

## **Francis S. Collins Scholars Program in Neurofibromatosis Clinical and Translational Research**

The Francis S. Collins Scholars Program in Neurofibromatosis Clinical and Translational Research will create a community of exceptionally well-trained clinician scientists who will be leaders in the field of Neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1).

Explicitly designed to attract talent of the highest order to the field of NF1 and to foster life-long commitment to this syndrome, the Program will invest in its Scholars by providing them the resources for formal training in the discipline of clinical translational science, the protected time to develop the specific skill set appropriate for their research focus, exposure to clinical translational research programs in government, academic, and industry environments and clinical training for the care of patients with NF1.

Collins Scholars, who will be in the last stages of their post-doctoral training or in the first seven years of a faculty appointment, will be selected based on their past accomplishments, their ability to explore new ideas, and their commitment to patient-centered research. Applicants must be able to demonstrate a strong prior interest in NF1 or be able to clearly explain why they would like to work in this field moving forward.

The Scholars Program provides salary support (75-100%) for the Collins Scholars, stipends for research costs, tuition for relevant coursework, travel costs for scientific meetings and mentor stipends. The Program period is two years (with an option for a third year in select situations) in order to allow sufficient time to develop both clinical experience in NF1 as well as the skill set required for clinical-translational research. People around the world who are interested in NF1 are encouraged to apply. The only requirements are those listed above and that the applicant choose to work at a site which can meet the clinical and research infrastructure requirements - including appropriate mentorship for both clinical and research training in NF1. All mentors will receive training to maximize their effectiveness as educators and role models for the Collins Scholars.

The Scholars Program is named in honor of Dr. Francis S. Collins, who as an exemplary physician-scientist discovered the *Nf1* gene in 1990. This discovery has directly contributed to all subsequent clinical-translational NF1 research. In addition to this work, Dr. Collins, as Director of the National Institutes of Health and former Director of the Human Genome Project, has been at the forefront of this generation's translational science developments. His leadership helped to establish the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) and Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN). Hence, this award is named to honor the contribution of Dr. Collins to NF1 in particular and to clinical-translational science in general. Our sincere hope and belief is that the Francis S. Collins Scholars Program in Neurofibromatosis Clinical and Translational Research will create a cadre of outstanding clinician-scientists who, motivated by their work with patients who have NF1, mentored by today's leaders in the field, and taught how to conduct rigorous clinical-translational research, will revolutionize the field of NF1 in the coming decades.