



Advanced Clinician Scientist Program

Call for Proposals

The University Medicine Zurich (UMZH) constitutes a network of six partner institutions: the University of Zurich (UZH), ETH Zurich (ETH), the University Hospital Zurich (USZ), the Balgrist University Hospital (Balgrist), the University Children's Hospital Zurich (KISPI), and the University Hospital of Psychiatry Zurich (PUK). Together, these institutions are dedicated to consolidating Zurich's expertise, aligning their strategies, and delving into innovative areas of focus. Tuned to this overarching goal, UMZH launches its inaugural initiative, the «Advanced Clinician Scientist Program». Recognizing the demanding nature of clinician scientists' roles, the funding program aims to boost their research careers while supporting their clinical work. The program operates on a three-year funding cycle, offering resources for protected research time, personnel, and expenses, with an annual funding limit of CHF 200.000.

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for consideration under the Advanced Clinician Scientist Program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Completion of medical studies (doctoral degree and/or PhD) and clinical specialization (FMH / FVH) at the start of the funding period.
- Submission of applications within 10 years of completing specialization (FMH/ FVH). Extension of this eligibility window is possible upon the applicant's request¹.
- Employment at a clinic or institute of the Faculty of Medicine or the Vetsuisse Faculty of the UZH with clinical activities, or at one of the university hospitals (USZ, Balgrist, KISPI, or PUK) at the start and throughout the funding period.
- Documentation of a scientific track record.
- Dedication of 50% of the total workload to research over the entire funding period (confirmation letter from the clinic / institute director is mandatory).
- Maintenance of clinical activity at 50% of the total workload throughout the funding period.
- Professors including assistant professors cannot apply.

Evaluation Criteria

Once the aforementioned requirements are fulfilled, the application will undergo evaluation based on the following criteria:

¹ See Weiterführende Informationen Advanced Clinician Scientist Program (<https://www.medicine.uzh.ch/de/Netzwerk-UMZH/Ausschreibungen.html>)

- Applicant qualifications: This includes assessing the applicant's scientific and clinical competency, as well as their research experience.
- Project quality: Evaluation will focus on the scientific relevance and the feasibility of the project, the suitability of the methodological approach, and the clarity of the work plan.
- CV and career goals: Consideration will be given to the educational and professional background, as well as the career aspirations, to the suitability of the applicant for the program and to advancing equal opportunities.

Review Process

The review process follows a two-step procedure.

- Applications are assessed by the Evaluation Committee of the Advanced Clinician Scientist Program, adhering to the principles and criteria of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). In case of a conflict of interest, evaluators and reviewers have to abstain from assessing the respective application.
- Selected applicants proceed to an interview with the Evaluation Committee.

The evaluation committee will then decide which applicants will be funded.

Duration and Funding

- Starting date: The program accepts starting dates between January 1st and July 1st, 2025. The standard duration is three years. However, in exceptional and justified cases, applicants may request a shorter duration of two years.
- Financial support: Successful applicants will receive funding covering 50% of their salary for protected research time throughout the entire funding period. Additionally, funds will be allocated for personnel, such as study nurses or technicians, and for research expenses. The program also provides funding to finance scientific publications that are preferentially made available immediately, without restriction and free of charge (open access).
- Funding limits: The maximum annual funding amount is CHF 200.000 for each year of the grant period. For a three-year funding duration, the maximum total funding is CHF 600.000, while for a two-year duration, it is CHF 400.000.

Application (online):

1. Motivation Letter (*max. 4500 characters*):

Detail how the Advanced Clinician Scientist Program will bolster your current situation and propel your career towards scientific independence alongside your clinical pursuits.

2. Research Project

- a. Abstract (*max. 4500 characters*): Overview encompassing background, hypothesis, methods, results, conclusion, and significance.
- b. Project Proposal (*max. 22.000 characters excluding bibliography*): Comprehensive outline covering current state of research in the field, current state of own research, hypothesis, aims, methods, timeline and milestones, rationale, and importance.
- c. Technical Personnel Proposal: Explain the necessity and role of requested %FTE technical personnel (e.g., study nurse, technician) within the project.

3. Career Development

- a. Overview (*max. 4500 characters*): Summarize your career trajectory, current position, and future aspirations.
- b. Career Concept (confirmed by department chair (*max. 4500 characters*)): Justify the allocation of research time and clinical duties, outline measures to adhere to the proposed time plan, and highlight available departmental resources.

4. Mentoring

Nominate a potential mentor for the funding period and articulate your expectations (*max. 2500 characters*). Note: There should be no dependency between mentor and mentee.

5. External Review

Provide 6-8 potential external reviewers for your proposal. Ensure the reviewers' expertise aligns with the project's topic and there are no conflicts of interest (past/current cooperation, dependency, personal or scientific relationship). External reviewers must be unrelated to university hospitals or institutes of UZH with clinical activities.

6. Documents

- a. CV in English: Maximum 2 pages, no photo, include past and present third-party funding.
- b. Scientific track record.
- c. Copies of diplomas (MD and FMH / FVH) compiled as one PDF File.
- d. Support letter of Department Chair confirming the described career concept in 3b.
- e. Budget File detailing requested costs (salary, personnel, project expenses, and biostatistical coaching if needed).

Submission Deadline: 26.05. 2024; 23:59 Swiss local time.

Contact Information

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