

Request For Applications: Implementation Science Scholars Program

The UAMS Translational Research Institute (TRI) and Center for Implementation Research (CIR) are pleased to invite applications for the Implementation Science Scholars Program. The Program will provide support for UAMS clinical faculty with a professional degree (M.D., Ph.D., Pharm.D., D.N.P., Dr.PH., D.O., etc.) in learning and applying the principles and methods of **implementation science**—*the study of how best to promote systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine care*. The program is open to all full-time UAMS faculty, including at Arkansas Children's Hospital and the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System. Those interested are encouraged to attend one of the informational sessions.

Program Summary

The IS Scholars Program is a two-year program which combines training in implementation science with mentored support of a implementation-related project in the faculty member's clinical area. IS Scholars will receive:

- 20% salary support (up to NIH annual salary cap: \$221,900 + fringe per year)
 - Scholars are required to dedicate 20% effort to the program; therefore, the sponsoring department or College may be required to supplement support to meet the 20% salary (per NIH salary cap requirements). Salary supplementation may be from a variety of sources except federal funds.
 - Monthly group mentoring calls
 - Monthly 1-on-1 mentor meetings
 - 14 hours of didactics each year over 2-3 month period (start of Year 1 and end of Year 2)
 - Annual conferences sponsored by the TRI (Annual IS Scholars symposia and TRI Research Day)
- A didactic program featuring two “short courses” in Years 1 and 2 of the program. Core faculty from the UAMS CIR will lead the program, with frequent guest speakers from UAMS and Arkansas Children's Hospital faculty with expertise in quality improvement, informatics, research methods, and scientific writing. Course schedule *to be determined*.
- Close mentoring from UAMS CIR and TRI faculty and staff in developing, deploying, evaluating, and disseminating an **implementation-focused project**. Program applicants will propose a project to address a quality/implementation gap in their clinical area. The project, then, must be focused on developing and testing an intervention to improve practice. (More details provided below in the section on the application itself.)

Important Dates

- **October 1, 2024:** Applications due
- **December 1, 2024:** Awardees Notified
- **July 2025:** Classwork Begins

The Application

Candidates will submit a **three-page** (maximum) application covering the following topics: 1) quality/implementation gap to be addressed, 2) potential implementation strategies to be deployed in addressing the quality/implementation gap, and 3) candidate's background, interest, and experience in quality improvement/implementation science. Given that addressing health issues of rural and other underserved populations are explicit goals of the TRI, priority will be given to projects with a focus on enhancing the reach of evidence-based practices to rural and other underrepresented populations and/or reducing disparities in healthcare delivery.

- **Quality/implementation gap:** In this section, the applicant will describe the quality/implementation problem that will be the focus of the project. Is there a guideline-recommended and/or evidence-based practice that needs implementation support to be better implemented? Is there a quality measure that is currently not being met? Is there a non-evidence-based or unsafe practice that needs to be de-implemented? Describe the gap fully, using available data if possible. What sense, or data, might you have on why the gap exists? (Current literature indicates that such gaps can result from multiple factors, including educational and knowledge deficiencies and/or disagreements, time constraints for practitioners, lack of decision support tools and feedback mechanisms, poorly aligned incentives, and a host of other organizational climate and cultural factors.) What are the negative outcomes associated with not improving care in this area? If efforts have already been tried to improve care delivery in this area, please describe.
- **Potential implementation strategies:** What types of interventions/strategies might be helpful in closing the gap in practice? What interventions/strategies might you want to try? What, if anything, has already been tried? Examples of potential strategies include clinical reminders, audit and feedback systems, academic detailing and other targeted professional development programming, use of incentives, training and use of local "champions" and opinion leaders, provision of technical assistance, and ongoing facilitation. The applicant is not expected to provide a definitive plan, but a preliminary discussion of possibilities and any history of previous change efforts. Please consider the extent to which you think you might need or want to use tools in medical records (e.g., data monitoring and/or decision support) in your project. Candidates will not finalize their intervention plan until after the Year 1 didactics and extensive group and individual mentoring.
- **Candidate's background:** The candidate should address the following questions in this section: Why are you interested in the program? What experiences and/or prior training are relevant to your ability to complete the Program? After the Program is over, how do you expect to continue to apply what you learned? In this section, please also discuss your plans for scheduling your 20% protected time.

Application Checklist

Please bundle your application into one PDF with the documents in the order listed below. Submit using link: <https://redcap.link/m856ki40>. If you have questions, contact Jenny Naylor jnaylor@uams.edu.

1. Application (as described above)
2. Applicant CV
3. Letters from relevant supervisors (Department chair, Service-line director, etc.) detailing support for the candidate and the proposed project, *including the department budget*

administrator's contact information. Letters should include salary information for proposed faculty, and an explicit statement of support for the candidate to devote 20% effort to the program over two years