

## 2024 TOPMed Fellowship FAQs

### Foreign Institutions/Investigators

The following items summarize responses to questions about foreign institutions/investigators and for visa holders.

- **There is no citizenship requirement for the TOPMed fellowship applicants. An applicant may be a citizen or a non-citizen national of the United States, have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence (i.e., possess a currently valid Permanent Resident Card USCIS Form I-551, or other legal verification of such status), or be a non-U.S. citizen.**

**For applications submitted on behalf of non-U.S. citizens with temporary U.S. visas, visa status during the period of fellowship must allow the applicant to conduct the proposed research at the applicant institution.**

- Non-domestic (non-U.S.) Entities (Foreign Institutions) are not eligible to apply, with the exception of those foreign institutions that have received funds from major NIH Common Fund initiatives on genomics/data science (e.g., H3Africa and DS-I Africa).

### Eligibility

The following items summarize responses to questions related to eligibility for the TOPMed Fellowship.

- MD-PhD students are allowed to apply when in the clinical portion of their training. However, the fellowship is to support genomics research, not clinical training.
- The fellowship is intended to be a training opportunity conducted by one applicant/investigator and one or more mentors.
- The TOPMed fellowship does not preclude involvement in another fellowship. The applicant must be able to commit a minimum of 25% time to the TOPMed fellowship.
- Applicants should be doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows, or early-career faculty investigators (i.e., those performing hands-on analysis work) at the time of application.

### Budget/Costs

The following items summarize responses to questions related to budget and costs for the TOPMed Fellowship.

- NHLBI will cover the computing costs for using BioData Catalyst (BDC) space via the ACC, up to \$2,000. The projected costs for use of BDC do not need to be included in the submitted budget.

- The award limit is \$70,000, which covers the salary of the fellow and the travel costs.
- Please contact the ACC ([topmed-admin@westat.com](mailto:topmed-admin@westat.com)) if you are unable to download the budget template from the TOPMed Fellowship application.

### **Proposal Sections and Requirements**

The following items summarize responses to questions related to the fellowship proposal sections and requirements.

- Each mentor should write a separate letter of support and each letter should be a limit of three pages. If there is more than one mentor, the subsequent letters will not count toward the page limit.
- The bibliography or references are counted in the 12-page limit.
- Awards are anticipated to be announced in mid-February 2025. Start date is dependent on the execution of the subcontract between the fellow's institution and Westat (the TOPMed ACC).
- Applicants will receive a confirmation via email once their fellowship accounts are active.

### **Data Access/Availability**

The following items summarize responses to questions related to data access and availability.

- The [dbGaP](#) and [TOPMed](#) websites have information about the data that are available through dbGaP and the BioData Catalyst ([BDC](#)). Cardiac MRI images/ECGs are not yet available.
- Projects that use TOPMed data exclusively will be evaluated equally to projects that use non-TOPMed datasets.
- Applicants must be able to obtain data access within three months of execution of the subcontract (after award). TOPMed data may be obtained by [data access request](#) in dbGaP and or through BDC. The ACC will provide technical assistance to applicants in obtaining data access for TOPMed data.
- Applicants may detail specific data sharing considerations for each non-TOPMed data set proposed for use during the training award. Data sharing is encouraged but is not part of the review criteria.

## Project Scope

The following items summarize responses to questions related to the project scope of the fellowship.

- The TOPMed Fellowship is a training award.
- All applications must be within the scope of the NHLBI's [mission](#). Heart, lung, blood or sleep disorders must be the primary focus of the analysis when proposing projects that incorporate other disorders (i.e. Alzheimer's disease or cancer).
- Preliminary data are not required for the proposal.
- The Review and Selection Criteria for the fellowship provide guidance on the expected scope of the project, mentor (sponsor) expectations and the research training plan.
- The length of the fellowship training is one year. The TOPMed ACC will provide technical support for accessing TOPMed data in dbGaP and BDC.
- The TOPMed ACC intends to offer this fellowship yearly, contingent upon NIH appropriations.
- Examples of previously funded TOPMed Fellowship projects can be found on the TOPMed website. [Funded Programs: Fellowship](#)