ANNUALMENT TITLE | ASTRO-Varian Radiation Oncology Research Training Fellowship
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AWARD YEAR | 2021
MECHANISM | Fellowship (F)
PA NUMBER | F-2021-01-VARIAN
PROGRAM PARTNER | Varian Medical Systems, Inc. (Varian)
POSTED DATE | October 14, 2020
PURPOSE | To support early-career scientists to receive radiation oncology-related research training in an industry setting.
AWARD TERM | 1 year
NUMBER OF AWARDS | 1
AWARD BUDGET | $100,000 is anticipated to be awarded to the selected fellow’s current training organization (“Institution”). The fellowship funds must be used for salary support for the selected fellow and a fraction of the funds can be used for travel to the ASTRO Annual Meeting. Neither ASTRO nor Varian will pay indirect costs as part of this award. No funds may be used for laboratory or other supplies. Request for an additional housing allowance may be considered by Varian. All travel to/from home to the Varian site will be covered by the fellow or the fellow’s Institution. No funds from Varian or ASTRO will be used to pay for travel.
APPLICATION DUE DATE | January 8, 2021, 11:59 p.m. Eastern time (GMT -5)
EARLIEST START DATE | July 1, 2021
PROGRAM FORMAT | The fellow is anticipated to remain an affiliate of the fellow’s home Institution but receive research training at a Varian corporate site (to be determined by Varian) through conducting research project(s) under the development by and supervision of Varian.

Before embarking on the fellowship, the fellow, the fellow’s home Institution and ASTRO must mutually agree to Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship award. In addition, the fellow, the fellow’s home Institution and Varian will develop a separate written Research Training Agreement with mutually agreed terms. In the Research Training Agreement, the fellow and Varian will document the proposed research training experiences designed to broaden the fellow’s scientific backgrounds and maximize the fellow’s acquisition of new knowledge and skills that will enhance the fellow’s potential to become a productive and independent investigator. The Research Training Agreement will also document the availability of Varian’s staff, research support, and facilities for high-quality research training.

All work will be conducted at a Varian research site and not at the fellow’s home Institution or any other academic sites. The fellow’s home Institution and Varian may consider an alternative employment status for the fellow, as needed.

SCOPE OF RESEARCH | The fellow can expect to work with Varian in the research and development area(s) of: radiobiology, immunotherapy, applications of artificial intelligence in radiation oncology, information systems, treatment planning, imaging and image-guidance, new hardware for treatment delivery systems and quality assurance.
ELIGIBILITY

a. ASTRO Membership
The individual applicant must be a current and active ASTRO member, or have submitted an application for ASTRO membership, as of the due date of the fellowship application. If selected, the fellow will be required to maintain her or his ASTRO membership throughout the duration of the fellowship.

b. Degree Requirements
The individual applicant must hold a doctorate degree such as PhD, MD/PhD, MD, DO or other equivalent degree(s) as of the due date of the fellowship application.

c. Residency Program and Institutional Affiliation
As of the application due date for this Fellowship, the individual applicant must be currently matriculated in an accredited residency program operated by the applicant’s current training organization (i.e., the Institution) in the United States (U.S.) and have sufficient time (1 year) to conduct a research project at Varian starting July 1, 2021. Faculty members or equivalent status are not eligible to apply.

The Institution must be a U.S. domestic organization, defined as “a public (including a State or other governmental agency), or private non-profit or for-profit organization that is located in the U.S. or its territories, and, is subject to U.S. laws, and assumes legal and financial accountability for awarded funds and for the performance of the fellowship-supported activities.” Once designated in mutual agreement with the applicant, the Institution is legally responsible for providing financial and progress reports as required by ASTRO, and financially responsible for the use and disposition of any funds awarded based on the application.

d. Immigration Status
The applicant must be a citizen or a noncitizen national of the U.S. or have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence by the time of award. Noncitizen nationals are individuals who, although not citizens of the U.S., owe permanent allegiance to the U.S. They generally are people born in outlying possessions of the U.S. (e.g., American Samoa and Swains Island). Individuals who have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence must have a currently valid Permanent Resident Card (USCIS Form I-551) or other legal verification of such status. For example, if an individual has the proper validation on his/her passport, a notarized photocopy of the passport could suffice. Because there is a 6-month limitation on this validation, it is the responsibility of the applicant to follow up and ensure that the applicant receives the I-551 before the 6-month expiration date.

An individual expecting to be admitted as a permanent resident by the earliest possible award date listed in the Program Announcement may submit an application for a fellowship. The submission of documentation concerning permanent residency is not required as part of the initial application. Any Fellowship applicant selected to receive an award must...
provide a notarized statement of admission for permanent residence prior to award.

Individuals with a Conditional Permanent Residency Status may still apply for this Fellowship. However, in all cases when permanent residency status is involved, it is the responsibility of the applicant to assure the applicant remains eligible for this ASTRO Fellowship support for the period of time of this Fellowship award.

If an application involving Permanent Residency is selected to receive an award, prior to any award being issued, a notarized statement will be required that documents that a licensed notary has seen the individual's valid Permanent Resident Card or other valid verification from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service of legal admission to the U.S.

**COMMITMENT FROM THE FELLOW**

- The fellow must designate a mentor at his/her residency program Institution who will provide guidance and support for the research opportunity. The fellow will also be assigned a Varian mentor who will oversee the research project.
- Because of the focus on progression to independence as a researcher, the fellow should propose a career development plan that is consistent with his/her previous training and suited to his/her career development needs.
- Since the goal is to provide the fellow with a research opportunity in industry, the fellow is not allowed to maintain additional research related grant support while serving in the fellowship program.
- The fellow is required to contact ASTRO immediately if any problems are encountered that would prevent him/her from successfully completing the fellowship.
- The fellow is encouraged attend at least one ASTRO Annual Meeting and present his/her research findings at the meeting.

**COMMITMENT FROM THE FELLOW’S INSTITUTION**

- The fellow’s home Institution must be willing to allow the fellow to conduct research at a Varian site during the resident’s research time.
- The fellow’s home Institution must sign an agreement with ASTRO and another independent agreement with Varian to allow the fellow to conduct research at Varian. The agreement with Varian will include terms on the handling of intellectual property developed while the fellow is conducting research at Varian.
- The fellow and the fellow’s home Institution must make a good faith effort to complete all agreements in a timely manner (prior to the July 1, 2021 start date).
- The host department will act as the fiscal intermediary. The Institution will pay the salary to the fellow and be responsible for satisfying tax withholding, deposit and/or reporting requirements applicable to the payment of the award. The fellow will be responsible for individual income taxes.
- ASTRO and Varian do **NOT** pay Institutional facility and administrative costs. Funds provided under this fellowship program will be used to pay salary and benefits for the recipient (at the level of $100,000). Up
to $3000 may be used to reimburse travel and registration costs to attend the ASTRO Annual Meeting. Depending on the Varian research location, a housing allowance may be added.

- The fellow’s home Institution will be required to provide sufficient additional funds to supplement the fellow’s salary or other fees.
- The fellow’s home Institution will maintain insurance for medical professional liability and comprehensive general liability during the fellowship period.
- Any change in the fellow’s Institution, department chair, mentor, or the fellow’s position that might affect the fellow’s ability to successfully complete the fellowship should be communicated as soon as possible to ASTRO Department of Scientific Affairs so that appropriate action can be taken.

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Applications must be submitted online at ProposalCentral: https://proposalcentral.altum.com/GrantOpportunities.asp?GMID=105

**Formatting**

All materials MUST be prepared in English, single-spaced with normal spacing between letters and words, using a font style such as Arial or Times New Roman and font size between 10 and 12. A minimum of one-half inch margins must be used on all page borders.

Each section must be loaded into ProposalCentral. Applicants can stop at any point and save the application to be completed by the deadline.

**Submission Content**

All applications must contain the following:

1. **Personal statement** (Recommended length 2 pages): A detailed personal statement that outlines the following:
   a. Prior research experience
   b. Dedication to work in radiation oncology
   c. Value provided to ASTRO, Varian, and the research field based on the Scope of Research outlined in this announcement
   d. Intention for pursuing this Fellowship
   e. Future professional goals and plans

2. **Biosketch**: The applicant must submit an NIH style biosketch including a list of relevant publications and currently funded research projects (5-page limit).

3. **Letters of recommendation (2)**: Upload two letters of recommendation outlining previous work, dedication to a research career, and characteristics that make this opportunity in industry a particularly good option for the applicant. One letter must be from the Institutional mentor.

4. **Institutional letter of recommendation (1)**: Upload a letter of support from the resident’s department chair. This letter must document that the department chair supports this Fellowship program and acknowledge that the resident, if selected, will conduct research at a Varian site.
Applications lacking the required content or in the incorrect format will be considered ineligible for review. Materials submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

No additional data or documentation such as accepted manuscripts or received awards will be accepted.

| APPLICATION REVIEW | All grant applications are subject to peer review by the fellowship Application Review Panel (“Panel”). Reviewers are members of the ASTRO Research Grants Evaluation Committee or other ASTRO-approved ad-hoc expert(s) as necessary, and members appointed by Varian. All members serving on the Panel will be required to report any conflict of interest, before reviewing applications and to execute an undertaking related thereto. The reviewers will convene to recommend an awardee following the peer review. Final decisions will be subject to the approval of the ASTRO Board of Directors and Varian.

Selected candidates will be those who demonstrate a strong research background, a desire to work in an industry setting, and a well-crafted plan for a future research career.

Panel will consider the following factors of an applicant during the application review process:

a. General qualifications and scientific background
b. Commitment in pursuing a research career in radiation oncology either within an academic or industry setting
c. Academic publications
d. Availability and commitment to conduct the research training at a Varian site
e. A statement that outlines how this opportunity can further the applicant’s research career
f. A mentoring plan developed by the applicant and the applicant’s academic mentor(s) |

| PROGRAM CONTACT | • Email questions about this PA to the Department of Scientific Affairs at science@astro.org.
• Technical questions about the ProposalCentral submission system should be directed to their customer support at 1-800-875-2562 (Toll-free U.S. and Canada) or by email pcsupport@altum.com. Support is available during normal business hours: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm Eastern Time (Monday through Friday). |

| OTHER INFORMATION | • Applicants should be aware that receipt of this fellowship may be reported by Varian to government entities or otherwise to third parties, as required by law or pursuant to Varian policy.
• Non-disclosure and intellectual property arrangements regarding the research training projects and other activities of the fellow during the fellowship will be addressed and mutually agreed upon in the Research Training Agreement among Varian, the prospective Fellow, and the fellow’s home Institution, prior to conferral of Fellowship. |