



Woodruff Memorial Research Building  
101 Woodruff Circle, Suite 6305  
Atlanta, GA 30322  
Tel: 404.727.9107  
Fax: 404.712.8576  
Email: hjinnah@emory.edu

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Dear Colleagues,

The Dystonia Coalition and the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation are pleased to announce that we are seeking applications for our *Career Development Program*. The goal of the *Career Development Program* is to facilitate career development for junior investigators interested in clinical and translational research relating to dystonia, or to provide a mechanism for more senior investigators from other fields to get involved in dystonia research. The program is sponsored by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), the Office of Rare Diseases Research (ORDR) in the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), and the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation (DMRF). Below is a summary of the application requirements and selection process.

Applications must focus on dystonia. The *Dystonia Coalition* is particularly interested in applicants focusing on projects that exploit data and/or resources already collected by the *Dystonia Coalition* and/or projects that encourage collaborations by involving different centers of the *Dystonia Coalition*.

Application instructions:

- Applicants who are not part of the Dystonia Coalition may also apply. US citizenship and affiliation with a US institution are not required.
- The purpose of the award is to support junior faculty interested in developing careers in clinical and translational research in dystonia. More senior investigators may apply if they are redirecting their efforts from another area of research to dystonia. Advanced postdoctoral fellows who are transitioning to their first faculty appointment may also be considered. Clinical residents and fellows in early training stages are not eligible.
- Please note that any application that requires new patient recruitment will need to have independent IRB approval, and this approval may have to be reviewed by NIH.
- Any domestic application that involves new patient recruitment across multiple centers must follow the NIH single IRB rule for each of its centers. This requirement does not apply to studies at foreign sites.
- Applications should include the following:
  1. The *Dystonia Coalition* Career Development Award Cover Sheet.
  2. A 3-4-page research proposal letter. The proposal should focus on clinical or translational research in isolated dystonia. Proposals for basic science will be given low priority.
  3. The 3-4-page proposal letter must include an explanation for how the award will impact the future of your career. Examples include generation of pilot data sufficient for publications or for writing a larger independent grant, networking/collaborating with other established dystonia researchers, or other career-advancement opportunities.
  4. Bibliography (not included in the page limit).
  5. Budget of up to US \$50,000 with no more than 10% indirect costs (institutional overhead); with budget justification no longer than 1 page. At minimum, 10% of applicant's effort should be devoted to this project.
  6. A NIH-style biosketch for the applicant. For directions and sample document, [click here](#).
  7. A letter of support and NIH-style biosketch from a senior mentor.
  8. Institutional approval/acknowledgement of the research plan and budget.

9. If IRB approval is required, include the IRB approval letter and consent document or proof of submission of protocol to the IRB.
  10. Signed DC Bylaws document.
  11. Optional items may include additional letters of support or copies of manuscripts in press. Published articles available online should not be included in the application.
- Submit all materials in a *single* PDF file of less than 2MB, in the order listed above, by email, to Gamze Kilic-Berkmen (dystoniacoalition@emory.edu), who will confirm receipt of each application with the sender. Paper applications cannot be accepted.
  - Deadline for receipt of applications is **15 May 2020**.

Selection process and criteria:

- Applications will be reviewed in **May-June 2020**; awards can begin as early as **August 2020**.
- Reviews will be conducted by the *Dystonia Coalition*. If new subject recruitment is required, project will need to be approved by NIH.
- In accordance with policies previously used by the Dystonia Coalition, applications will be shared with representatives from the DMRF and may be shared with other patient advocacy groups for possible co-funding.
- Reviewers of these applications are instructed to give priority to the following, so they should be addressed in your application:
  1. *Candidate*. What are the candidate's track record of accomplishments, long-term career goals, and potential for future development?
  2. *Research plan*. What are the feasibility, significance, and relevance of the proposed research to clinical and translational research in dystonia? Can the project be completed in 1 year?
  3. *Environment*. Are the research environment and institutional commitments to the candidate conducive to the proposed research and career development plan? Are other individuals at the same institution already participating in other *Dystonia Coalition* projects?
  4. *Mentor*. What is the mentor's track record of relevant research accomplishments, record of training other investigators, and access to resources to support the candidate and project?
  5. *Development plan*. How will the award impact career development?

Successful applicants will be required to provide written progress reports due at 6 months after funding and no later than 30 days after the end of the award period. They also are expected to attend the annual *Dystonia Coalition* meeting to present the research project, so costs of travel should be included in the proposed budget. Please direct any questions or comments to Gamze Kilic-Berkmen (dystoniacoalition@emory.edu).



H. A. Jinnah, MD, PhD  
Director, Dystonia Coalition