



SWOG Coltman Fellowship Program Request for Applications A Career Development Program for Early Career Investigators

OVERVIEW

The SWOG Cancer Research Network Dr. Charles A. Coltman, Jr. Fellowship Program protects time for clinical or translational research on SWOG-associated projects. The funding encourages investigators from SWOG member institutions to engage either in learning clinical trial methodology or in expanding current research interests within a cooperative group environment. The program strives to honor the legacy of long time SWOG Chair and leader, Dr. Chuck Coltman, through encouraging the spirit of scientific integrity and the ultimate commitment to bettering patient care.

The Hope Foundation for Cancer Research sponsors the Coltman Fellowship Program through support of early career awards. Each award provides \$100,000 over two years to successful candidates, as well as key travel support.

ELIGIBILITY

The applicant must hold an early career faculty appointment at a SWOG member institution (Assistant Professor, Clinical Instructor, Lecturer) **or** demonstrate 0-7 years of experience in clinical research (e.g., having held a leadership/key position on a protocol development team, or having independently developed a protocol).

If there are questions regarding whether the potential applicant is at the correct career stage, applicants are encouraged to send an email to jo@thehopefoundation.org for clarification and eligibility verification.

The candidate must also name a Primary Mentor. Appropriate mentors are active in SWOG as Principal Investigators and/or Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, or contributing members. Mentors are required to attend the SWOG meeting at least once a year. A mentoring plan is required.

Other eligibility requirements:

- Candidates must have a minimum of 25% protected time for clinical/translational research.
- Candidates with active multi-year career development awards (i.e.: K-award, ACS, DOD) are not eligible.
- The applicant must be a member of SWOG and at a SWOG member institution at the time of grant award.
- International applicants from SWOG institutions are welcome to apply.

RESEARCH CRITERIA

The proposed research must involve SWOG resources. Examples include:

- Project approved by Disease Working Group and/or the SWOG triage committee. A letter from the Disease Committee chair with a priority score is required.
- Project pending activation in SWOG.
- Project recently activated in SWOG.

- Project uses other SWOG resources (e.g., specimens, clinical data, imaging). A letter from the appropriate SWOG chair is required.

INSTITUTIONAL CRITERIA

SWOG Member Institutions may nominate multiple candidates, as appropriate.

Letters of nomination from the institutional SWOG PI must clearly demonstrate institutional commitment to the candidate's research project and/or overall academic career. For applicants that hold Clinical Instructor or Lecturer appointments, this letter of support must include ongoing commitment by the institution for the period of the grant award.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

See instructions at [the program page](#).

When deadline falls on a weekend or federal holiday, application deadline is automatically extended to the next business day.

Full application packets should include:

- Completed Application Form (see URL above)
- Current CV and Other Support of the applicant
- Applicant's Personal statement (2 pgs)
 - Summary of career to date with emphasis on commitment to cancer research
 - Future career goals
 - What role SWOG will play in your career
 - How this award will help you achieve your goals
 - Other time commitments as required by your department
- Research proposal:
 - Abstract (250 words)
 - Hypothesis and specific aims (1 pg)
 - Background (2 pgs)
 - Preliminary Data (up to 2 pgs): Preliminary data not required. Preliminary data may include data from your mentor and/or institution.
 - Research Plan (5 pgs): This includes tables and figures. References should follow the research plan but are not included in the page limitation.
 - Statistical Plan: the following elements should be included, as applicable:
 - A statement of the primary objective on which the study design is based
 - Definition of primary and secondary endpoints
 - Sample size
 - For hypothesis testing- a statement of the null and alternate hypothesis and associated power/level of testing and test
 - For estimation- a statement of the precision of the estimation
 - Analysis plan
 - Estimation of accrual rate/duration of study

Appendices are limited to publications that are not available in the public domain and/or clinical protocols.

- Project Timeline (1/2 pg). Include time estimates for completion of each aim of the project and manuscript writing.
- Budget (1 pg). The applicant must devote a minimum of 25% of their effort to research and to this project. The budget will only include salary line item and associated fringe.
- Letter of support from SWOG Institutional PI and SWOG Disease Working Group or Committee, as applicable.
- Mentoring Plan (1/2 pg) which clearly outlines scope and frequency of interactions and responsibilities.
- Letter of support from Primary Mentor. Mentors must clearly describe their own commitment and experience as it relates to SWOG and the candidate’s proposed work.

Indirect costs are not covered in this grant.

Payment will be presented annually to the hosting institution in accordance with The Hope Foundation policy.

EVALUATION

A committee of SWOG and Hope leadership will review applications in consideration of the following scoring criteria: Investigator Qualifications, Research Plan, Strength of Environment – including mentorship, relevance of research to SWOG’s mission, scientific merit, significance, and innovation. Brief feedback will be provided to each applicant.

<p>Investigator Qualifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate’s preparedness for the proposed research plan • Candidate’s qualities that will improve the likelihood of a successful project outcome • Candidate’s potential to benefit from the fellowship and to transition to the next career stage – <i>and ideally within the SWOG network</i>
<p>Research Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigor and feasibility of the research plan and how completion of the project will contribute to the development of the candidate as a research scientist • Goals of the overall research plan and the extent to which the plan will facilitate the attainment of the goals • Whether the research plan identifies areas of needed development and contains appropriate, realistic activities and milestones to address those needs – <i>considers the infrastructure and unique processes of cooperative group trials</i> • Whether the scientific environment, facilities, and resources are adequate and appropriate for the proposed research – <i>considers current/future connection or relevance to SWOG’s mission</i>
<p>Strength of Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a strong mentoring plan appropriate to the needs and goals of the candidate • Institution’s commitment is appropriate, sufficient, and in alignment with the candidate’s research & training goals • Perceived commitment will contribute to the successful completion of the proposed work and allow the candidate to advance in their career – <i>and within SWOG</i>

DETAILS OF AWARD

Award Payments

The fellowship provides \$100,000 over two years, to be paid at \$50,000 per year. Payment will be presented annually to the designated financial officer of sponsoring institution. Second year payments are contingent upon submission/approval of progress and financial reports. Additional travel support will be available from the Foundation for each Fellow.

A Fellow may request in writing to pay the balance forward to year two. The release of funds for the second year is dependent upon receiving the progress report and its approval by SWOG/THF.

No Indirect Cost is paid on this award.

Personnel

The award is for salary support of the candidate only. The intention is to provide protected time to develop/further independent clinical research. However, if the applicant is awarded another grant during this time that contributes to salary, the applicant can request the use of the remaining funds for other aspects of their clinical research if a budget justification is provided to The Hope Foundation.

Travel

Coltman Fellows are awarded two years of travel funding. This support includes all air, lodging, and related travel expenses for four (4) consecutive SWOG Group Meetings, as well as one (1) additional professional meeting within the two-year timeframe. Fellows are expected to attend SWOG Group Meetings.

Progress Reports

Annual progress reports are required. The first report is due 30 days prior to the start of year 2. At the conclusion of the Award, the recipient must complete a final report summarizing the research conducted. Deadlines and templates are provided with the formal Letter of Award. Long-term follow-up reporting is also required, up to 5 years.

Changes in the Research Plan or Institution

Any major changes in proposed project or transfer of hosting institution must be acknowledged in writing to The Hope Foundation for review. For additional policies and indemnification statements, see Letter of Award.

Returning Grant Funds

A no cost extension for year three is acceptable with proper justification. Any unused funds should be returned to The Hope Foundation within 90 days of the grant expiration date after year three.

Please note: In compliance with the Physician Payments Sunshine Act, components of this program (travel, meals, educational materials) may require reports of payment or transfer of value provided to all US licensed physicians. The Foundation will alert grantees should regulations mandate reporting.

Inquiries may be directed to Johanna (Jo) Horn at (734) 998-7150 or jo@thehopefoundation.org