

THE HELEN HAY WHITNEY FOUNDATION

20 Squadron Boulevard
Suite 630
New City, NY 10956
www.hhwf.org
Tel : (845) 639-6799
Fax: (845) 639-6798
Email: office@hhwf.org



2020 Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

Online Application Deadline: 5:00pm EST, Wednesday, July 3, 2019

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The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation

supports early postdoctoral research training in all basic biomedical sciences. To attain its ultimate goal of increasing the number of imaginative, well-trained and dedicated medical scientists, the Foundation grants financial support of sufficient duration to help further the careers of young men and women engaged in biological or medical research.

Eligibility

Candidates who hold, or are in the final stages of obtaining a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent degree and are seeking beginning postdoctoral training in basic biomedical research are eligible to apply for a fellowship. The Foundation accepts applications from candidates who have no more than *one year* of postdoctoral research experience at the time of the deadline for submitting the application (July 3, 2019), and who have received a PhD (or D.Phil. or equivalent) degree no more than *two years* before the deadline, or an M.D. degree no more than *three years* before the deadline.

Fellowships may be awarded to US citizens planning to work in laboratories either in the US, Canada, or abroad and also to foreign citizens for research in laboratories in the US only. We expect that most applicants will reside in North America at the time of application. Foreign Students will need to obtain appropriate visa documentation, as required by US Immigration.

Applications from established scientists or advanced fellows will not be considered. The fellowships are for early postdoctoral training only. Clinical house-staff training does not count as "postdoctoral laboratory training."

The Foundation will not ordinarily consider applicants who plan tenure of the fellowship in the laboratory in which they have already received extensive predoctoral or postdoctoral training. The aim of the fellowship is to broaden postdoctoral training and experience, and a significant change of venue is advisable.

Since the number of available fellowships is limited, the Foundation does not make more than one award per year for training with a given supervisor. It also does not support more than two fellows per laboratory at one time.

The SAC will review no more than one application from a laboratory/supervisor during each annual cycle. We will accept applications

from different laboratories/supervisors at the same institution. Should we receive more than one, the Chair of the SAC will decide which of the applications appears most competitive and decline the other(s) administratively. We urge the heads of laboratories to make this choice for us, if at all possible.

The Foundation expects that fellowship training will be obtained in an academic setting. The selection of a commercial or industrial laboratory for the training experience is not acceptable.

Review Procedure

In addition to considering the research plan and recommendations presented in each application, the Scientific Advisory Committee must give weight to the many intangibles involved, including interpretation of the Foundation's objectives. The following procedure is designed to be fair and to take into account the number of applications received in relation to the number of fellowships that can be awarded.

The initial step is the screening begun by the Scientific Advisory Committee as soon as all applications have been received. In this screening, the Committee selects those candidates whose applications merit a personal interview with a Committee member. Each applicant so selected is then assigned to a member of the Committee, who completes arrangements for the interview in October. Interview travel expenses from points in the United States, Canada, and Mexico are paid by the Foundation. US citizens residing abroad who are approved for an interview will be reimbursed for travel to the interview, up to an amount comparable to the transcontinental domestic airfares reimbursed for other candidates. All applicants will be advised by email of their status (declined or approved for interview) by early-mid October.

All personal interview reports and applications are reviewed in context with each other at a full Scientific Advisory Committee meeting in November, and it is at this meeting that those interviewed candidates are selected to be recommended for approval by the Board of Trustees. All interviewed applicants are notified of the Committee's decisions by mid-November.

As the last step in the procedure, the Board of Trustees votes to approve the fellowship awards, in order of priority, up to the availability of funds.

Duration of Fellowship

The Whitney Fellowship is for a period of three years, contingent on performance satisfactory to the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Committee. One and two-year fellowships are not considered.

Activation of Fellowship

You may activate your fellowship anytime from April 1, through September 1, 2020.

Travel Expense

The Foundation provides funds for travel to the fellowship location at the time of activation of the fellowship for the Fellow and his or her family. No payment is made for the transportation of household goods. The Foundation also covers travel expenses incurred for the two-day Annual Fellows Meetings held in November. Travel expenses will be reimbursed directly to the Fellow, upon submission of expense receipts. These reimbursements are in addition to the annual stipend and research allowance.

Stipend and Expense Allowance

The current stipend and expense allowance is:

	Stipend	Research Allowance
1st year	\$54,000	\$1,500
2nd year	\$57,000	\$1,500
3rd year	\$60,000	\$1,500

There is a research allowance of \$1,500 paid annually to the host institution. It is to be used at the discretion of the Fellow with no deductions for institutional overhead, registration fees, or taxes. This money is to be used for research expenses, such as lab supplies, computers, etc. If the Fellow wishes, this money may be used, in part or entirely, to help defray the cost of the Fellow's health insurance premiums. The Fellow determines how this research allowance will be spent. Payment of the research allowance will be made on the fellowship activation date, and annually thereafter.

There is a Dependent Child Allowance of \$1,500 per annum for each child. There is no allowance for a spouse. If a fellowship is awarded and the Fellow advises us that he or she is eligible for the Dependent Child Allowance, we will then

request a copy of the birth or adoption certificate(s). Payment of the child allowance will be made on the fellowship activation date, and annually thereafter.

Depending on the activation date of the fellowship, stipend payments are made semi-annually by the Foundation to the administering institution. Fellows in training abroad will receive quarterly stipend payments directly.

Supplementation of the stipend is permitted. It is not acceptable, however, to hold concurrently a full fellowship from another source. Non-research activities, such as teaching, must not occupy more than 10% of the Fellow's time.

Annual Meeting

A two-day Annual Meeting of Fellows is held in November of each year, at which each third-year Fellow presents the results of his or her research. This meeting is an important component of the Fellowship Program because of the opportunity it provides the Fellows for scientific interchange and exposure to biomedical fields other than their own. Attendance at the meeting in its entirety is expected as a condition of acceptance of the fellowship.

Competition

Competition for the Helen Hay Whitney fellowships is intense. Less than 5% of those who apply to us receive awards. Please note that because of the volume of applications received, the Foundation is unable to provide critiques of unsuccessful proposals.

Applications

Applications are to be filled out and submitted online at www.hhwf.org. **Applications must be received by The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation no later than 5:00pm EST, July 3, 2019. Late applications will not be considered.**

IMPORTANT DATES

Date	Description
May 1, 2019	Application forms become available online at www.hhwf.org
July 3, 2019 (5:00pm EST)	Applications must be received by the Foundation no later than 5:00pm EST, July 3, 2019.
Early- Mid October	All applicants will be advised by email of their status (declined or approved for interview).
October	Personal interviews take place for applicants who have been so selected by the Scientific Advisory Committee.
November 1, 2019	Scientific Advisory Committee meets to review all personal interview reports and applications. At this meeting, Fellows are chosen from among the interviewed candidates and recommended for approval by the Board of Trustees.
November 4, 2019	All interviewed applicants are notified of the Scientific Advisory Committee's decisions.
April 1, 2020	Earliest possible fellowship starting date. All fellowships must be activated by September 1, 2020.

Potential Fellows should also be aware that in November, at the Annual Meeting of Fellows, each third-year Fellow presents the results of his or her research.

THE HELEN HAY WHITNEY FOUNDATION

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ONLINE APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications must be uploaded and received by the Foundation no later than 5:00pm EST, July 3, 2019. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. It is advisable to avoid waiting until the last day of the deadline to submit an application, as increased online traffic may overburden the web server and potentially slow down or stall the application submission process.

Please note that in some rare instances, a university's internet firewall might erroneously block access to our application's link. If you do experience technical difficulties connecting to our application's link, please try connecting from an outside internet connection (ie. smartphone wireless 4G connection, or your home Wi-Fi connection, etc).

Please read the instructions carefully before attempting to complete the online application submission. It is important that the application be carefully prepared far enough in advance of the deadline to avoid error and omission. It is also necessary that the referees and prospective supervisor realize the importance of submitting their communications in a timely manner. Please do not deviate from the application format.

Overview of the different components of the application **(Details on the following pages)**

The following items are to be sent directly to the Foundation by the referee or supervisor, NOT to be uploaded along with the application:

- ☐ 4 Reference Letters
- ☐ 1 Letter from your Prospective Supervisor

The following items are to be submitted by the applicant, and uploaded along with the application:

- ☐ 2-Page Application Cover
- ☐ Form "Application Items 1-6"
- ☐ If applicable, up to three significant publications that are NOT readily available online
- ☐ If applicable, a Financial Officer's Letter (depending on whether your prospective supervisor includes the administrative clause in his or her letter)
- ☐ If applicable, Collaboration Letter(s)
- ☐ If applicable, a Copy of Proof of US Citizenship (only for US citizens working outside USA)

**THE PROSPECTIVE SUPERVISOR'S LETTER SHOULD BE EMAILED DIRECTLY TO HHWF,
IT SHOULD NOT BE UPLOADED WITH THE APPLICATION:**

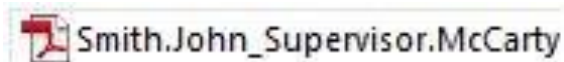
LETTER FROM PROSPECTIVE SUPERVISOR endorsing the application and guaranteeing adequate facilities and research expenses other than the stipend and annual research allowance provided by the Foundation. By July 3, 2019, the prospective supervisor should email his or her letter directly to the Foundation at letters@hhwf.org. No faxes please. The letter will remain confidential. The prospective supervisor should not mail a follow-up hard copy. This letter should be typed on the supervisor's letterhead, signed, and scanned/converted into a pdf format. If there are multiple pages, please combine them into one pdf file. **(Do NOT use the "Reference Letter Template" for your prospective supervisor's letter.)**

CO-PROSPECTIVE SUPERVISORS: If you will have co-supervisors, it is preferable that they write a joint letter.

When sending us the email, please name the pdf letter attachment according to the following convention:

"Applicant'sLastName.Applicant'sFirstName_Supervisor.Supervisor'sLastName"

Example: Applicant John Smith will work in Dr. McCarty's lab



This letter should include a statement that the institution will administer the fellowship according to the Foundation's guidelines, which are:

- (1) The Foundation remits the stipend semi-annually to the host institution. In turn, the institution will disburse the stipend regularly (i.e. biweekly, bimonthly, monthly) to the Fellow, with no deductions for health insurance, institutional overhead, cost sharing, or union dues.
- (2) There is also a research allowance of \$1,500 remitted annually to the host institution. It is to be used at the discretion of the Fellow with no deductions for institutional overhead, registration fees, or taxes. This money is to be used for research expenses, such as lab supplies, computers, etc. If the Fellow wishes, this money may be used, in part or entirely, to help defray the cost of the Fellow's health insurance premiums. The Fellow determines how this research allowance will be spent. Payment of the allowance will be made on the fellowship activation date, and annually thereafter. You do not need to notify us on how you will spend the research allowance.

If your prospective supervisor is not authorized to include in his or her letter a statement that "the institution will administer the fellowship according to the Foundation's guidelines", then please have an authorized financial officer do so and upload that letter along with your application. Whenever these guidelines are unacceptable, arrangements can be made at the Foundation's discretion, to pay the Fellow directly on a quarterly basis, with only the research allowance remitted to the institution.

Dependent Child Allowance: In the application, you do not need to send us information regarding any dependent children which you may have. In the event that you are awarded a Whitney Fellowship, please notify us then, and we will request a copy of the birth or adoption certificate(s). The child allowance will be remitted to the host institution, just like the stipend and research allowance.

All Fellows working abroad will be paid directly, therefore the host institution has to agree to administer only the research allowance in accordance with our guidelines. For legal purposes; in order for our Foundation, a US non-profit organization, to be able to pay the research allowance to a non US entity, we will request that your foreign institution fill out a 'Foreign Public Charity Equivalence Affidavit' and an 'IRS Federal Form 5578', copies of which will be provided by our Foundation after your award notification.

**THE REFERENCE LETTERS SHOULD BE EMAILED DIRECTLY TO HHWF,
THEY SHOULD NOT BE UPLOADED WITH THE APPLICATION:**


REFERENCE LETTERS We request that four reference letters be submitted by three professors, supervisors, or collaborators who know you and your scientific work well, **plus** your thesis advisor. Download a copy of the “Reference Letter Template” and forward it to your referees.

- Your prospective supervisor cannot be one of the 4 references. (Do not use the “Reference Letter Template” for your prospective supervisor's letter)
- If you hold an M.D. and do not have a thesis advisor, use an alternate as a 4th reference.
- All four referees should submit the reference letters directly to the Foundation by July 3, 2019.
- These references will remain confidential and should be emailed to **letters@hhwf.org**. No faxes please. The referee should not mail a follow-up hard copy.

IMPORTANT: In order to ensure that our office properly files and attaches all the incoming emailed reference letters to the correct application, please have your referee name the pdf letter attachment according to the following convention:

“Applicant'sLastName.Applicant'sFirstName_**Ref.**Referee'sLastName”


Example: If Dr. McCarty is writing a reference letter for an applicant name John Smith:

 Smith.John_Ref.McCarty

ONLINE APPLICATION STEP BY STEP OVERVIEW:

1. In your web browser click on the application's link posted on our website at: <https://tinyurl.com/klpokng> .
Doing so will open the following 2-page application cover:

Page 1 of 2

**The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation**
Online Application for 2020 Postdoctoral Research Fellowship

Please do not type in ALL CAPS

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ MI: _____

Address 1: _____

Address 2: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Country: _____

Email: _____ One or two email addresses (separated by a comma).

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Actual Start Date at your Postdoctoral Lab: _____

Intended Whitney Fellowship Activation Date: MM/DD/YYYY
-- Select -- -- Select -- 2020

Place of Birth: COUNTRY
-- Select --

The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation is committed to equal opportunity. We ask for the following information for statistical purposes only.

Optional: Gender -- Select -- Optional: Underrepresented Minority -- Select --

Title of Proposed Research: _____

Proposed Supervisor - Primary

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____

Proposed Supervisor - Secondary (Optional)

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____

Proposed Location: _____

Please indicate a primary and a secondary field using the lists below ▼

Primary: _____

Secondary: -- Select --

Page 2 of 2

FOUR REFERENCES:

Thesis Advisor: _____ Email: _____

University/Institute/Company Name: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

University/Institute/Company Name: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

University/Institute/Company Name: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

University/Institute/Company Name: _____

EDUCATION:

College or University: _____ Degree: _____

Field or Specialty: _____ Date Awarded or Expected: _____

1. _____ -- Select -- -- Select --

2. _____ -- Select -- -- Select --

3. _____ -- Select -- -- Select --

4. _____ -- Select -- -- Select --

FELLOWSHIPS, RESEARCH, AND/OR OTHER (HOSPITAL, CLINICAL, ETC.) EXPERIENCE:
(List Chronologically)

Name of Institution: _____

Position: _____

1. _____ From: -- Select -- To: -- Select --

2. _____ From: -- Select -- To: -- Select --

3. _____ From: -- Select -- To: -- Select --

4. _____ From: -- Select -- To: -- Select --

You will attach your zip file after you submit here.

Submit

2. Fill in the relevant fields in the 2-page application cover. Please note that to type in your own answer in any of the relevant drop-down lists, scroll to the very bottom and click on 'Other'.


3. Click 'submit' at the bottom of page 2, to be automatically taken to another website to upload the zip file/folder containing all the requested items (as detailed on pages 9-10).

4. Choose your zip file/folder from your local hard-drive and click 'Upload'. After uploading, you will see indicated to the right of your zip file's name, in green letters, that it is 'uploaded'. Nothing else is required to do after this. (See screenshot of the upload website, to the right)

IMPORTANT: The uploading of the zipped file should be done immediately following the submission of the 2-page application cover, it should NOT be uploaded at a later time or date.

THE HELEN HAY WHITNEY FOUNDATION

File Request from Robert Weinberger at The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation



Drag files here

[Browse files](#)

Upload

GENERAL INFORMATION IN THE 2-PAGE APPLICATION COVER

When filling out the 2 page form, please do not use LARGE CAP in any of the fields, including your name. (i.e. type "John Smith, 123 Main Street", not "JOHN SMITH, 123 MAIN STREET")

Email and Postal Address:

The email & postal address that you provide will be used to correspond with you about this application.

When entering your email address, please ensure that there is no space following the typed email address, otherwise the system will assume that the space is part of the email address and can cause technical difficulties in delivering your auto-generated 'receipt of submission' email.

If an officer of your host institution is submitting the application for you, please make sure that they fill in YOUR email address on the application cover since we will be emailing you directly with status updates and possible inquiries (They can also add their email address, if they so choose, separated by a comma, no space).

They should also be aware of the application's formatting instructions. To ensure proper delivery of important notification emails, please add our email address, office@hhwf.org, to your computer's contacts or personal address book so that our email correspondence does not get blocked by your anti-spam software. Please notify the Foundation of any change to your contact information.

For the chronological listing of "Fellowships, Research, and/or Other Experience" on page 2:

When listing your experiences during the time from when you received your doctorate degree up until the date of your application's submission, please ensure that you list all of your experiences without a gap. If there is a significant period (3 months or more) of 'non-experience' activity (ie, sabbatical, extended travel, etc.), please list that time-off as well (a short description of just a few words will suffice). Prior to when you received your doctorate degree, you do not need to list any gap activity.

Please note that in regards to the questions about gender and underrepresented minority status, the Helen Hay Whitney Foundation is committed to equal opportunity. We ask for this information for statistical purposes only. Answering these two questions is optional. The Helen Hay Whitney Foundation has a continuing commitment to monitor the operation of its review and award processes to detect and deal appropriately with any instances of real or apparent inequities with respect to age, sex, race, or ethnicity of the proposed postdoctoral fellow.

APPLICATION ITEMS 1-6

Download a copy of form "Application Items 1-6". Please fill out the form according to the instructions below and, once completed, upload it as one long document containing "Application Items 1-6". After completing form "Application Items 1-6", please make sure that there are no blank pages. **The font should be NO SMALLER THAN 11 pt Ariel or 12 pt Times New Roman. This minimum will be strictly enforced; applications in smaller fonts will not be considered.** Text for figure descriptions can be reasonably smaller. **The page margin limit is 0.4 inches on all sides.** Please note that you don't necessarily need to use the actual MS Word template "Application Items 1-6", but you could rather use it as a guide for the correct layout. You will anyway have to convert everything into a PDF format. If you do not use the exact template, please include the item number and title of the section above each. Also, please type your name at the top of every page. (Please see instructions below on how to name and upload files)

1. **SUMMARY STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL** (no more than 200 words)
2. **SUMMARY OF PRIOR RESEARCH** (no more than 500 words) - You should emphasize the research carried out during your doctoral studies, with brief mention of any other particularly significant contributions. We are interested in your summary of the work and its published (or to be published) results, as well as in why you chose to pursue it. Please avoid hyperbole or claims of being "first": your recommenders can provide such evaluations. We do not use the "prestige" of a journal as a surrogate for the quality or importance of the research reported in a published paper.
3. **BIBLIOGRAPHY** - List all of your publications, including those in which you are not a primary author. List all papers that have been published, in-press, submitted, or about to be submitted. Do not list abstracts, either poster or oral presentations of conference proceedings. However, patent issues may be listed. If needed, you may add another page to the bibliography section.

In addition, indicate by boldface or asterisk the three of your most significant publications (including published, in-press, submitted, or about to be submitted).

Please include the PMCID and/or the doi for the three aforementioned publications.

Of your 3 aforementioned most significant publications, you should then upload **ONLY** those that are NOT available from PubMed — i.e., submitted papers not yet published or any still not yet Open Access from the journal. Do not upload pdfs of publications that are readily available online, just indicate their reference on your list. (See instructions below on how to name and upload files).

4. **AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH** - up to 1 page of information about family, childhood, extracurricular activities, hobbies, etc. There is no specific format for the autobiography. Do not submit a C.V.
5. **RESEARCH PROPOSAL**. The presentation should be a full description of the proposed research, not to exceed 5 pages. This page limit includes tables and figures, but does not include literature cited. Include the literature cited after the 'Research Proposal – Item 5' (not after Item 6). Tables and figures may be included in the middle or at the end. Please ensure that your name is at the top of each page. There are no restrictions as to the number of tables and figures one may include.
6. **STATEMENT OF GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS**, goals for the fellowship period, and long-range career objectives. Ideally no longer than 1 page.

If you are a US citizen who will pursue your fellowship outside the US or Canada, upload a scanned copy of your proof of US citizenship, e.g. passport. (See instructions below on how to name and upload files)

If applicable, you may upload a copy of your collaboration letter(s). (See instructions below on how to name and upload files)

Please note that we do not require a CV or biosketch of your prospective supervisor. Also, we do not require a copy of your official transcript of graduate record.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL UPLOADED FILES

The following is a list of all the individual files that you will upload in one zipped file/folder:

1. Form "Application Items 1-6" (1 long document – do not submit each page as a separate file)
2. If applicable, up to three significant publications that are NOT readily available online, as indicated in your bibliography. Do not combine all of the publications into one file. (Up to 3 documents) If any of your 3 significant publications are readily available online, then do NOT upload them.
3. Financial Officer's Letter (depending on whether your prospective supervisor includes the administrative clause in his or her letter)
4. Collaborator's letter(s) - (Not necessary, only if applicable. There is no template or specific instructions)
5. Copy of proof of US citizenship for US citizens who will pursue their fellowship outside the US or Canada. (only if applicable)

Please make sure that all of the above-listed documents are in PDF format. Please **DO NOT** combine all of the above-listed documents (1-5) into one long PDF document.

In order to ensure proper organization of uploaded files, please name all of your uploaded files, including form "Application Items 1-6", as follows:

" Last Name.First Name_#of# - File Description "

Example: If an applicant named John Smith is uploading a total of 4 files (you may have less), here is how he should name them:

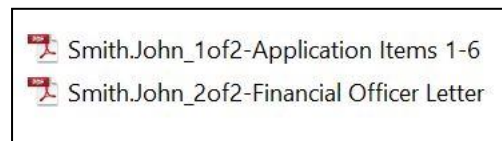
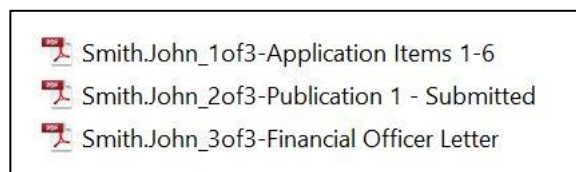
Smith.John_1of4 – Application Items 1-6

Smith.John_2of4 – Submitted Publication 1

Smith.John_3of4 – Collaborator's Letter

Smith.John_4of4 – Financial Officer's Letter *(this is the stmt of administration)*

SAMPLE SCREENSHOTS OF ZIPPED FILE/FOLDER'S CONTENTS



Once you have named all your files according to this convention, please compress them into one zipped file/folder. You can do this by creating a zipped file/folder containing all of your files. Please name your zipped folder as follows: "Last Name.First Name.zip" (i.e. Smith.John.zip). After which you will upload only one zipped file/folder, which will contain all of the pertinent documents. **PLEASE COMPRESS THIS FILE/FOLDER IN ZIP FORMAT ONLY** (other compressed formats such as .zipx , .rar , etc , will not be accepted)

THE ENTIRE ZIPPED FILE/FOLDER MUST BE LESS THAN 20MB IN SIZE. Even though your total unzipped file may be less than 20MB, please compress anyway to ensure a smooth upload.

Please note that large files may take a longer time to upload. After submitting your 2-page application, you should receive an automatically generated email stating that the application has successfully been submitted. This email will be sent to you even before you upload your zip file. **Just in case you experience a problem with your zip file/folder upload, there will be a link in this email which you can use to upload your zipped file/folder.** If you happen to make multiple submissions, don't worry, every application submitted receives a time stamp on our server, and we will use the most recently submitted version of your application. Between July 3 and July 31, we will notify you by email whether your application is complete or if you are still missing reference letters.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPRESSING FILES:

Microsoft Windows Users:

- Windows users: <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/compress-uncompress-files-zip-files>
- PC users can also use Winzip, which can found at <http://www.winzip.com>.

Mac Users:

- Mac users : https://support.apple.com/kb/PH25411?locale=en_US
- Mac users can also use Stuffit, which can found at <http://www.stuffit.com/mac-stuffit.html> .

For more information, please refer to our 'Frequently Asked Questions' section in the following pages or online at <http://hhwf.org/faqs/> . Should you not find the answer to your question in our FAQ, please email your inquiries to office@hhwf.org .

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

ELIGIBILITY

Q. The Foundation accepts applications from candidates who have no more than one year of postdoctoral research experience at the time of the deadline for submitting the application and who have received a PhD (or D.Phil. or equivalent) degree no more than two years before the deadline, or an M.D. degree no more than three years before the deadline. How are the dates of the Ph.D. and M.D. defined? What constitutes postdoctoral research experience?

A. We consider the day you defend your thesis as the date of your Ph.D. The date of an M.D. is the date of the formal awarding of the degree. If someone stays in their graduate lab after their PhD is granted to finish up papers, etc., then this work is not counted towards the 1-year maximum 'postdoctoral research experience'. Clinical residencies, military service, parental leaves of absence, etc., are of course not considered postdoctoral research experience. The Foundation will, at its discretion, accept applications from candidates whose postdoctoral research has extended for a month or two longer than the one-year limit, but in no case will a substantially longer interval be approved.

Q. Am I eligible to apply for the fellowship before I obtain my degree, as I will probably not be able to defend my thesis before the July 3, 2019 application deadline?

A. You may apply before obtaining your degree, as long as you will receive your degree before you intend on commencing your postdoctoral research under a Whitney Fellowship grant.

Q. I applied last year and was not awarded a Whitney Fellowship. May I reapply a second time for next year's deadline?

A. You may apply a second time as long as you don't have more than one year of post-doctoral experience by the July 3, 2019 deadline. Please note that every year a revised version of the online application form is created. If you will indeed reapply, make sure that you use the new one. In any case, you must reapply as if you never applied before, and you cannot simply reactivate your old application. A word of caution: we get outstanding applications every year. Unless you believe that your credentials have changed substantially during the past year, reapplication may not be worth the effort.

Q. I am interested in applying for the HHWF fellowship, and am wondering if it can be used at a federal government research institution, e.g. The National Institutes of Health?

A. Yes, you may pursue your proposed research at such an institution. Normally, when we deal with a non-governmental institution, we issue semi-annual stipends directly to the university or research institute in question. With the NIH, however, we pay you directly on a quarterly basis and send you a Federal Form-1099 at the end of the year. The research allowance is paid directly to the NIH.

Q. The Foundation expects that fellowship training be obtained in an academic setting, as opposed to a commercial or an industrial lab. How does the Foundation view a non-profit research institute?

A. Non-profit research institutes, whether supported privately or publicly, are appropriate places for HHWF postdoctoral training.

Q. I intend to pursue my postdoctoral research in a laboratory that already has a Whitney Fellow. Will this hurt my chances of getting a fellowship? I understand that your Foundation does award up to two Whitney Fellows in the same lab.

A. The presence of one Whitney Fellow in the laboratory of your prospective sponsor will in no way adversely affect your application.

Q. After obtaining my Ph.D., I worked at a biotech company. Does my time spent working in biotech count as post-doctoral experience?

A. Your work at the biotech company does count towards your maximum one-year postdoctoral experience.

Q. I am a second-year cardiology fellow interested in continuing my basic research. Because of my residency and fellowship training, I passed the 3-year cutoff after medical school. Do you make exceptions for MD/PhD-graduates?

A. When an applicant obtains both an M.D. and a Ph.D., we go by the most recently obtained degree. Therefore, if you did not obtain your Ph.D. more than 2 years prior to the application deadline or 3 years for an MD, and you do not have more than one year of postdoctoral experience by the application deadline, then you are eligible to apply.

INVENTION POLICY

Q. Does the Foundation have an invention/patent policy?

A. The Foundation does not maintain an invention/patent policy. Our only stipulation is that you cite the HHWF in any of your publications or discoveries resulting from your Whitney Fellowship. Your host institution will have an invention policy, however, which probably applies to you.

DURATION OF FELLOWSHIP

Q. I understand that the fellowship is a three-year commitment. Is it possible to start the fellowship in one laboratory and then finish in another?

A. The three-year commitment is for one laboratory only. If during the fellowship your mentor moves or some other unusual circumstance arises, you may request a transfer to another laboratory, subject to review and approval by the SAC Chairman.

CHANGE DURING FELLOWSHIP (i.e. Lab Transfer)

Q. I am wondering what happens to the fellowship if I change my supervisor or lab mid-fellowship(i.e. transfer to different institution)?

A. When we evaluate your application, among the many factors we take into consideration is the supervisor you'll be working with. If you decide mid fellowship to transfer, in a sense that changes the application and we would therefore have to reevaluate your fellowship. Please note that the bigger the change, the more scrutiny the new application will get. For example, if you simply change universities but your supervisor transfers with you, then there isn't much of a change. If you change your lab, supervisor, but you maintain the original research proposal, then that modifies the original application a bit more. However, if you change everything, including your research proposal, then for all intensive purposes you're practically starting from scratch and that would be reviewed very carefully. We expect that when one submits an application, their intention is to stay with their proposed supervisor, host institution, and research proposal throughout the three years, barring any unforeseen circumstances.

STIPEND & EXPENSE ALLOWANCE

Q. I read that no part of the research allowance can be used for overhead. Is this also true for the actual stipend?

A. Yes, our policy of 'no overhead' extends to the fellowship stipend, as well.

Q. What is your policy regarding computers purchased with the annual research allowance - do they belong to the fellow or the institution?

A. Equipment purchased with the research allowance, such as laptops, may be kept by the fellow after they finish their fellowship. However, fixed lab equipment will stay in the lab.

APPLICATION

Q. In the application you request reference letters 'from three of your former professors or supervisors'. I did not work with Dr. _____, but he knows my work through collaborations. Would that be accepted?

A. As long as the referee is closely familiar with you and your work, it is acceptable.

Q. Regarding the 5 page research proposal, I am attempting to balance the importance of background material and discussion of relevance, versus experimental detail. What are your guidelines?

A. There are no rigid guidelines beyond what is in our instructions. You should choose a balance appropriate for your project, assuming that the application will be read by an expert in your field, broadly defined (such as neuroscience, structural biology or developmental biology), but not necessarily by someone who knows the detailed topic of your research.

Q. The instructions state, "Do not include your prospective supervisor as a reference". My prospective supervisor knows me unusually well, however, as a result of previous collaboration. I think it would be unfortunate not to have him or her recommend my candidacy.

A. Your prospective supervisor may include in their sponsor's letter anything he or she wishes to comment about you and your work, but because of the potential for conflict of interest, we focus more on the evaluation of the other 4 references. We still require 4 other reference letters, one of which should be from your thesis advisor.

Q. Is it permissible to have two co-supervisors for the Fellowship? My work is interdisciplinary, and my potential supervisors have different but equally relevant areas of expertise. They also have an ongoing collaborative relationship.

A. It is permissible to have two co-supervisors. Put both names down on the application form. Please put your primary supervisor's full name in the "Proposed Supervisor – Primary" fields, and the secondary supervisor's full name in the "Proposed Supervisor – Secondary (Optional)" fields.

Q. After I applied for the Whitney Fellowship, I was informed that a paper I cited in my bibliography was accepted for publication. May I submit it to the Foundation?

A. You can email it to us, and we will update your application.

Q. I was wondering if there would be a problem if my reference letters arrive before my application.

A. We receive most reference letters ahead of the application. We keep files on each applicant, and when the application gets processed we attach their reference letters.

FOREIGN STUDENTS

Q. I am currently applying for a Whitney Fellowship. At this point I do not have a visa for my intended stay in the U.S. Do I need the appropriate visa before applying for the HHWF, or does it suffice to apply for a visa in time for my intended starting date?

A. Foreign Students will need to obtain appropriate visa documentation, as required by US Immigration. It is sufficient to simply state in your application your intent to obtain the appropriate visa documentation in time for your intended fellowship activation date. Include this statement as a separate letter in your application.

Q. What is your policy regarding student visas for foreign students?

A. The Foundation does not specify which visa a fellow must obtain. Our only stipulation is that you comply with whatever the US Immigration laws and your prospective institution requires.

Q. The application form asks me for a social security number. Since I am currently not a US citizen and do not have one, what should write in that field?

A. It is sufficient to enter "NA" for 'Not Applicable'.

HHMI – JANELIA RESEARCH CAMPUS CANDIDATES

Q. I plan on pursuing my postdoctoral fellowship at the Janelia Research Campus. I would like to apply for the Whitney fellowship because of the opportunities that it would give me to meet other young scientists in similar stages as mine. However, as you might know, Janelia Research Campus' policy prevents me from receiving any external funds, and I would have to decline the stipend part of the fellowship even if I get accepted. My question is whether my application would be given full consideration given this situation?

A. Our program does accept applications from candidates pursuing their research at the Janelia Research Campus. Your application would be given full consideration as any other. In the event you are awarded a Whitney Fellowship, then your stipend salary will be paid directly through HHMI. Other than that, you would be considered as any other Whitney Fellow, such as participating in our Annual Fellow's Meetings.