

HEALTH-FAST

Helping Everyone Achieve a LifeTime of Health

Future Addiction Scientist Training

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

DOCTORAL SCHOLARS APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Program Description

The HEALTH-FAST Program is designed to enhance the education and training of doctoral scholars, postdoctoral fellows, and Early-Stage Investigators (ESIs) in addiction sciences, with a particular focus on encouraging individuals from groups underrepresented in the health sciences to pursue substance abuse research careers in an academic or medical setting. The program offers cutting-edge educational activities and transformative hands-on research and developmental experiences.

Doctoral Scholars will receive education, methodology, and grant writing experiences that are designed to facilitate their graduation and strengthen their national competitiveness to secure a substance abuse postdoctoral fellowship and/or faculty research position in an academic or medical setting. The HEALTH-FAST Program offers outstanding training opportunities, including:

- HEALTH-FAST seminars on alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use designed to develop in-depth and cutting-edge knowledge in substance abuse and its associations with chronic diseases.
- Mentored substance-abuse research project at a UH laboratory. Doctoral trainees will be matched with a UH faculty mentor who will provide hands-on research experience.
- HEALTH-FAST Research Rounds to refine future research ideas, advance research methods, and enhance the trainees' presentation skills.
- Professional development seminars to enhance resiliency and retention in a research career.
- Grant writing course to build grant writing skills and competency.
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training.
- Quarterly group mentoring and publication program.

Eligibility

- HEALTH-FAST doctoral scholars must be doctoral students who are starting their first or second year of training at the University of Houston in the upcoming fall semester.
- Applicants must have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited domestic or foreign academic institution.
- Applicants should be in excellent academic standing as measured by adequate degree progress relative to program milestones (as applicable).
- Applicants should not be gainfully employed >10 hours a week in a position or should be willing to relinquish it in order to fully participate in HEALTH-FAST programming while maintaining full-time academic status.
- This fellowship is only available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents.



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UHHealthFast



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Funding

- Doctoral scholars receive competitive monthly stipends with the expectation that they will work 20 hours on their mentored research projects and engaging in other HEALTH-FAST programming.

Terms of the Award

- Doctoral trainees must commit 20 hours a week to HEALTH-FAST programming for 9 months. Trainees are expected to dedicate about 15 hours a week in supervised research activities with their research mentor and about 5 hours in other program elements.
- Doctoral 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@uh.edu). Include the following documents in one PDF file:
- 2) **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 completed **Letter of Recommendation** from the applicant's major professor/advisor addressing their fit and capability to achieve the expected milestones using a standardized form available on the website (www.UHhealthfast.com).
- 4) A current **Curriculum Vita**.
- 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").



Application Review Process

Phase 1: Initial Application

- All application components must be emailed to healthfast@uh.edu.
- 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?
 - a. **Note:** Individuals under-represented in the sciences (e.g., women, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, African American scholars, Latinx scholars) will be given preference in selection decisions.
3. **Resources and Support:** Are the applicants' research interests aligned with those of the proposed mentors and existing resources?

Important Information

- 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@uh.edu.

