Flexible Funding Support for Early Career Investigators

Implementation and Outcomes

Health Research Alliance Members Meeting
October 17, 2023
Mission:
To “support and promote the investigation of human disease and the alleviation of human suffering through improved treatment.”

<table>
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<th><strong>Award Summary</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Award Amount:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Award Duration:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Eligibility:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Research Focus:</strong></td>
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**Charles A. King Trust Postdoctoral Research Fellowship**

**Goal:**
Empower postdoctoral fellows to overcome common research and career hurdles through flexible funding.

**Considerations:**
- Support research-related costs and work/life balance
- Regional cost of living

**Pilot Approach:**
- Increase base pay rate
- Add fringe allowance (10%)
- Add $25,000 flexible discretionary funding

**Preliminary Evidence of Success:**
- Increase in applications received
- Greater institutional representation
- Positive reviewer feedback
King Trust: Empowering Postdoctoral Fellows

Today’s Discussion:

Implementation

Pilot Findings

Opportunities for Iteration
Grant Cycle Implementation and Evaluation

How we did this

**Communication**
- Funding Announcements
- Terms of the Award
- Office Hours

**Due Diligence**
- Checking Budgets & Requests
- Follow-Up as Necessary

How we measured success

**Understanding Funding Use**
- How are funds proposed for use?
- How else the work is supported?
- Does this change as an award progresses?
- Understanding salary needs

**Assessing Feedback**
- Applicant Surveys
- Awardee Interviews
- Reviewer Feedback
- Institutional Representation
Opportunities for Improvement

Increased Communication

• Intention of the purpose of the flexible funding
• Define the term “flexible” and how funds can be used

Increased Support for 1st Time Applicants

• First time applicants may need assistance in constructing budgets in navigating Offices of Sponsored Programs
Understanding Funding Use
How are funds proposed for use?
How else the work is supported?
Does this change as an award progress?
Understanding salary needs

Assessing Feedback
Applicant Surveys
Awardee Interviews
Reviewer Feedback
Institutional Representation
Opportunities for Improvement

Learned Lesson:
Expect requests that are tailored to the project and research path needs

Additional Information Needed:
Are there institutional restrictions? Awareness of applicants?

Opportunity for Iteration:
Follow up with applicants to understand rationale
Successes and Next Steps

*Continue flexible funding for postdoctoral fellows*

Program Iteration
Provide applicant assistance
Increase communication
Request budget rationale
Ask for total compensation

Evaluation
Application rates & institutional representation
Applicant & Awardee feedback
Funding expenditures
Determine research related salary support
Thank you!

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