

# **Ritu Banga Healthcare Disparities Research Awards**

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**2 - 4 awards per category**  
**Applications due: December 17, 2021 at 11:59pm**  
[Click here to apply](#)

### **Program Summary:**

Dean Augustine M.K. Choi and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion are pleased to announce the fifth round of funding for the Ritu Banga Healthcare Disparities Research Awards. Previously named the Dean's Diversity and Healthcare Disparity Research Awards, they are now generously endowed by Ritu and Board Fellow Ajay Banga, ensuring their place at our institution for decades to come. The awards will support excellence in research to improve the health of women and underrepresented minorities and/or to reduce health disparities in healthcare systems and in clinical settings, either locally or globally. Research into improving the diversity and gender balance of the biomedical workforce will also be supported, as lack of a representative workforce can be linked to health disparities and we must move the needle and better confront inequality.

The awards are designed to further Weill Cornell Medicine's goal of becoming a national leader in advancing diversity, inclusion, and gender equity within academic medicine. We seek proposals for basic, translational, clinical, informatics, or outcomes research that addresses health disparity areas including, but not limited to: race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, differing standards of healthcare, insurance status, age, geography, sexual orientation, and cultural beliefs. Projects that enhance the diversity pipeline either through research or the inclusion of diverse personnel are encouraged.

The Ritu Banga Healthcare Disparities Research Awards will provide funding for one year and will be available at two levels:

- **Faculty (4 awards)** - \$50,000 each
- **Fellows and Postdoctoral Associates (2 awards)** - \$50,000 each

Awardees may be required to present their research projects **the year following their completion** during Weill Cornell Medicine's Diversity Week.

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Applicants must be full-time faculty, fellows, or postdoctoral associates at Weill Cornell Medicine, or full-time fellows at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center.
- Faculty applicants must be Instructors, Assistant Professors, and Associate Professors with a primary appointment at Weill Cornell Medicine.
- Pairing with more senior faculty members to provide mentorship/guidance will be permitted, however, the grant must be to the junior member and a clear indication of how the project will enhance the development of an independent career for the more junior member will be required.
- Departmental commitment to the retention/faculty development of junior applicants is required.
- Applicants must be able to complete the proposed work within 1 year or before they leave NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center (whichever comes first).
- Applicants must have a well-developed feasible, significant, and innovative research plan focused on diversity, women's health, diseases that disproportionately affect diverse communities, or the

reduction of health disparities.

- A salary cap will be imposed on all project budgets; the funds allocated to the PI's salary and fringe benefits may not exceed 25 percent of the total budget.
- Salary rebudgeting post-award is not allowed.

Announcement of award recipients will be made in the late winter/early spring of 2022. Awardees are expected to attend the "Celebration of Diversity" to receive their awards. The celebration will be scheduled during Diversity Week, April 25<sup>th</sup> – April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**Instructions for Submitting an Application:**

Please provide the following items in the order listed as a single PDF file (single-spaced, 11-point Arial type with 1-inch margins). Applications should be submitted via an online portal ([click here](#)) using the naming convention "Lastname.Firstinitial\_RBHDRA\_Category."

Example:

Smith.J\_RBHDRA\_Faculty.pdf  
Smith.J\_RBHDRA\_Fellow-Postdoc.pdf

**The Faculty award application package must include\*:**

1. Project title and scientific abstract (250 words)
2. Key co-investigators (names and titles)
3. NIH-style biosketch of the applicant and co-investigators (limit 4 pages each)
4. Research plan (limit 5 pages)
  - a. Background, rationale and significance
  - b. Specific research objectives/aims
  - c. Preliminary studies (if applicable)
  - d. Experimental design and procedures
  - e. Significance of the proposed research to the Award's diversity and health disparity goals
  - f. Project timeline and specific expected deliverables
5. Human subjects (if applicable). Include all sections required for an NIH application.
6. Vertebrate animals (if applicable). Include the 5-point narrative required for an NIH application.
7. References, including the full title of each work cited
8. Detailed budget (PHS 398 form)
9. Letter of support from department chair/division chief attesting to the candidate's eligibility, resources available for support of his/her research, the candidate's past academic record, scientific progress to date, and potential for academic career development

**The Fellow/Postdoctoral Associate award application package must include\*:**

1. Project title and scientific abstract (250 words)
2. Proposed research sponsor's name and title
3. NIH-style biosketches of the applicant and sponsor (limit 4 pages each)
4. Sponsor's training record (table indicating experience supervising trainees)
5. Sponsor's current grants
6. Items 4-8 as described in Faculty award application above
7. Letter of support from sponsor confirming how the project will enhance the development

- of an independent career for the fellow/postdoctoral associate.
8. Two letters of reference from previous mentors or other qualified individuals  
\*\*\*letters/application materials in excess of those requested are not permitted and will result  
in the return of the application\*\*\*

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**Review Process and Review Criteria:**

Proposals will be evaluated by a scientific review committee through the Office of the Research Dean. The main criteria for the review of the applications are:

- Scientific merit, including potential for publication and for subsequent extramural funding of the research project
- Relevance of the proposed work to the goals of the Ritu Banga Healthcare Disparities Research Awards
- Applicant's personal qualifications and potential for academic success
- The sponsor/mentor's experience and plans for supporting the applicant (for fellows/postdoctoral associates)

**Final Report:**

Awardees must file a summary report 1 ½ years after funds are dispersed.

**Questions:**

For further information, please contact Elizabeth Omondi ([elo2010@med.cornell.edu](mailto:elo2010@med.cornell.edu)) in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.