

Robert E. Leet and Clara Guthrie Patterson Trust
Mentored Research Award
Frequently Asked Questions, January 2026 Grant Cycle

Eligibility

Is there a limit on how many applications may be submitted from one institution?

No. There are no institutional limitations on the number of candidates who may apply.

Is there a limit on how many applications may be submitted from one applicant?

Yes, one application per applicant during each funding cycle.

Can I re-apply if I have already received a Patterson Trust Award?

No, previous Patterson awardees are no longer eligible.

Is there more information to help me determine if my project would align with this program?

The Patterson Program definition for clinical research aligns with that of the NIH. To determine if you are doing human subjects research, you can utilize the following: [Decision Tool: Am I Doing Human Subjects Research? | grants.nih.gov](https://grants.nih.gov/decision-tool/).

Please note that all submitted proposals must include that the investigator or colleague on the proposed study must directly interact with human subjects. Furthermore, proposals are not eligible if the majority of the studies focus on fundamental aspects of phenomena without direct clinical application. Research conducted with human subjects data from biorepositories and/or electronic health records is allowed.

My faculty appointment is at an out-of-state institution, but I am in a temporary position at my current institution in Connecticut. May I apply for this grant?

No. The applicant's faculty appointment must be at a Rhode Island, Connecticut or New Jersey institution which will administer the award.

How do I know if I am in a “non-independent mentored training position”?

Non-independent training positions may include the following: The candidate's research is entirely funded by another investigator's grant or conducted entirely in another investigator's assigned space. The candidate has not received a start-up package from the university. The candidate may also not be allowed by institutional policy to hire postdoctoral fellows or technical staff or be the responsible supervisor of graduate students. Finally, the candidate may lack other rights and privileges of faculty such as attendance at faculty meetings.

How is ‘mentor’ defined?

Eligible applicants are required to have a mentor for the project. This can be a formal mentor or Department Chair/Division Chief who is an established investigator with an active research program where the applicant will be conducting research. Mentors must provide a letter of support.



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I am in a dual degree program for my MD/PhD. Am I eligible to apply for the Patterson award?

No, those who are in a dual degree program are not eligible during their degree program. However, applicants would be eligible after completion of the program, assuming all other eligibility criteria are met.

Should I count my postdoctoral research experience in my former lab or outside the United States?

Yes. All previous research experience in former labs as well as outside the United States is counted towards eligibility.

How do I determine completed years of postdoctoral research experience?

Example: If months of full-time postdoctoral research experience is 2 years and 10 months, the Patterson Trust considers this 2 years.

Should I include my postdoctoral research experience in my former lab?

Yes - all postdoctoral research experience, former and current, should be counted. However, if you spent time in the graduate lab to finish up papers, etc. after receiving your degree, this time should not be counted.

How is experience counted toward eligibility for those with clinical training and those without clinical training?

For applicants **with** and **without** clinical training the calculation is based on full-time **postdoctoral** (or equivalent) research experience. All postdoctoral research experience, former and current should be counted, however if you spent time in your graduate lab to finish up papers, etc. after receiving your degree, this time should not be counted. In some cases, postdoctoral research may occur after the first doctoral degree but prior to starting residency/fellowship clinical training. Periods of post-graduate clinical training are excluded.

Are leaves of absence counted in the experience maximum?

No. If you were not working during a specific period, you would not include that time when determining your eligibility. The Mentor/Division Chief's letter must confirm both the duration of the leave of absence and the Applicant's eligibility for this Program.

How do you count part-time research experience?

Part-time research experience is pro-rated. If you were conducting one year of postdoctoral research at 25% effort, then that one year will be counted as three months (12 months x .25 percent effort = 3 months). State this clearly within the Career Trajectory section of the application and have your Mentor/Division Chief confirm the total years of research experience completed by the beginning of the funding period.



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How are interruptions in research experience calculated?

For all applicants with and without clinical training, if research was interrupted for family or medical leave or for other reasons (including COVID-19), these months are not considered part of the full-time employment experience. Pauses in research experience due to COVID-19 related disruptions cannot extend for longer than 6 months. **Research experience is calculated based on experience as of the Award Funding Start Date.**

Do you count the time spent on conducting research for a second doctoral degree as postdoctoral research experience?

No, the time spent conducting research during any doctoral degree program does not count as postdoctoral research experience.

Must we commit a certain percentage of time to the Patterson project?

The program does not require that a specific percentage of time be allocated to the project; however, applicants with clinical responsibilities must commit at least 70% time in total to research whereas applicants without clinical responsibilities must devote at least 90% time to research.

Are exceptions made to the minimum percent of protected research time for applicants with clinical responsibilities in the surgical disciplines?

Exceptions to the percentage of protected research time requirement would be considered if the PI's circumstance is documented satisfactorily in the mentor's letter of support. Please reach out to HRiA staff (PattersonAwards@hria.org) to confirm eligibility.

May I still apply if I am currently funded or was previously funded on a Career Development Award? What about other awards?

No. Applicants may not hold a concurrent Career Development Award (K-Awards) or other major source of research funding that covers more than half of their salary. Applicants may not currently or have previously been designated as Principal Investigator or Co-PI on an R, K, DP2, PO1, Pioneer Award, New Innovator Award, Early Independence Award, or similar large awards from other federal agencies or national foundations. Applicants may not have held any previous career development award (such as those performed under the guidance of mentor with the goal of a transition to independence), including those from foundations.

Applicants who hold or have previously held an R03 or K12 award would be eligible for the Patterson Award as long as the 50% salary requirement is met.

Please see the chart below for specific eligibility determinations and contact PattersonAwards@hria.org to discuss other types of awards not listed.



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Award	Patterson Eligibility Determination
R	Ineligible, except R03 (see below)
K	Ineligible, except K12 (see below)
DP2	Ineligible
P01	Ineligible
Pioneer Award	Ineligible
New Innovator Award	Ineligible
Early Independence Award	Ineligible
T32	Eligible, as long as 50% salary requirement is met
R03	Eligible, as long as 50% salary requirement is met
K12	Eligible, as long as 50% salary requirement is met

May I list collaborators or a Co-PI on this submission?

Collaborators may be included on your application, but the Patterson Awards Program does not recognize a Co-PI.

Shall I include the C.V. of a collaborator?

Do not append a C.V. for a collaborator; that person should forward a brief letter of collaboration to you which also describes the expertise that they are bringing to the project.

If I am offered the award but cannot accept it, may it be transferred to another individual significantly involved in the project?

No. The Patterson Award can only be awarded to the applicant who originally submitted the grant.

How do I complete the Other Support page of the budget workbook?

PI/Applicant should list all active and pending support, addressing potential overlap for each at the level of the specific aims with the submission. Duplication of funding is not allowable. If the research project is supported by other funding sources, a plan must be provided outlining how duplication of funding will be avoided.

Other Support includes all financial resources, whether Federal, non-Federal, commercial or institutional, available in direct support of an individual's research endeavors, including but not limited to research grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and/or institutional awards. Training awards, prizes, or gifts do not need to be included.

Effort devoted to projects must be measured using person months. Indicate calendar, academic, and/or summer months associated with each project.



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Should the Other Support form include all Key Personnel's other funding?

No. Other Support information is only required for the Principal Investigator, but if applicable, any grant overlap for collaborators/key personnel must be reported.

What does the term Project Ownership mean?

To help further the success of awardees obtaining independence, the Patterson Program requires that mentors provide a statement regarding portions of the project that the applicant may take to an independent research position. The applicant may use this project to pursue additional grant funding, and that the mentor will not compete with the applicant on the project that is “owned” by the applicant. This statement is akin to that required as part of the K99 application process:

Plans and Statements of Mentor and Co-mentor(s)

- The application must include a statement from the primary mentor that provides: 1) information on his/her research qualifications and previous experience as a research supervisor; 2) a plan describing the nature of the supervision and mentoring that will occur during the proposed K99 award period, including how the candidate's scientific and professional independence will be promoted; 3) a description of the elements of the planned career development activities, including any formal course-work; 4) a plan for transitioning the candidate from the mentored phase to the independent phase of the award and a description of how the mentor will help the candidate achieve scientific independence from his/her mentor(s); 5) a statement identifying the components of the proposed research that the K99 applicant can take when he/she transitions to research independence and that can be part of his/her independent (R00) phase award; and 6) when appropriate, a statement affirming any resources and reagents that can be taken by the applicant to the independent phase of the award.
- The mentor should have sufficient independent research support to cover the costs of the proposed K99 research project in excess of the allowable costs of this award, and should state that needed costs will be covered. If funds are needed beyond what will be provided by the mentor, the source of additional funds should be identified and documented in a letter signed by the responsible individual.
- Similar information must be provided by all co-mentors. If more than one mentor is proposed, the respective areas of expertise, the responsibility of each, and the nature of the involvement with the candidate should be explicitly described. Co-mentors should describe clearly how they will coordinate with the primary mentor and the candidate to provide an integrated mentoring effort.
- The primary mentor must agree to write and provide annual evaluations of the candidate's progress for the initial mentored phase as required in the annual progress report.



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- The mentor must agree to assist the candidate in transitioning to an independent research position by guiding the candidate during the job search and negotiation process and by commenting on the R00 phase application.
- If the applicant is proposing to gain experience in a clinical trial as part of his or her research career development, the mentor or a member of the mentoring team must include a statement to document leadership of the clinical trial, and appropriate expertise to guide the applicant in any proposed clinical trials research experience.

Application Guidelines and Online Submission

When will the online application system be live?

The online application should be available on July 8, 2025. Access instructions will be available here: <https://hria.org/grants/patterson/>.

What is the difference between the Authorized Institutional Representative and the Institutional Officer?

The Authorized Institutional Representative is responsible for research oversight and is often in the Office of Sponsored Programs. This person signs off on the application to ensure that you and the Institution have met the eligibility requirements. The Institutional Officer is typically the Fiscal Officer and receives award payments, prepares fiscal reports and oversees other financial requirements of your grant.

Will the Patterson Trust sponsor my work visa?

No, the Patterson Trust Awards are made to your sponsoring institution on your behalf. The Trust does not sponsor work visas.

Do I need to write a letter to the Trust in advance of the deadline?

No. A letter to the Trust is not necessary prior to the submission of the application.

Is there a Biosketch format that I should use?

Applicants and mentors are asked to use the latest NIH biosketch format.

Where do I find my Institution's Tax ID?

Contact your Office of Sponsored Programs for this information.

How should I proceed with the application if I have two mentors?

Please designate one Primary Mentor to be responsible for research progress and administrative oversight. It will be acceptable to include bio-sketches for a maximum of three (3) Co-Mentors. There can only be a total of three letters of recommendation; therefore, the Co-Mentor's letter will be counted as one of the three confidential letters of recommendation. Alternately, one letter may be written and signed by both individuals.



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Do the budget pages reflect the actual cost of the project or only what is requested from the Patterson Trust?

The budget form reflects the yearly costs requested from the Patterson Trust. The budget summary should include both these expenses plus any additional support from other sources.

Are subcontracts allowable costs and where do we note these expenses on the budget page?

The PI is allowed to pay subcontractors and these subcontracts can be listed as a line item under Consortium/Contractual Direct section of the Detailed Year budget tabs. Detailed budgets for this work must also be included under the Sub Budget Year tabs and an explanation must be included in the Sub Budget Justification tab. The Patterson Trust does not separately pay other personnel on someone's grant.

Is graduate student tuition an allowable budget expense?

If the graduate student has a significant role on the proposed project, tuition may be charged as a personnel expense.

Recommendation Letters

Is the mentor's Letter of Support confidential?

Yes, all letters of recommendation are confidential. The letters will be submitted on your behalf by your mentor as well as by additional recommenders through the online application system. Please review the guidelines for what needs to be included in these letters. It is advisable that you contact these recommenders early on in the application process to make sure they submit their letters prior to the deadline.

My mentor will not be able to submit their letter by the online deadline. Can this letter be sent later on?

No. All materials must be submitted through the online system and by the application deadline. Unless all recommendation letters have been received by the system, you will not be able to submit your application. Please make sure that you follow up with all recommenders to confirm that they have uploaded their letters in advance of the deadline.

Can any letter be mailed separately?

No. The three letters of recommendation must be submitted online by the application deadline. Otherwise, the system will not allow the applicant's materials to go through. Collaboration letters are forwarded directly to the applicant for document upload.

To whom are the letters of support/recommendation addressed?

Reference letters may be addressed to the Scientific Review Committee.



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Are the headings mentioned in the Research Proposal section required or may other section titles be included?

These sections are required but other subheadings may be added if you wish.

Who are the successful applicants from the previous grant cycle?

Please see the listing of Recent Award Recipients at <https://hria.org/grants/patterson/>.

Questions from June 25, 2025 Office Hours Session

Is there a cap in budget to be used for a postdoc salary?

The NIH salary cap applies to all positions including postdocs.

Is it possible to get feedback on responsiveness of the aims for a grant proposal?

While we do require reviewer comments, we do not control the contents of those comments. Most reviewers do tend to provide that type of feedback, however.

If I received reviewer comments from last year, is there a way to address that in the current round?

It is acceptable to incorporate previous reviewer comments and respond to them in your Research Proposal, adhering to the specific formatting requirements outlined in the Program Guidelines.

Can there be multiple mentors including those from outside institutions (even if outside of CT, RI, or NJ)?

The primary mentor should be located at the same institution as the applicant and thus needs to be within the geographic area. Additional members of the mentoring team may be located outside of the geographic area.

What constitutes an institution? For example, do you consider Yale University as a single institution, or Yale School of Public Health and Yale School of Medicine as two different institutions?

HRiA uses federal tax ID numbers to define institutions. In this example, both the Yale School of Public Health and the Yale School of Medicine fall under Yale University's tax ID number. Both submissions would be considered from Yale University.

The Patterson program does not require institutional nominations, nor are there any limitations on the number of applications accepted from an institution. However, the number of awards from an institution may be limited to two per year.



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Should proposed training related to the award exclusively relate to the project itself, or could some training relate to next future directions (e.g., grantwriting workshops)?

Award funds may be used for training in grantwriting and other career development activities.

Additional Questions

For any questions not covered in the program guidelines or the FAQs, please contact PattersonAwards@hria.org

