

International Trainee Research Visit Program **2017 Competition**

AllerGen's Strategic Goal and Objectives for the Development of HQP (2012-2019)

Create 'value-added' opportunities for the training, education and professional development of highly qualified personnel (HQP), students and new professionals that strengthen Canada's knowledge base, innovative capacity and work-force productivity.

- *Expose AllerGen HQP to unique trans-disciplinary research teams where they receive mentorship from research and business leaders, and receive guidance in addressing complex technical, social and ethical issues in order to maximize the applications and impacts of their research.*
- *Leverage AllerGen's investments in HQP, in partnership with other private, public and not-for-profit partners, to provide work placement and job shadowing experiences.*
- *Provide opportunities for Canadian research trainees to develop business-ready skills and experiences that will enhance their knowledge and expertise for the benefit of Canadian industry and public and not-for-profit organizations upon graduation.*
- *Integrate 100% of AllerGen trainees into an international network of academic, clinical, private sector, public policy and patient advocacy leaders in the field of allergic disease by funding student involvement in network-wide research programs, research exchange meetings and conferences in Canada and abroad.*

Program Overview

AllerGen NCE Inc. (AllerGen) is a member of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program with a mandate to support research, networking, commercialization, knowledge mobilization and capacity building activities that contribute to reducing the morbidity, mortality and socio-economic impact of allergic and related immune diseases.

Through a competitive process, the *International Trainee Research Visit Program* offers funding for AllerGen trainees to spend from six weeks to six months outside of Canada working on research projects with international investigators and their research teams. Research visits must contribute to the advancement of the objectives and intended outcomes of an AllerGen-funded research project and provide for a unique training opportunity not available in Canada. In turn, AllerGen encourages visiting research students from outside of Canada to work with AllerGen investigators on AllerGen-funded research projects.

Priority will be given to host institutions where AllerGen has an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Currently, MOUs are held at:

- Allergie - Centrum - Charité at Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin (Germany)
- Changzhou University Institute for Biomedical Engineering and Health Sciences (China)
- Karolinska Institutet (Sweden)
- Munich Allergy Research Center (MARC) - Technische Universität München (TUM) and Helmholtz-Zentrum München (Germany)
- Sean N. Parker Centre for Allergy Research at Stanford University (USA)
- The University of Newcastle (Australia)
- The University of Queensland (Australia)

Applications will be evaluated based on the potential impact to AllerGen-funded research and the capacity building benefits for the applicant.

Funding is restricted to a living allowance and travel-related expenses for AllerGen trainees.

Program Purpose

- Provide AllerGen HQP with new research, networking and capacity building opportunities to gain valuable short-term international research and training exposure.
- Expose AllerGen HQP to cutting-edge international discovery and development efforts contributing to reductions in the impact of allergic diseases.
- Enhance AllerGen's partnership linkages with international centres of excellence in allergy and immune disease research and training, through knowledge sharing, knowledge exchange and partnered-research training.
- Develop international collaborations that facilitate long-term interactions between AllerGen investigators and international research teams.
- Facilitate international trainee talent scouting for Canadian recruitment of the next generation of allergists, clinician-scientists and allergic disease-related research leaders.

Applicant Eligibility

- Graduate students, fellows-in-training (Allergy and Immunology) and postdoctoral fellows enrolled in a full-time program or employed by a Canadian university or Canadian partner institution and in good academic standing are eligible to apply.
- Applicants must be an AllerGen trainee or approved member of the AllerGen Students and New Professionals Network.
- The applicant's research visit must contribute to the advancement of the objectives and intended outcomes of AllerGen's Integrated Research Strategy. Projects that do not strengthen the Network's strategic goals, and do not have the potential to build capacity of an AllerGen research project, will not be funded.

- Research visits with Allergan investigators are available for international trainees seeking opportunities to train in Canada, subject to negotiations between the host Canadian institution and the international partner.

Funding

- The number of research visits approved annually is limited, according to available funding.
- Funding is restricted to a living allowance and travel-related expenses for Allergan trainees.
- Allowable travel-related expenses for travel to and from the host country include economy travel, en route accommodations, ground transportation and meal per diems, in accordance with Allergan's Travel Policy.
- The award will provide a monthly living allowance for accommodations and other related living expenses, negotiated on a case-by-case basis.
- Accommodations other than hotels are strongly encouraged; the full cost of hotel accommodations may not be eligible for reimbursement.
- Allergan trainees may include a modest research allowance to cover direct research costs, if required to fulfill the research visit's objectives.
- Allergan investigators and/or host institutions may choose to exceed or 'top-up' these limits by acquiring funds from non-Allergan sources. Such arrangements must be declared to Allergan.
- Where one-way exchanges occur between sites, Allergan will cover the costs of its trainees' travel, accommodation and living expenses, consistent with approved maximums.
- For one-way exchanges by international students to Allergan research sites, the international collaborator will be expected to cover the international travel, accommodation, living expenses and travel costs to and from the host institution.
- Allergan and the partner institution may 'swap' equivalent costs in their jurisdictions for accommodation and living expenses where two-way exchanges occur.
- Subject to available funding, supervising Allergan researchers may apply for a modest research allowance to cover costs associated with research visits incurred in Canada if the collaborating institution is unable to provide such support.

Conditions of Funding

- Applicants must be able to obtain the necessary authorization to enter the host country.
- Trainees and researchers must comply with all applicable institutional agreements and policies/procedures related to international research visits.

- Any agreement for academic cooperation and associated Intellectual Property Rights must be negotiated and documented through separate agreements in accordance with the NCE Standard Network Agreement, policies and procedures of the Canadian academic institution(s) and the international host university.
- Submission of a final report, including an auditable expenditure report approved by the host supervisor and reviewed by the AllerGen supervisor, must be forwarded to the AllerGen Administrative Centre within 60 days of completion of the research visit.
- Unexpended funds must be returned to AllerGen within 60 days of completion of the research visit.

Application Process

- Prior to completing a *Research Visit* application, interested trainees must contact the AllerGen Manager of HQP Training Program and Events to confirm compliance with the application criteria. Research visits must contribute to the advancement of the objectives and intended outcomes of AllerGen's Integrated Research Strategy. Projects that do not strengthen the Network's strategic goals, and do not have the potential to build capacity of an AllerGen research project, will not be funded.
- Only fully completed applications will be considered.
- A letter of invitation from the international host supervisor and a letter of support from the trainee's AllerGen supervisor must accompany the application.
- A letter of intent and/or interview with the applicant and/or his/her AllerGen supervisor(s) may be required.
- Evaluation of applications will take a minimum of eight weeks.

Research Project Proposal

The maximum length of the project proposal is two pages and must include the following:

- Introduction to proposed research project and focus
- Hypothesis
- Project objectives (maximum two)
- Selected research methodology and its appropriateness
- Anticipated research outcomes, which clearly define what will be achieved through the research visit and how it will build capacity and advance AllerGen Network research

Note: Where the research visit provides for new skill acquisition only, a research project proposal is not required. However, in place of the project proposal, a detailed description of the new skill must be provided.

Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed through a competitive process by AllerGen's Advanced Education and Training Opportunities Advisory Committee (AETOAC) and approved by AllerGen's Research Management Committee (RMC).

1) AETOAC will assess applications according to the following criteria:

Excellence of the Applicant

- Does the applicant's prior achievements, including transcripts, publications, presentations and past experiences, indicate a high level of excellence?
- Is the proposed research project an appropriate fit given the applicant's education, experience and interests?
- Does the research visit have the potential to enhance the trainee's research career path by providing for value-added learning and skill-development opportunities?

Excellence of Training Opportunity

- Is the host supervisor well funded and well published? Does his/her record demonstrate productivity, impact and collaboration?
- Is there strong rationale for the research visit and the choice of host institution?
- Does the research visit provide for a unique training opportunity not available in Canada?
- Is the proposed research realistic and appropriate for the selected host institution? Is the trainee's proposal achievable? Is there quality and scientific merit in the proposed research, including the strength of the hypothesis, research objectives, methodology and anticipated outcomes?
- Will the research visit provide the trainee with exposure to cutting-edge international discovery and development efforts contributing to reductions in the impact of allergic diseases?
- Will the research visit help to develop international collaborations that facilitate long-term interactions between AllerGen investigators and international research teams?

2) Applications recommended for support by AETOAC will be considered by RMC for final approval.

- Applications not recommended by AETOAC will not be forwarded to RMC for review. However, RMC will be informed of AETOAC's recommendation and related rationale.

Application Deadline

The 2017 application deadlines are as follows:

- January 13, 2017
- April 14, 2017
- September 15, 2017

Application Package

Please submit the application package electronically in PDF format to Michelle Harkness, Manager of HQP Training Program and Events, at michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca. Only electronic applications will be accepted.

The completed application package must include:

- Completed application form
- Research Project Proposal (or new skill description)
- Letter of invitation* from the international host supervisor
- Letter of support* from the AllerGen supervisor
- Trainee's *curriculum vitae*
- AllerGen supervisor's and host supervisor's *curriculum vitae*
- Copy of trainee's academic transcripts (for degree(s) completed and current studies)

Notification Process

Decisions will be communicated to applicants within eight weeks of the competition deadline, unless communicated otherwise/

Contact Information

For further information or assistance in completing the application, contact:

Michelle Harkness – Manager of HQP Training Program and Events
michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca
905-525-9140 ext. 26633