

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The University of Chicago and Northwestern University (UCANU)
Postdoctoral Health Services Research (HSR) AHRQ T32 Program

Application Review Deadline: September 29, 2023, 5:00pm Central Time

Fellowship positions can begin anytime between December 1, 2023, and June 1, 2024.
Applications will continue to be accepted after the priority deadline until all positions are filled.

[Apply online using the application form found here.](#)

About: With support from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), we aim to develop the future careers of **postdoctoral candidates** from diverse personal and professional backgrounds by supporting rigorous, competency-driven postdoctoral training in areas that span research ethics, question formation, systems science, informatics, improvement science, leadership, **health equity**, and foundational HSR methods, such as **learning health system research, implementation science**, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods, quasi-experimental and natural experimental designs, and traditional to pragmatic trials.

The information below is relevant only to applicants interested in the postdoctoral fellowship based at the University of Chicago. If you are interested in applying to the program based at Northwestern University, you can [learn more here](#).

Who should apply?

- 1) Internal and external PhD recipients committed to careers in health services research (HSR).
- 2) MD clinical residents and fellows based at UChicago who are interested in full-time research training. These might be residents or fellows currently in research years of their ACGME training or finishing their ACGME training.
- 3) Candidates with other doctoral level professional degrees (DNP, PharmD, DDS/DMD, etc.) at UChicago who are interested in research training. Candidates with an MD who have not yet begun residency are also eligible.
- 4) Prospective applicants who fall outside these categories should contact the team to determine if they are eligible to apply.
- 5) Applicants who are from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, who have disabilities, and/or who are from disadvantaged backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. [Learn more here](#).

Additional Eligibility criteria: All candidates must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents and have completed a professional doctoral degree (MD, DO, PharmD, DNP, DDS/DMD, etc.) or research degree (PhD) at the time of appointment. Students completing a doctoral degree may apply so long as they will have completed all doctoral degree requirements by the AHRQ T32 appointment start date. Dual degree recipients such as MD/PhDs are also welcome to apply. Junior faculty are not eligible to apply. Trainees must reside in the Chicagoland area during the postdoctoral training period.

Funding: It is expected that most fellows will complete at least two years of postdoctoral training. Fellows who only need one year of funding because they are already partway through postdoctoral training or have already begun coursework for one of the approved master's degrees are also welcome to apply.

Fellowships pay a stipend based on [NRSA stipend levels](#) for postdoctoral fellows. For MD fellows, the NIH stipend is supplemented by funds from the home department in order to match the fellowship stipend level set by their institution's GME office and/or section.

The fellowship also provides funds to cover tuition and fees for one of the master's programs described below and a modest amount of funds to cover training related expenses such as attendance at a national conference, poster printing, software, etc. The fellowship includes funds to offset health insurance expenses for the recipient fellow but does not provide coverage for vision, dental, or the fellow's family/spouse. Please note that trainees are allowed a maximum of three years of NRSA support at the postdoctoral level.

Program Activities:

- 1) Attend regularly and present once annually in the joint UChicago and Northwestern (UCANU) research seminars, which bring together HSR pre- and postdoctoral fellows at both institutions. These seminars typically take place on the second Friday of every month from 3-4:30 pm and allow trainees to present their research to one another. Trainees should plan to attend in person, although some remote participation is possible.
- 2) Periodically attend the [Health Economics Workshop \(HEW\)](#), which takes place on Thursdays from 3:30pm to 5:00pm at the Harris School of Public Policy.
- 3) All trainees attend regularly and present once per appointment year in the [Outcomes Research Workshop \(ORW\)](#), which occurs weekly on Wednesdays from 8:30-9:30 and will take place over zoom.
- 4) Trainees will be expected to participate in the [Summer Program in Outcomes Research Training \(SPORT\)](#) in part or in full, depending on prior training and the trainee's master's coursework. As a part of SPORT, trainees will participate in the Research Proposal Development Workshop (RPDW).
- 5) Trainees will be encouraged to engage in interdisciplinary and cross-institutional training in implementation science and learning health systems.
- 6) All trainees attend the [AHRQ National Research Service Award \(NRSA\)](#) Annual Meeting.
- 7) Fellows are expected to submit an abstract and present their work annually at a national conference such as the [AcademyHealth](#) Annual Research Meeting. Funds will be provided through the grant to support travel.
- 8) Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research: All trainees must complete in person RCR training during postdoctoral research training. Two examples of approved RCR training include the [RCR summer course](#) and the [Essentials of Patient Oriented Research](#) winter course. Trainees must also complete [CITI training](#) in Human Subjects Protection.

Participating Master's Programs:

Appointed trainees who are MDs will enroll in one of two masters degrees: (1) the Master of Science in Public Health Sciences for Clinical Professionals (MSCP), based in Department of Public Health Sciences; and (2) the Master of Arts in Public Policy (MAPP) based at the Harris School of Public Policy. Both programs require 9 courses, which can be spread out over the course of two years of postdoctoral training to accommodate trainees' research. Students in both of these programs also have room for several electives that may be taken in any graduate program across the University and may apply coursework they complete through SPORT toward their degree requirements.

Occasionally, a candidate might choose to obtain an MPP, MPH, or other degree. Because these course require more than 9 courses, applicants considering one of these or another degree should discuss with the T32 program staff and directors during the application process to determine if the program is appropriate for their research interests and training timeline.

PhD postdoctoral fellows are not required to complete a master's degree but are required to identify areas for continued training in HSR, health equity, and/or implementation science in their application. Once selected for a fellowship, PhD fellows work with their primary mentor and the UC steering committee to identify appropriate electives to audit to address these gaps in training.

| Degree Program | Program Description | Application Deadline |
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| <i>Core Programs</i> | | |
| UChicago's Master of Science in Public Health Sciences for Clinical Professionals (MSCP) | MSCP is offered by the Department of Public Health Sciences in the Biological Sciences Division (BSD) at UChicago and is designed to provide individuals who already have doctoral-level expertise in medicine and other clinical disciplines with training in the theory, methods, and concepts of biostatistics, epidemiology, and health services research needed to design and carry out clinical epidemiology and health services research programs. | March 15 – late applications until April 15 if space permits |
| UChicago's Master of Arts in Public Policy (MAPP) | For those who already have an advanced degree but want to understand the public policy aspects of their field and are interested in attending school full-time, this 9 course MA program in public policy provides the fundamental understanding of public policy and analytics to complement their experience. This program is also available to students enrolling for other graduate programs at the University. | March 28 – late applications until June 13 if space permits |

| <i>Optional Programs</i> | | |
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| UChicago's Master of Science in Biomedical Informatics (MScBMI) | MScBMI is delivered by UChicago's Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies. The goal of the MScBMI program is to equip students with the necessary knowledge and technical skills to tackle everyday data management issues and to guide large informatics projects in clinical and research settings. | June 1 |
| UChicago's Master of Public Health (MPH) | The MPH is offered by the Department of Public Health Sciences in the Biological Sciences Division. The new MPH program has been designed to meet the public health competencies required for accreditation, including the foundations of public health, health behavior theory, health communication, biostatistics, epidemiology, health policy, social inequities in health, and public health program planning, implementation, and evaluation. Health equity is fundamental to public health. | March 15 – late applications until April 15 if space permits |
| UChicago's Master of Public Policy | The MPP is offered by the Harris School of Public Policy. The core curriculum draws on a variety of disciplines and fields, including economics, sociology, political science, statistics, econometrics, political economy, organizational theory, and program evaluation. | March 28 – late applications until June 13 if space permits |

Reporting requirements:

1. Trainees must submit quarterly learning plans to AHRQ T32 administrator. Trainees must review and obtain comments from their primary mentor at the bottom of the form.
2. Trainees must abide by all NIH/NRSA reporting requirements including reporting funding on all publications and presentations and submitting all journal articles to the PubMed Central database in accordance with the NIH public access policy.
3. At the start of the first year of the AHRQ T32 appointment, trainees must sign an NIH payback service agreement, which states that “Postdoctoral Kirschstein-NRSA recipients will incur a payback obligation only during the initial 12 months of the postdoctoral Kirschstein-NRSA support” and that the fellow agrees to engage in 12 months of health-related research, health-related research training, or health-related teaching after completion of the first 12 months of postdoctoral NRSA support. [More information on the payback agreement can be found here.](#)
4. While in the program trainees agree to submit information as needed to the program administrator on an annual basis for progress reports and future renewal applications. Trainees agree to complete all necessary paperwork in a prompt and timely manner.
5. Trainees must complete an annual AHRQ T32 alumni survey and provide the training program administrator an updated CV, as requested, once per year after completing the program for program evaluation purposes.

Applications are currently being accepted for positions beginning between December 1, 2023, and June 1, 2024:

To be reviewed in the first round of applications, **please submit an application by September 29, 2023.** We may have spots remaining after this date, so contact the program team if you plan on submitting an application after this date.

We may also have 1 or more additional positions available beginning July 1, 2024. Please reach back out in October to learn more.

Applications will start being reviewed in October 2023 and will continue being accepted until all positions are filled. Please also note the deadline for each of the approved master's degrees listed above. **You must also apply to the master's degree separately to facilitate enrollment by the appropriate deadline.** If the deadline has passed, you may contact the program team to discuss options or may submit your application for consideration in 2024. You may contact the program team to confirm if there are still positions available before you apply.

[Candidates must submit their materials through the online form found here.](#)

Application materials include:

- 1) CV
- 2) Personal statement describing career goals, research interests, and how the training program will help the candidate reach these goals. Maximum of 1800 words.
 - a. Applicants may also describe how prior coursework may be duplicative of training in chosen master's degree and request a waiver for these courses.
 - b. Applicants should describe how their research goals already align with the AHRQ T32 program, and/or how AHRQ T32 training will help the trainee align their research with these goals.
 - c. External candidates who do not yet have a primary mentor at UChicago institution should also list faculty with whom they are interested in working.

- d. Plans for any F32 or individual awards should be described in the personal statement.
- 3) Two letters of recommendation. One letter should be from the trainee's proposed primary mentor (if applying internally). This letter should include a justification of why the faculty member is an appropriate research mentor for the candidate, including a description of the mentor's record of publications, grant funding, and mentoring. At least one of the other two letters should be from a faculty who can speak to the candidate's ability or promise in health services research.
 - 4) Undergraduate and graduate (PhD, MD, etc.) transcripts. Unofficial transcripts are preferred at this stage for application processing and should be uploaded directly to the application system. Official transcripts may be requested at a later date.
 - 5) Letter of commitment from unit leader (fellowship director, section chief, or department chair) who is able to attest to institutional commitment for candidate (MDs only): This letter should include the following commitments: 1). The section/department will take necessary steps to transition fellow to an Advanced Clinical Fellow position by the start date of the AHRQ T32 appointment; 2). The section/department will cover the difference between the stipend provided by the AHRQ T32 grant, allocated according to years of experience, and the fellow's stipend level set by the GME office; and 3). If awarded the AHRQ T32, the fellow will have 80% protected time during the appointment period for research and training activities.
 - 6) Job market paper and/or first author publications (required for PhD candidates; optional for MDs): All PhD applicants must submit a job market paper and/or other first author publications. Candidates may submit up to three papers in their application, combined as one PDF. MD applicants are welcome to submit writing samples but this is not required.

Applications will be reviewed by the AHRQ T32 program directors and steering committee. Candidates in consideration for a fellowship position will be invited to interview, either in person or over the phone.

Contact: Please contact CHeSS Director of Training Programs and Communications Fahad Sajid, PhD at fahad.sajid@bsd.uchicago.edu with any questions about the AHRQ T32 program.

Faculty Leadership:

Director

Tara Lagu, MD, MPH
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Neil Jordan, PhD
Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Preventive Medicine
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