

A nighttime photograph of the Pittsburgh skyline. The city is illuminated with warm lights, and the sky is a deep blue. In the foreground, a multi-level highway interchange with yellow arches is visible. The background is filled with various skyscrapers, including the PPG Place with its distinctive pointed top.

Physician Scientist Training Program

Basic and Translational Research

PittMedicine
pstp.pitt.edu

The Program

The Physician Scientist Training Program (PSTP) is a merit-based five-year program through which students with a strong interest in basic or translational research can begin to build a career in academic medicine.

Benefits

- The ability to join internationally renowned departments that help to maintain the University's ranking in the top 10 of National Institutes of Health-funded medical schools
- Partial tuition coverage for all four years of medical school
- Paid summer research rotations before and after MS1
- Paid research year between

MS2 and MS3

- Membership in a special community of passionate medical researchers
- Enrichment curriculum focusing on skills necessary for a career as a physician scientist
- Individualized research and career mentoring

Our Graduates

- Consistently match at the country's most academically accomplished residency programs
- Publish, on average, three papers each
- Present at national and international conferences
- Obtain faculty positions at leading academic institutions

PSTP Curriculum

The PSTP curriculum augments the medical school curriculum to help students build the skills and knowledge base to conduct significant biomedical research and to successfully navigate a career pathway as academic physician scientists.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory Rotation (1) • Professional Development Course (1) • Work in Progress Seminars 	SUMMER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Basis of Medical Knowledge Course (1) • Career Advisor Meetings • Work in Progress Seminars 	SOM1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory Rotation (2) • Professional Development Course (2) • Work in Progress Seminars 	SUMMER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Basis of Medical Knowledge Course (2) • Career Advisor Meetings • Work in Progress Seminars 	SOM2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Advisor Meetings • Work in Progress Seminars 	RESEARCH YEAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Advisor Meetings • Work in Progress Seminars 	SOM3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Advisor Meetings • Work in Progress Seminars 	SOM4

Application Guidelines

Eligibility

All individuals receiving an MD interview invitation at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine are offered the opportunity to apply to PSTP. We also accept a limited number of highly qualified internal applicants (application submitted during MS2).

Successful applicants have:

- high levels of scholastic achievement,
- previous basic or translational research experience, and
- a desire for a career in academic medicine that includes laboratory research.

The deadline for applications and recommendations is February 6.

How to Apply

Applicants will be able to access the PSTP supplemental application after receiving an interview invitation from the Pitt Medicine admissions committee. Two letters of recommendation from instructors and/or scientists who are well acquainted with the applicant's research training are required. PSTP recommenders can be identical to MD recommenders, but the letters must be submitted separately to PSTP.

Recommenders receive a request for letters once the supplemental application has been completed. All submissions are deemed complete with the receipt of the PSTP supplemental application and two letters of recommendation.



Application Guidelines

PSTP Selection Process

PSTP expects to receive approximately 80 applications for a maximum of eight available positions. About 20 applicants will be offered interviews at our expense. The interviews will take place from mid-January until late February, with decisions communicated by the second week of March.

While completing the application, all interviewees are asked to identify specific

investigators in Pittsburgh with whom they would like to meet on the interview day. The interview format consists of separate half-hour interactions, spread throughout the day, with members of the selection committee, current PSTP students, and potential investigators.



Contact Us

University of Pittsburgh Physician Scientist Training Program
M250A Scaife Hall

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Research

Areas of Research

The spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration that pervades the University of Pittsburgh creates a dynamic and ideal environment for promising students to launch careers that integrate the clinical and basic sciences. As a student in PSTP, you will find a wide array of scientific areas in which you might receive training. You may choose to work in any approved discipline, but the following list provides a sample of the possible areas for basic research.

- Bioengineering
- Bioinformatics
- Cardiology
- Cellular and Molecular Pathology
- Computational Biology
- Epidemiology
- Human Genetics
- Immunology
- Molecular Biology
- Molecular Pharmacology
- Neuroscience
- Oncology
- Ophthalmology
- Psychiatry
- Regenerative Medicine
- Structural Biology
- Tissue Engineering



Current PSTP Student Research Projects



Pooja Karukonda

“Investigating the Role of Radiation Therapy in Promoting an Anti-Tumor Response in the Host”

Mentor: Chris Bakkenist, PhD



Aneta Kowalski

“Role of CREBRF and its metabolic-risk variant in cardiac metabolism and function.”

Mentor: Erin Kershaw, MD



Filip Istvanic

“Sonoreperfusion for Microvascular Obstruction Using Microbubbles and Tissue Plasminogen Activator”

Mentor: John Pacella, MD, MS



Mondira Ray

“Construction and Validation of Pathway-Oriented Features for Use in Machine Learning Programs to Predict Breast and Lung Cancer Outcomes”

Mentors: Rebecca Jacobson, MD, MS, and Ziv Bar-Joseph, PhD



Audrey Kindsfather

“Temporal and spatial effects of advanced maternal age and embryo culture on imprinted DNA methylation and mitochondrial function in the pre-implantation mouse embryo”

Mentor: Mellissa Mann, PhD

The PSTP Experience

Studying in Pittsburgh

By living in the city of Pittsburgh, you will be immersed in the culture and traditions of one of the nation's most livable cities. The school is in close proximity to many attractive and affordable neighborhoods. The city of Pittsburgh boasts an enormous array of cultural attractions, such as museums and galleries, music, dance and symphony performances, professional and amateur sporting events, and numerous parks and outdoor recreational facilities. Pittsburgh restaurants have received numerous national accolades for their quality and creativity and offer a variety of innovative and reasonably priced dishes.





University of Pittsburgh

School of Medicine

Physician Scientist Training Program
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The University of Pittsburgh, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, as fully explained in Policy 07-01-03, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. The University also prohibits and will not engage in retaliation against any person who makes a claim of discrimination or harassment or who provides information in such an investigation. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance these values consistent with the University's mission. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs and activities*. This is a commitment made by the University and is in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

For information on University equal opportunity and affirmative action programs, please contact: University of Pittsburgh; Office of Diversity and Inclusion; Katie Pope, Title IX Coordinator, and Cheryl Ruffin, 504 and ADA Coordinator; 500 Craig Hall; 200 South Craig Street; Pittsburgh, PA 15260; 412-648-7860.

For complete details on the University's Nondiscrimination Policy, please refer to Policy 07-01-03. For information on how to file a complaint under this policy, please refer to Procedure 07-01-03.

**Except where exempt by federal or state laws.*