

HEALTH-FAST

Helping Everyone Achieve a LifeTime of Health

Future Addiction Scientist Training

Open only to U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents.

EARLY STAGE INVESTIGATOR APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Program Description

The HEALTH-FAST Program is designed to enhance the education and training of doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, and Early-Stage Investigators (ESIs) in addiction sciences, with a particular focus on encouraging individuals who are from low-income households, low-resourced communities, or are first-generation college graduates. The program offers cutting-edge educational activities and transformative hands-on research and developmental experiences.

The 2025 summer program will focus on emerging issues in tobacco and other drug co-use research.

ESI Trainees will receive education, methodology, and grant writing experiences that are designed to facilitate the successful transition into an independent research career in an area responsive to NIDA funding priorities. The HEALTH-FAST Program offers outstanding training opportunities, including:

- Grant Writing Boot Camp: An intensive 1-month virtual summer immersion program (June 2 – 27, 2025) to accelerate the development of grant writing skills.
- HEALTH-FAST Seminars: Scientists across the U.S. are invited to provide Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drugs (ATOD) seminars that are designed to develop in-depth and cutting-edge knowledge in substance abuse and its associations with chronic diseases.

Eligibility

- ESI applicants must be faculty members with budgeted research time (e.g., tenured/tenure-track faculty, research faculty, etc.) who have a PhD, MD, DSW, DDS or comparable degree in a health-related field.
- Applicants must be specializing or re-specializing in addictions research and have a strong interest in tobacco and other drug co-use topics.
- Applicants must be employed at an U.S. institution of higher education or medical center.
- Applicants must have completed their terminal research degree or end of postdoctoral clinical training, whichever date is later, within the past 10 years.
- Applicants cannot have previously received a substantial NIH independent research award as a Principal Investigator/Project Director (e.g., R01), but highly competitive applicants will have a history of application for, and potentially receipt of, small grant awards (i.e., R03, R21), (internal) institutional awards, and or foundation funding, etc.
- This fellowship is only available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents.



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UHhealthfast.com



HealthFast@mdanderson.org

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Funding

- ESIs receive stipends of \$3,000 for their month of participation in the intensive summer program and year-long virtual programming, and an additional \$1,000 after the associated grant application is submitted for funding consideration. Additional funds are available for external pre-submission grant reviews during their year of participation in the program.

Terms of the Award

- ESI Trainees must be willing and available to participate in a virtual, intensive 1-month summer immersion program and year-long virtual programming.
- Time-intensive virtual summer programming includes two sessions per day (12.5 hours a week) during the 1-month summer intensive HEALTH-FAST Program (June 2 – June 27, 2025).
- ESI Trainees are expected to participate in quarterly group consultation and grant support meetings that will take place virtually during the academic year following the summer program.
- ESI Trainees are expected to submit a grant application for funding consideration by the end of the training year.
- ESI Trainees are expected to participate in all relevant evaluation activities, including those that span beyond their active participation in the program.

Application Components

NOTE: Your application will not be accepted if any of the following items are missing, unclear or incomplete. Please read these instructions carefully.

- 1) Submit your application via email (HealthFast@mdanderson.org) by April 16, 2025 (5:00 PM CST). Include the following documents in one PDF file:
- 2) Submit a **Statement of Purpose**, a 2-page description of your education and research background, research and career interests and goals, and fit with the HEALTH-FAST Program. Explain how this program will help you meet your goals. References are not included in the 2-page limit.
- 3) A current **Curriculum Vita**.
- 4) A draft **specific aims page for a grant application** to be worked on during and submitted as part of the HEALTH-FAST Program.
- 5) A completed **Demographic Information Form** – [accessible here](#)

FORMAT

Margins: 0.5 or 1 inch

Format: Single-Spaced

Standard Paper Size: 8.5 x 11

Font Color: Black

Font Size: 11 or 12 point font

Font Types: Arial, Times New Roman, or Georgia

Top right corner of each page of the supporting documents must include applicant name & “HEALTH-FAST” (e.g., “Jane Doe – HEALTH-FAST”).



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Application Review Process

Phase 1: Initial Application

- All application components must be emailed to HealthFast@mdanderson.org by April 16, 2025 (5:00 PM CST).
- Confirmation of receipt and the application decision date will be e-mailed to the applicant within 2 business days after receipt of their application materials.

Phase 2: Interview

- Finalists will be invited for a video conference interview with the MPIs (Drs. Obasi and Reitzel).
- Interviews will last up to one hour and will include discussion of the finalists' interests in substance abuse research, research experience, and long-term career plans.
- Acceptance decisions will be conveyed via email within 1-2 weeks after the interview.

Application Review Criteria

The HEALTH-FAST program will use the following criteria when reviewing applications:

1. **Relevance:** Are the career and research interests of the applicant clearly described in the personal statement?
2. **Promise and educational benefit to the applicant's career development:** Will the HEALTH-FAST Program accelerate the applicant's interest in and career development toward transitioning into an independent research career in an area responsive to NIDA funding priorities? Does the applicant have the intellectual experience and work ethic to benefit from the HEALTH-FAST Program?
 - **Note:** Individuals from low resourced communities, low income households, or first generation college graduates are particularly encouraged to apply.
3. **Resources and Support:** Are the applicants' research interests aligned with those of the proposed mentors and existing resources?

Important Information

- **All application documents are due by April 16, 2025.** Missing items will result in an incomplete application and will not be reviewed.
- Refer to the **HEALTH-FAST Program website** (www.UHhealthfast.com) for more information. If you have questions that are not answered by that information, please email HealthFast@mdanderson.org.

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