

Vanderbilt Faculty Research Scholars Application Process

Application Instructions

The application should include as a single PDF the items listed in the order below:

1. Cover letter.
2. Applicant's NIH biosketch.
3. Applicant's full CV using the Vanderbilt School of Medicine CV template: [Link to CV Format](#).
4. Abstract; not more than 30 lines (separate page).
5. Research proposal and career development plan – 10 pages maximum including the specific aims, research proposal, figures, and career development plan. References are not included in the page limit. Font: Arial 11 pt. with 0.5" margins.
6. Mentor letter (signed by either primary or all mentors).
7. Primary mentor's biosketch. (Do not include biosketches from committee members.)
8. Letter from department chair stipulating willingness to accept Faculty Research Scholars' funding, assurance of 75% protected time, and documentation of other duties.
9. Two (2) additional letters of reference – do not submit more than 2 additional letters.
10. Abstract, aims, and body [approx. 12 pages] of any prior application for an extramural career development award.

Cover Letter

The letter should briefly summarize the candidate's prior research experience, the desirability of a mentored research experience, and the perceived synergy between the candidate's interests and the background and resources of the mentor(s) in no more than two pages. If the applicant has already applied for an extramural award (such as a K award) this should be indicated in the cover letter, and a copy of the award application should be provided with the candidate's application.

Research Proposal and Career Development Plan

The goal of the research proposal section of the application is to give review committee members an overview of the research question under scrutiny and to outline the approach that will be used to conduct the research. The goal of the career development plan is to describe how the applicant will be mentored, what training is planned, and the anticipated timeline for preparation of academic products such as manuscripts, presentations, and grant proposals planned during the period of support.

The proposal must include:

- Title on the abstract page and the first page of the proposal.
- Sections:
 - Abstract summarizing the application in 30 or fewer lines on a separate page not included in the 10-page limit.
 - The proposal is limited to 10 single-spaced pages formatted as indicated above.
 - The 10 pages **include both** the research plan and the career development plan.
 - The 10-page limit includes specific aims and figures but does not include references.

It is up to the applicant to decide how to allocate the 10 pages.

Mentor Letter

This letter should narrate the training plan for the applicant with a clear rationale for the components, as well as provide comments indicating how the applicant's project relates to the mentor's research expertise. The mentor should indicate a significant track record for mentoring investigators to independence.

Mentor's NIH Biosketch

The mentor's NIH biosketch should indicate active extramural funding that runs concurrently with the applicant's entire Vanderbilt Faculty Research Scholars appointment.

Department Chair Letter of Support

The letter from the department chair must indicate:

- Desire to have the applicant considered for the Faculty Research Scholars Program.
- Commitment to the candidate specifying that the scholar will spend no more than 25% of their effort on clinical or other activities during the duration of the award.
- Assurance that a departmental award of \$10,000 per year for up to 3 years will be provided for the scholar or the mentor's laboratory to provide supplies, equipment, or personnel to support the candidate's research or to support tuition. This is required in addition to the \$15,000 per year that will be provided by the VUMC Faculty Research Scholars Program.
- Space and resource plan for the applicant's eventual emergence from the mentored setting when independent federal funding is secured.
- If the chair is also the primary mentor, he or she should indicate this in the letter, which will suffice for both chair/mentor letter. Only **one** letter from the department chair is needed for the application.

Letters of Reference

Letters from two individuals who are familiar with the applicant's scientific and/or clinical experience should provide insight into the applicant's potential as a scientist. These letters are in addition to the mentor's and chair's letters of support. Letters of reference should come from individuals who are senior in appointment to the applicant. *Do not include more than 2 reference letters*; multiple people can sign a single letter.

DUE DATES

Survey of Intent – January 15

Once your department chair approves, email the [program manager](mailto:rebecca.helton@vumc.org) (rebecca.helton@vumc.org) to request a survey. Complete and submit this no later than January 15.

Application Package – February 17

All materials must be emailed to the [program manager](mailto:rebecca.helton@vumc.org) in a **single PDF** document ordered as above by February 17. The program manager will not compile applications.

**All materials are due by 5:00 PM Central Time on the corresponding due date.
No late submissions accepted.**