

## **Pilot Program for Biomedical Laboratory R&D Clinical Scientist and Senior Clinical Scientist Awards**

**Objective:** To recognize and retain outstanding senior BLRD clinician scientists.

**Strategy:** Provide outstanding senior BLRD clinician scientists with longer term, flexible support to maintain their laboratory infrastructure, retain key staff, and explore transformative advances in their fields.

**The awards:** The awards will consist of a merit award extension of up to 2 additional years (for a total of 6 years) for the Clinical Scientist Award and up to 4 additional years (for a total of 8 years) for the Senior Clinical Scientist Award. A satisfactory non-competing review after the first 3 years of funding is required.

**Eligibility:**

- 1) A minimum 5/8 VA paid clinical appointment at the time of application
- 2) Has a BLRD renewal application which has been accepted for review
- 3) Has had BLRD Merit Award funding for more than 3 years
- 4) Has an outstanding record of scholarly productivity including national peer-reviewed research funding as Principal Investigator (co-investigator is not sufficient) for at least 8 years.
- 5) Has a strong record of contribution to the VA research program.
- 6) The qualifications for the Clinical Scientist Award correspond roughly with those for Associate Professor rank in a School of Medicine (nationally recognized research achievements) and those for the Senior Clinical Scientist correspond roughly to those for Professor (internationally recognized achievements)

**Nomination process:** Outstanding clinician scientists are identified at the time of merit review renewal either by their ACOS for R&D or by the BLRD Portfolio Manager who manages their award. Each station may nominate at most 2 candidates in any review cycle and each Portfolio Manager may nominate at most 1 candidate from any Merit Review panel per review cycle.

**Submission of the Nomination packet:** If the nomination is by the local station then the nomination packet must be submitted as a single document to the scientific Portfolio Manager within two weeks of the receipt of the score from the review of the renewal proposal. If the nomination is made by the scientific Portfolio Manager, they will contact the station immediately after the review committee has met and the station will have two weeks to submit the nomination packet to the Portfolio Manager.

**Nomination packet:** The nomination packet should be a single pdf file with the following items:

- 1) A letter from the ACOS for R&D supporting the nomination, outlining how the longer-term award will be used to expand the investigator's program and support the VA research program more broadly.

2) The nominee's curriculum vitae

**Review and approval of nominations:** Nomination packets are reviewed at the time of funding decisions for the review round and approved by the Service Director. Decisions made by the Service Director are not subject to appeal.

**Non-competing review at 3 years:** The station must submit a modification request for a cost extension at the 3-year anniversary of the award which should include a summary of progress made on the project (can be taken directly from the RPPR) as well as an outline of specific aims and new methods for the period of the funding extension. The modification request, with a summary budget worksheet and budget justification, will be reviewed by the scientific program manager and approved by the service director.

Questions about Pilot Program for Clinical Scientist Awards should be directed to [VHABLRD-CSR@va.gov](mailto:VHABLRD-CSR@va.gov)