



## 2026 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

### **Advancing Oncologic Research Communities in Health Equity (ARCH) K12 Program**

**Application Deadline: April 8, 2026; 5:00pm EST**

Informational Webinar: February 24, 2026 at 1pm EST ([Register here for Zoom link](#))

The University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center (UMGCC) is seeking applications for the 2026 Advancing Oncologic Research Communities in Health Equity (ARCH) K12 Program. The purpose of this program is to enhance research training and education of post-doctoral fellows, junior faculty, and other early-stage investigators in implementing oncology research that considers population-level factors influencing health outcomes. This award supports career development awards designed to prepare newly trained clinicians who are committed to independent research careers in community oncology, prevention, or treatment research, and to facilitate their transition to more advanced support mechanisms or independent research funding (e.g., K08 or R01-equivalent).

This request for applications is for new Scholars, including post-doctoral fellows, junior faculty, and other early-stage investigators. Support, including salary, research funds, tuition fees, and travel funds are provided for two years. Fundamental elements of the award include: structured, foundational coursework; didactic and hands-on training in clinical and translational research through a formal program of instruction; training in manuscript preparation and grant submission; participation in career development opportunities; and designated mentors that will support the Scholar throughout the period of K12 award and on an ongoing basis thereafter until the Scholar achieves promotion with tenure.

Funding for these awards is provided by the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health under The NCI Worta McCaskill-Stevens Career Development Award for Community Oncology and Prevention Research (Award Number K12CA301384).

#### **I. Purpose of K12**

The purpose of the Advancing Oncology Research Communities in Health Equity (ARCH) K12 program is to integrate population-focused research into the oncology projects of early-stage investigators, while enhancing their expertise in cancer prevention and community engagement. This will be achieved through 1) didactic population health education along with multitiered mentoring by successful oncology researchers, 2) classroom instruction on cancer prevention through a public health and basic biology lens; 3) classroom and in-the-field community engagement instruction of impactful methods to relay research results to affected community members. Scholars will also partake of programming that expands their national network of population health and cancer prevention collaborators, participate in an Annual Oncology Research Conference and attend the NCI Community Oncology Research Program, as well as receive longitudinal comprehensive support to facilitate Scholars' progression from a mentored, career-development phase to an independent, tenure-track faculty position with demonstrated readiness for long-term academic success.

**Application Due Date: April 8, 2026; 5:00pm EST**

**Award Notification: by June 1, 2026**

**Start Date: September 1, 2026**

## **II. Eligibility**

Scholars of the K12 award must be individuals with a clinical doctoral degree. Such degrees include, but are not limited to, the MD, DO, DDS, DMD, OD, DC, PharmD, ND (Doctor of Naturopathy), DNP (Doctor of Nursing Practice), and DVM. Individuals with a PhD or other doctoral degree in clinical disciplines such as medical physics, clinical psychology, nursing, clinical genetics, speech-language pathology, audiology, or rehabilitation are also eligible. Non-clinically trained PhDs or PhDs without clinical/patient responsibilities are not eligible.

The applicant must be a late postdoctoral fellow preparing to transition to faculty based on research productivity **or** an early career faculty member, with an active research program, who has not successfully achieved a career development award. The applicant will primarily fall into two categories:

- 1) a basic, clinical, or translational science researcher; or
- 2) a population health researcher investigating an epidemiologic, clinical, translational or genetic oncology project.

Scholars must be citizens or noncitizen nationals of the United States or have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence at the time of appointment.

## **III. Types of Research Proposals Accepted**

This funding opportunity encourages applications proposing creative transdisciplinary research and innovative institutional career development programs focused on community oncology, prevention, and treatment research that improve cancer outcomes across populations. Program areas of interest include, but are not limited to, cancer prevention, screening, intervention, control, and treatment, cancer care delivery research; the integration of cancer health disparities research within these scientific areas; community-based oncology research both nationally and internationally; the management of comorbidities within clinical trials; and molecular research that helps to identify those individuals who will benefit from cancer prevention and control interventions.

## **IV. Scholar Support**

It is expected that the K12 Scholars will be working in a funded research environment and that support provided by the K12 grant will augment existing research support to the Scholar.

Scholar support consists of two 12-month appointments, provided their progress towards an independent academic career is on track and satisfactory.

Scholar salaries can be requested up to \$110,000 for 75% of full-time professional effort, in accordance with K-awardee salary guidelines, along with associated fringe benefits. The total

salary requested for Scholars must be established on the base salary of a full-time, 12-month appointment.

Up to \$30,000 per individual Scholar may be provided for the following types of research-related expenses:

- Research expenses, such as supplies, equipment, and technical personnel;
- Tuition and fees related to required career development courses and activities;
- Travel to scientific meetings or training that the institution determines to be necessary for the individual's career development experience such as the NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) annual meeting; and
- Statistical services including personnel and computer time.

## **V. Award Stipulations & Expectations**

Scholars are required to devote a minimum of 9 person-months (75%) of full-time professional effort to conduct health-related research with the remaining effort devoted to activities related to the development of a successful research career.

Surgeon-scientists with surgical duties may request a minimum of 6 person-months (50% full-time professional effort) to the K12. A clear justification must be provided in the application when requesting less than 75% full-time professional effort (less than 9 person-months).

ARCH Scholars are expected to participate fully in a structured training, mentoring, and research program centered on population-focused cancer research. Requirements include:

- Training & Coursework
  - Complete foundational coursework and didactic instruction in population health, responsible conduct of research, clinical and translational research, scientific writing, and cancer prevention.
  - Participate in tailored training aligned with the Scholar's career goals in cancer prevention or community-engaged research.
  - Receive didactic and hands-on clinical and translational research training through the UMB Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR).
- Professional Development
  - Participate in professional development activities to support transition to scientific independence, including manuscript preparation and grant submission through the UMB CARTI program.
  - Enroll in two grant-writing courses annually and develop a one-page research concept for mentor and program officer feedback.
  - Participate in additional leadership and faculty development opportunities, as needed (e.g., AAMC Minority Faculty Leadership Development Seminar).
- Research & Mentoring
  - Conduct a research project focused on improving cancer outcomes across populations, resulting in a scholarly product (e.g., abstract, manuscript, or grant application).

- Demonstrate ongoing participation in mentors' multidisciplinary clinical research team(s), including biannual mentoring committee meetings.
- Apply for and maintain membership in one UMGCCC research program aligned with the Scholar's research and career interests, with required participation in monthly meetings and annual retreats.
- Conferences & Scholarly Dissemination
  - Attend and present research at the annual ARCH Oncology Research Retreat.
  - Attend the Health Equity Leadership Institute (HELI) annual research conference and the AACR Annual Meeting on Cancer Health Disparities.
  - Attend the NCI National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) group meeting and the annual NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) meeting.
- Community Engagement
  - Participate in quarterly UMB Mini-Medical Schools and/or Health Fairs to provide community education and disseminate research findings.
- Program Participation & Reporting
  - Submit quarterly progress reports and complete semiannual program assessments.
  - Provide ongoing updates on publications, grants, and awards during and following the appointment period.
  - Engage in collaborative activities with peers, mentors, and program faculty to enhance training experiences.

## **VI. Mentor(s) Expectations**

Scholars will participate in the UMSOM-created Centralized Mentoring Program, which supports the research and professional development of early--stage faculty through bi-annual mentoring committee meetings. Each Scholar will have a mentoring system designed to optimize their institutional support (Next Generation Mentor), national presence (Master Mentor) and transition to scientific independence. Scholars will be assigned to a mentoring committee to provide guidance and oversee research and professional progress through tenure. Mentoring committees will include:

- A primary mentor who is an NIH funded investigator within the same department/center/institute with a track record of mentoring early-stage faculty;
- A secondary mentor with similar research interests;
- A professional development advisor who is an active member of the departmental appointment, promotion, and tenure committee; and
- A population health master mentor.

Mentoring committees will assist Scholars to leverage existing resources to meet their research and career needs, including successfully competing for NIH R01 funding.

## **VII. Application Process**

Applications and all required documents must be submitted electronically by April 8, 2026, by 5:00 PM EST. The application can be accessed [\*\*here\*\*](#).

The candidate will submit an online application that consists of the following sections:

- 1) basic demographics (e.g., sex and gender, race, ethnicity)
- 2) one page description of how their research interest and career goals are aligned with improving cancer outcomes for diverse or underrepresented populations;
- 3) a research strategy in NIH format (5 pages including Specific Aims, research strategy and study timeline); and
- 4) budget and budget justification.

We also require biosketches of the Scholar and their primary research mentor, if they are late-stage postdoctoral fellows, as well as a letter of support from their department chair. A copy of the Scholar's current U.S. clinical license (and board certification if applicable) must be provided, and all relevant information—surgical training, clinical license, expiration date, board certification—must be present in the Scholar's NIH Biosketch.

The department chair's letter must confirm that the Scholar is in good standing, will have 75% protected time for research and a Faculty Mentoring Committee, affirms the applicant's overall potential, and includes the department's commitment to supporting the remaining 25% of the Scholar's salary.

## **VIII. Review and Selection Process**

Our goal is to select Scholars who, with proper career development and clinical and translational research training, have potential to become independently funded, successful and ethical clinical investigators.

Each application is reviewed by three independent reviewers and evaluated for:

- 1) quality of the research proposed;
- 2) likelihood of the candidate to transition to scientific independence;
- 3) clear focus on improving cancer outcomes across populations within the research proposal;
- 4) impact of the award on minority communities;
- 5) likely overall impact on the applicant's career trajectory, and
- 6) strength of evidence of mentor's and sponsoring department's commitment to the Scholar.

Research projects that are highly relevant to improving cancer outcomes across populations, demonstrate strong feasibility, have potential to influence clinical practice, and support the investigator's path to scientific independence will be prioritized. Applications are presented to the full review committee and review will be conducted similar to NIH study section process, using

the NIH criteria. Applicants are ranked by lowest score, with top candidates invited for interviews, and awards offered based on a predefined threshold and available slots.

We will provide mentoring for resubmission of proposals not selected. We will provide the reviewer's written comments and offer specific guidance on mechanisms to make the proposal stronger for the next funding cycle. If a slot becomes available before the next review cycle, we will pull waitlist candidates who ranked highly into the program.

## **IX. Contact Information**

Applicants are encouraged to contact [ARCK12@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:ARCK12@som.umaryland.edu) to discuss eligibility requirements, obtain guidance about any special circumstances or discuss other aspects of the K12 award and its terms.