Q: Can I work on another research project under my 75% protected time?

A: Yes. A KL2 scholar is allowed to devote complementary effort without salary support on other research grants that include related research between the KL2 and the research grant. In cases where there is scientific overlap, effort on the research grant is subsumed within the effort of the KL2. Nonetheless, there should not be significant duplication of the scope of the research supported by the KL2 award.

Q: If a portion of KL2 salary is provided by a department, does this mean that the percent effort devoted to KL2 activities may be reduced?

A: No. At least seventy-five percent effort of a full-time position must continue to be dedicated to the KL2 activity regardless of the source(s) of salary funding. The fact that a department may fund a portion of the scholar's salary can in no case require the scholar to redirect effort toward Departmental priorities outside of those directed to the research and career development activities of the KL2.

Q: If I accept a position at another institution what will happen to my KL2 award?

A: The KL2 award is not transferable to another institution.

KL2 APPLICATION INFORMATION:

Q: How many times a year is the KL2 Application process open?

A: KL2 Application process is conducted only **ONCE** a year, with the nomination letters being submitted by the end of July and the application process finalized by October 1 each year.

Q: Can an individual applicant directly apply for the KL2 award?

A: No. Each KL2 applicant needs to be nominated by their home UW departmental chair or school dean

Q: What is the timeline and process for submitting the KL2 application?

A: Typical dates for the Application and Award process are as follows:

- Dean/Chair Nomination Letter Receipt: Late July
- Mandatory Information Sessions (attend one): Early August
- Application Receipt: Early October
- Study Section: mid-December
- Award Selection: January

Q: When does the application close?

A: The application closes at 11:59 p.m. on the application due date.

Q: What are the KL2 application components?

A: Key application components are as follows:
- Applicant current CV
- Applicant NIH biosketch
- Translational NIH research competency self-evaluation
- Candidate statement
- Individualized career development plan
- Description of mentor support
- Research plan
- Human subjects/animal protocols
- Mentors' NIH biosketches
- Mentors' letters of support and commitment
- Chair's or dean's letter of support (not the nomination letter)
- References letters

Q: In case I have additional questions who should I contact?

A: Questions involving the application or review process should be directed to Ana Garić, ana.garic@wisc.edu.