Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University

SUMMER MEDICAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP (SMRF) PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS and GUIDELINES 2027

I. INTRODUCTION

Medical students have the opportunity to participate in scientific research activities at a professional level in the SMRF program. Students who are selected to participate receive a stipend to work for six (6) weeks with an SOM faculty mentor on a research project. Students accepted into the program are responsible for doing the work required to complete their project with the guidance of their mentor as needed. The **stipend will be paid in two payments**. The **first half of the stipend payment will be processed around the beginning of July 2027**, and the **second half/final payment of the stipend will be processed on or around the end of July 2027**. (**Please note: Stipend payment is taxable. Rowan University will send all SMRF Program Participants a 1098-T in Jan./Feb. of 2028)**

The purpose of the summer research program is to promote and facilitate education in scientific research where students participate in research activities at a professional level.

Note: Literature reviews are not eligible for SMRF funding.

II. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Rowan-Virtua SOM Senior Associate Dean for Research and the Rowan-Virtua SOM-Research Committee administer the SMRF Program. The Research Committee and ad-hoc members will review and evaluate the SMRF research proposals. The program is competitive and it is anticipated that not all proposals will be funded. All proposals will be evaluated with respect to:

- The expected experience of the student participating in research activities
- The strength of the scientific rationale and feasibility of the stated objectives (the scope of the research project should be appropriate for a student working over a six week period)
- Clarity of the written proposal.

III. APPLICATION FORMAT AND CONTENT

Applications must:

- **be written by the student (First Person)**, with guidance from their faculty mentor
- address **all** sections
- address items in narrative format, preceded by the item number

Submission of applications will be electronic; no paper applications will be accepted. Applications exceeding the page limits will not be reviewed.

Send your application/proposal, in Adobe ".pdf" format, to somresearch@rowan.edu by no later than **Monday, January 18, 2027**

The application and guidelines can be found online at http://som.rowan.edu/oursom/pipeline/research/smrf.html

Use your Rowan credentials when logging in to access this information.

IV. CONTENT FOR APPLICATION/PROPOSAL

The narrative portion of the proposal **must be no more than 2 pages total** in length. The cover page is a Microsoft Word fillable form.

There are 6 sections of the proposal/application:

1) Cover Page: Not part of the 2 page limit
2) Introduction: 0.5 page
3) Experience of the Student: 0.5 page to 1 page
4) Expected outcome(s): 0.5 page
5) References: Not part of the 2 page limit; no page limit
6) Appendices: Not part of the 2 page limit; no page limit

The proposal must have all the sections completed, and must address all items listed below:

INTRODUCTION (0.5 page limit):

In the **student's own words**, address the following 3 items:

1. What is the problem/question that will be addressed in this summer medical research project?
2. Briefly describe the approach and the specific goals of the project. If Clinical Research, please provide the number of subjects to be recruited in the study.
3. If this summer project is part of a larger research project, briefly explain how the student's work will fit into it.

EXPERIENCE OF THE STUDENT (0.5-1.0 page limit):

Address the following 10 items:

1. What specifically will the student do?
2. What methods /tasks will the student perform?
3. How will quantitative data be analyzed?
4. What skills will the student learn?
5. How will the student's work relate to the scientific goals as outlined in the Introduction?
6. Where and when (days/hours) will the student work?
7. Who else will be involved in the project?
8. What resources are available to the student?
9. What will be the involvement of the Faculty Mentor?
10. Provide a timeline of milestones for the project.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES (0.5 page):

Address the following 3 items:

1. What will be the tangible product of the student's work?
2. What will be the next phase of the research project based on the student's work?
3. What will happen if the desired results are not achieved?

REFERENCES (no page limit):

List of bibliographic references for any citations mentioned in the Introduction and Experience of the Student sections.

APPENDIX (no page limits):

Instructions:

1. If adding an Appendix to the application, it must be a separate file (Word or PDF) and named "Appendix.___" (*.doc, *.docx, or *.pdf).
2. The Appendix must be a single merged Word or PDF file (*.doc, *.docx, or *.pdf).
3. The Appendix may include any additional documentation **necessary** to describe the project (e.g., figures, tables, survey instruments).

V. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND REQUIREMENTS

Regulatory and ethical standards apply to all research, regardless of the scope of the project.

Faculty Mentor: (Mentor must be a full time Virtua / Rowan University Faculty Member)

It is the role of the Faculty Mentor to aid and advise the student. This includes all activities and requirements related to the research project, as it pertains to student involvement. **Faculty mentors can supervise up to 5 students for this program. The Faculty Mentor will also need to help the student(s) complete the Job Request Form that is submitted to the IRT Technology Services Media Department for his/her poster printing for Research Day. This will require the Faculty Mentor to have available funds in their departmental budget to cover the cost for the poster printing.**

The investigator of record for all student projects is the Faculty Mentor. All such research requires regular reporting and is subject to audit by internal and external regulatory officials, even after the student's participation is finished. To provide best guidance to the mentee, it is recommend that the faculty mentor should review Rowan-Virtua Research Guidance and Resources at https://go.rowan.edu/rvsomresearch.

Faculty Mentor Certification:

Before submission of the application by the student, the Faculty Mentor must certify that he/she is willing to participate in the project, has available resources (*i.e.*, supplies - **including cost for poster printing,** time commitment, etc.) and has the proper facilities to carry out the project. The **Faculty Mentor must sign fill out and sign the Mentor SMRF Application.** ***Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Approvals:***

(See Section X for contact information)

- **All research involving human subjects or patient information must be approved by the IRB by May 31st.**
- **All research involving animals must be approved by the IACUC.**

Appropriate **IRB** and/or **IACUC approvals must be obtained before research projects can begin**. In most cases, this usually involves adding the student to an existing protocol. **IRB and/or IACUC applications are completed and submitted by the Faculty Mentor on behalf of the student.** Applicants (student and Faculty Mentor) who are recommended for funding will be notified about any approvals that are required and how to obtain these approvals. Procedural instructions to use when applying for IRB approval will be provided (included with Award Letter) to those individuals selected to participate in the program.

Student: You must be in Good Academic Standing in order to participate in the SMRF Program. It is the role of the Student to prepare the application in its entirety with the help of the Faculty Mentor. The application must be written and submitted by the student (First Person). Each student must have his/her own unique project. The student is required to do the research work involved with his/her project with guidance from his/her faculty mentor as needed.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Approvals:

All research involving human subjects or patient information must be approved by the IRB by May 31st.

All research involving animals must be approved by the IACUC. IRB and/or IACUC applications are to be completed and submitted by the Faculty Mentor on behalf of the student.

If (IRB/IACUC) Approvals are not received by the start date of the SMRF Program Monday, May 31, 2027, the project will be disqualified from the program and no stipend will be paid.

Students are responsible for getting a copy of the protocol approval from the Faculty Mentor or the IRB and/or IACUC offices, and must submit the copy(s) to somresearch @rowan.edu.

All projects approved for funding must be conducted as described in the original application submitted to the SOMDR. Changes to any approved project will require a one (1) page addendum to the application stating what and why changes will be made.

VI. FELLOWSHIP STIPENDS

No stipends will be processed until all appropriate IRB and/or IACUC approvals are obtained by the Faculty Mentor and copies of protocol approval(s) are submitted to the SOMDR.

VII. PROGRESS REPORTS

At the end of the research period, **a Progress Report (2-page limit) is required**. **The progress report must be submitted to the SOM Research Office by Friday, September 17, 2027.** The report should briefly state what work was performed, what data were collected, and what conclusions were drawn. **The Faculty Mentor must certify the Progress Report content before the report is submitted via e-mail by the student**.

The student must include the following statement in his/her e-mail with attached final progress report that will be sent to somresearch@rowan.edu **with a copy to his/her Faculty Mentor:**

> ***"I am copying this e-mail to my Faculty Mentor, _____, to confirm that he/she has reviewed and approved the attached final progress report."***

VIII. RESEARCH DAY

Successful completion of a project requires a poster presentation by the student during the **2028** Research Day. All posters will be evaluated by the SOM Research Committee, during which time student participants are required to be present for discussion. It is expected that the students can sufficiently explain their projects, including their involvement. All who participated significantly in the project are expected to be appropriately recognized as collaborators in the poster's authors' list.

IX. TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES

Deadline for applications	Monday, **January 18, 2027**
Notification of accepted proposals	on/around Monday, **March 26, 2027**
Mandatory IRB Info Session Webex (Clinical Projects)	**TBD**
IRB and IACUC approvals required	Monday, **May 31, 2027**
Projects begin	Monday, **May 31, 2027**
Fellowship Stipend - First half payment processed	Early **July 2027**
- Second half/final payment processed	Mid **July 2027**
Active phase of projects should be complete	around Friday, **July 9, 2027**
Progress reports due	Friday, **September 17, 2027**
Research Day	around beginning of **March 2028**

X. CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions regarding the SMRF Program please contact the Research Office: somresearch@rowan.edu or 856-566-6066

If you need help finding a mentor, please reach out to SOM-MSR@rowan.edu

Please refer to Rowan-Virtua SOM IRB and IACUC Compliance Webpage at https://research.rowan.edu/officeofresearch/compliance/index.html **if you have questions concerning IRB (SOM) or IACUC (SOM) protocols and approvals.**