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CIHMID Postdoctoral Training Program

The Cornell Institute of Host-Microbe Interactions and Disease (CIHMID; <http://cihmid.cornell.edu>) is pleased to announce a new call for postdoctoral fellows to study host-microbe interactions. CIHMID postdocs are supported for three years to develop research programs in collaboration with two or more labs at Cornell and will be provided with professional development opportunities during the academic year and summer. CIHMID postdocs are expected to have intellectual ownership of their projects and may use their support to build bridges across different disciplines of study. Studied host-microbe interactions may be pathogenic or beneficial; microbial partners may be bacterial, viral or fungal; eukaryotic hosts may be animal or plant. Supporting a diverse portfolio of research systems and questions is an explicit goal of the training program.

The program is supported by a training grant from the US National Institutes of Health (T32 AI145821) and appointments are made through competitive application. For more information, including instructions on how to apply, please visit <http://cihmid.cornell.edu/cihmid-opportunities/cihmid-postdoctoral-fellows-program>. **Review of applications will begin on Dec 1, 2021.**

Trainee Support

- Trainees will be supported for up to 3 years of appointment, conditional on continued satisfactory progress and meeting of program expectations.
- Trainee salary is paid on the NIH scale (see Table describing “Postdoctoral Trainees and Fellows” at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-21-049.html>). The appointment includes health coverage offered through Cornell.
- Trainees will be provided with up to \$10,000 per year in discretionary spending. If the trainee obtains an external fellowship that covers the cost of their appointment, the discretionary allowance will be increased to \$15,000 per year for the remainder of the CIHMID training program appointment.

Mentoring Structure

- Prior to applying to the program, applicants must identify two or more labs with which to collaborate, selected at the discretion of the trainee. Rationale for choosing labs may include opportunity for complementary training experience, cross-disciplinary skills development, access to distinct technologies, or other attributes. The Principal Investigator of the primary lab must be a CIHMID faculty member, listed at <https://cihmid.cornell.edu/people>. Minor labs can be drawn from the entire Cornell community. The Plan of Proposed Research component of the application should address the logic for choosing the collaborating labs, making clear that the applicant will have intellectual independence and ownership of their project. Project effort associated with the minor lab(s) can vary from 10% to 50%, and may vary over the duration of the project. If the PI of the primary lab is an Assistant Professor, then the PI of a minor lab must have tenure and a mentoring commitment of at least 30%.



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- Within two months of initiating the appointment, trainees will identify a 3-member faculty mentoring committee, at least one of whom is not a formal advisor. The mentoring committee will develop an Individual Professional Development Plan with the trainee and will meet with the trainee at least twice per year to discuss professional progress and goals.

Program Features and Expectations

- All program participants are required to complete approved training in ethics and responsible conduct of research.
- Trainees are encouraged to join the CIHMID Postdoctoral Association. The Postdoctoral Association is a social and professional community organized by postdocs in CIHMID labs.
- CIHMID postdocs are encouraged to participate in, and take leadership roles in, journal clubs and supergroups such as [Virology Journal Club](#), [Microbiology Journal Club](#), [Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Disease \(EID\) Journal Club](#), [Microbiome Supergroup](#), and [Symbiosis & Cooperation Supergroup](#).
- Trainees are offered the opportunity to mentor undergraduate students in research, in collaboration with the [CIHMID Undergraduate Research Experience](#) program.
- All trainees are expected to give at least one oral presentation per year, either on the Cornell campus or at a national or international conference. Program leadership will help trainees identify and access appropriate venues and will provide opportunity if necessary.
- Logistical and financial support is provided for trainees to invite external speakers to visit Cornell. Trainees serve as the hosts for these visits and members of the postdoctoral and graduate communities have priority access for meeting with speakers.
- Trainees may be offered voluntary opportunity to teach small undergraduate courses and/or lead topical workshops according to their interest and career goals.
- The training program offers additional career and professional development opportunities, including:
 - Guidance in applying and interviewing for academic and nonacademic jobs to follow the postdoctoral appointment, including multiple rounds of feedback on application materials, opportunity to give practice job talks and chalk talks, and practice interviews with faculty,
 - Workshops on writing grants and fellowship applications, as well as on the grant review process at federal funding agencies,
 - Workshops on practical elements of running a research lab, with topics including mentoring strategies and styles, financial aspects of running a lab, and strategies for establishing priorities and objectives and maintaining focus on them,
 - Training in leadership and mentoring,
 - Training and experiential workshops on diversity, equity and inclusion in the STEM fields and beyond.

Application and Eligibility



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- **Review of applications will begin Dec 1, 2021. Because this program is funded by the US National Institutes of Health, it is only open to US citizens and permanent residents.**
- Applications will consist of a Cover Letter, CV, Plan of Proposed Research, and a brief statement describing how the applicant will contribute to Cornell's campus culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. A Statement of Support is required from each prospective mentor, and candidates should arrange for two Letters of Reference that do not come from prospective mentors.
 - The Plan of Proposed Research should be a maximum of 4.5 pages in length and should consist of the following sections: Previous and Proposed Research (3 pages max), Professional Objectives (1 page max), and Meaningful Publication (0.5 page max). The description of Previous and Proposed Research should be written for a knowledgeable but non-expert audience, and should describe the proposed project in sufficient detail that it can be evaluated. The Previous and Proposed Research should also contain some explanation of how the applicant's prior research experience positions them to be successful with the proposed work. The Professional Objectives section should describe the applicant's long-term professional goals and should explain how an appointment as a CIHMID postdoctoral fellow would help them to reach those goals. The Meaningful Publication section should highlight one paper published by the applicant. The narrative can be used to explain why this publication represents the applicant's research program particularly well, why it is especially important to the applicant, or why the applicant is especially proud of it.
 - CIHMID and Cornell embrace diversity and have an expectation that all members of our campus community will contribute to a climate that supports equity and inclusion of students, faculty, and staff of all identities and backgrounds (<https://cihmid.cornell.edu/commitment-to-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>; <https://hr.cornell.edu/our-culture-diversity/diversity-inclusion>). Accordingly, every applicant should provide a statement that describes their philosophies and prior or proposed activities with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion. Personal affiliation with an underrepresented group is not a requirement of eligibility for this fellowship, but we strongly encourage applications from individuals who identify with underrepresented and/or marginalized groups, who come from backgrounds of disadvantage, or who are differently abled.
 - Statements of Support from prospective mentors should be submitted by the prospective mentors directly into the job application portal. These statements can be brief, but they should describe commitment to mentoring the applicant and a description of how the mentoring team intends to foster intellectual independence and achievement of career goals by the applicant. Applicants must enter the names and email addresses of each mentor into the AJO application portal as "reference writers" in order to trigger automatic solicitation of the support letters. It is also acceptable for a single letter co-signed by the entire mentoring team to be submitted.



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- Two Letters of Reference that do not come from prospective mentors should be submitted directly by the recommenders into the AJO application portal. These letters should emphasize the qualifications of the applicant for a CIHMID fellowship.
- A full CV and brief cover letter should be uploaded by the applicant into the application portal.
- Applicants must hold a Ph.D. at the time the appointment begins. Applicants who are already established at Cornell will be considered only if they are changing labs or substantially changing projects. Candidates will be selected based on track record and career promise, merit of the proposed project, and alignment with CIHMID priorities. Each of these factors is given approximately equal consideration in the selection process.