

Building a Multidisciplinary Pipeline of Researchers in Child Abuse and Neglect: Summer Training Institute for Early Career or Transitioning Scholars

Invitation to Apply for Competitive Trainee Award

Rationale: Child abuse and neglect is a significant public health concern in the United States and around the world. According to the most recent statistics, in fiscal year 2014, there were over three million referrals for some form of child maltreatment. The magnitude of the problem, the devastating short and long term consequences, and the importance of co-occurring contextual factors make this a challenging area of research requiring research from multiple disciplines. Despite the scope, size, and costs associated with child abuse and neglect, however, there is a dearth of scholars trained to conduct research in child abuse and neglect. As noted in the recent Institute of Medicine (2014) report by the Committee on Child Maltreatment Research, Policy, and Practice for the Next Decade, “Existing research and service system infrastructures are not sufficient for responding to this public health challenge”.

This exciting new annual summer training institute is designed to help assure a continued pipeline of researchers interested in advancing science regarding abuse and neglect. This requires an innovative, multi-disciplinary approach that can take into account the multi-determined nature of this public health problem and its multiple and cascading outcomes. Beginning in 2017, 15 competitively selected trainees will receive awards to attend a week long summer institute. Training activities of the institute will begin prior to the summer and extend beyond the on-site week-long training to include individual follow-up mentoring provided by trainers matched to participants’ interests. Institute presenters (trainers) represent diverse fields (e.g., anthropology, criminology, genetics, law, medicine, psychology, public health, and social work), methodological expertise, and cultural backgrounds. This project is funded by the National Institute of Child and Human Development (NICHD) and executed through a collaboration of two senior scholars (Drs. Melissa Jonson-Reid from Washington University and Cathy Spatz Widom of John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York).

The competitive award will fund 15 early career or transitioning scholars with backgrounds in a variety disciplines, including criminology, economics, law, neuroscience, genetics, medicine, psychology, psychiatry, public health, public policy, social work, or sociology. Applicants need not have expertise in child maltreatment but must have some training related to children’s health and development prior to the summer institute. Costs of materials, food, lodging, travel, and communication with mentors are provided as part of the award. The first summer training institute will be held in St Louis, Missouri at Washington University with subsequent years alternating between New York City and St. Louis.

Timeline and application procedures for Year One follow:

Timeline:

- October 15, 2016 - January 6, 2017: Applications accepted
- January 6, 2017: Final due date for applications
- February 15, 2017: Awardees will be notified and pre-seminar readings will be distributed.
- May 22 - May 26, 2017: 4 1/2 day seminar to be held at Washington University in St. Louis
- June, 2017: Follow-up calls with mentors
- July 15, 2017: Submission of final draft of brief research proposal (6 pages)
- August 15, 2017: Trainees receive feedback and suggestions for funding

Participant Commitment:

Trainees must be able to attend the onsite training, complete the readings prior to the seminar, and adhere to the timeline for research plans.

Eligibility:

Applicants must have completed their PhD or MD (or equivalent degree). Applicants must meet early career scientist criteria [meaning that the scholars must not yet have been a PI on any grant beyond the R03 or R21 (developmental) levels] OR be established researchers who are interested in transitioning to research on child maltreatment but lack methodological training in this area.

All participants will be required to have some training related to children's health or development to serve as a foundation for participation. However, prior training specific to child maltreatment is not needed. Participants must demonstrate an interest in pursuing research relevant to epidemiology (causes and consequences), prevention or intervention in the area of child maltreatment. Participants must also indicate how this training will advance them in their chosen careers.

For this institute, we will accept up to 15 participants with a minimum of at least four different specialties or disciplines represented. Applicants from under-represented ethnic/racial groups, persons with disabilities, or persons from disadvantaged backgrounds are especially encouraged to apply.

Application Process:

Submit these materials:

- (1) Completed application form (see below)
- (2) A 2-3 page statement of interest describing why this training will be beneficial to you, what work related to child maltreatment, if any, you have done, and a brief rationale for and discussion of a research study you hope to conduct in the future (this latter section will form the foundation for the brief proposal project);
- (3) Curriculum vitae; and
- (4) A letter from a senior researcher or administrator at your institution indicating their enthusiasm regarding the anticipated benefits of your participation and the support of the institution for any needed release time in order to participate, as no stipend will be provided.

Applications should be submitted to:

Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD
Professor and Director Brown Center for Violence and Injury
Summer Training Institute on Child Abuse and Neglect
Campus Box 1196, 1 Brookings Drive
St Louis, Mo 63130

Or electronically by e-mail to: jonsonrd@wustl.edu

Due Date: Applications must be submitted no later than Friday, January 6, 2017.

Review Process:

Applicants will be reviewed by the Summer Training Institute Co-Directors (Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD and Cathy Spatz Widom, PhD) and at least one additional institute presenter. Applications will be rated according to relevance of interest, likelihood to benefit from the training content (i.e., coming from disciplines/training programs not already benefiting from such material), promise as a researcher in this area, and strength of support letter. We will select up to 15 participants, with an aim of achieving broad diversity in discipline, topical interest and ethnic and experiential backgrounds.

Questions can be directed to:

Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD (jonsonrd@wustl.edu)

Cathy Spatz Widom, PhD (cwidom@jjay.cuny.edu)

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TRAINEE AWARD APPLICATION

Name: _____

Degree & Discipline: _____

Current University or Institution: _____

Gender: _____

Race: _____ Ethnicity: _____

Interest Area (check all that apply):

Neglect _____

Physical Abuse _____

Sexual Abuse _____

Emotional Abuse _____

Etiology _____

Epidemiology _____

Study Design _____

Ethics _____

Culture & Context _____

Genetics _____

Measurement _____

Data sources _____

Brief justification for need for support for travel and lodging: _____

Any other information that might be relevant: _____
