**HMS/HSDM Office for Postdoctoral Fellows**

**NIH/NSF Training Template for Grant Submission**

The Office for Postdoctoral Fellows (<http://postdoc.hms.harvard.edu>) at Harvard Medical School was founded in 2001, began offering programming in 2004, and given a dedicated office space in 2007, further demonstrating the institution's commitment to the advanced training and mentoring of HMS postdoctoral fellows. The Office for Postdoctoral Fellows (OPF) collaborates with many offices and organizations within HMS, as well as at local, regional, and national levels to address the training needs of postdoctoral fellows across the institution to achieve its mission.

The OPF enhances the development and experience of the postdoctoral community by recognizing the valuable contributions of postdoctoral scholars, developing a firm foundation on which to build a comprehensive training and career development experience, encouraging individual responsibility, fostering mentoring and cultivating a sense of community. Through a combination of administrative initiatives and educational activities, the OPF offers timely and practical programming that adds value to the postdoctoral experience and evolves with the ever-changing training landscape. The office has created a programmatic approach that advances postdoc research skills, career development, and social and personal skills while addressing specific issues of early, mid, and late career trainees. Throughout the year, fellows can participate in a curriculum of workshops, panel discussions, seminars, and networking opportunities designed to advance lab management skills, grantsmanship, communication, academic and industry career exploration, as well as work/life and cultural considerations (see figure). The implementation of this curriculum is essential in enhancing the training experience and in preparing postdoctoral fellows for the next stages of their careers.

The OPF hosts quarterly IDP workshops for postdocs as well as provides an Individual Development Plan (Annual Planning Meeting Tool) aimed at fostering ongoing and recurring discussions, evaluation, goal setting and feedback. Our IDP is used to address research and professional progress by benchmarking advancement and identifying barriers to success along the training path. In addition, postdoctoral fellows benefit from access to one-on-one counseling sessions with a dedicated career development specialist to explore career options, seek feedback on resume and CV preparation, and discuss resources for skills enhancement. Postdoctoral fellows seeking careers beyond the academic track are encouraged to participate in a CV-to-Resume workshop and Career Discussion Hour, a monthly featuring former HMS postdocs regarding careers outside of academia. To supplement the professional development activities of the office, a lending library is available to postdoctoral fellows with over 70 titles ranging from writing an NIH proposal to career options in the biotech sector. As postdoctoral fellows move on to new positions in academia and beyond, they are invited to participate in an exit survey that informs HMS of their next position and assesses their training and professional development experience. They are also asked join the Harvard Medical School Postdoc Networking Group on LinkedIn. The exit survey asks for feedback on the career development curriculum that allows HMS to further strengthen the overall training and mentoring environment for postdoctoral fellows while the LinkedIn group is used as an unofficial alumni network.

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