

## **Biomedical Laboratory R&D Clinician Scientist Investigator (CSI) Award Program**

**Objective:** To recognize and retain outstanding clinician scientists engaged in VA research while they continue to provide high quality and timely clinical care to Veterans.

**Strategy:** To provide outstanding clinician scientists, with a current BLRD Merit award, longer term, flexible support to maintain their laboratory infrastructure, retain key scientific staff, and explore transformative advances in their fields.

**Award levels:** The Clinician Scientist Investigator (CSI) Award will allow for a Merit award extension of up to 2 additional years (for a total of 6 years) and up to 4 additional years (for a total of 8 years) for a Senior Clinician Scientist Investigator (SCSI) Award. A satisfactory non-competing review after the first 3 years of funding is required before this award can be granted. The qualifications for a CSI Award correspond roughly with those for Associate Professor rank in a School of Medicine (nationally recognized research achievements) and those for a SCSI Award correspond roughly to those for Professor (internationally recognized achievements)

### **Eligibility:**

- 1) A minimum 5/8th VA paid clinical appointment with a current BLRD Merit award at the time of submission of a competitive BLRD Merit renewal application.
- 2) A competitive BLRD Merit renewal application which has received an excellent to very good score (< 20<sup>th</sup> percentile).
- 3) An outstanding record of scholarly productivity including national peer-reviewed research funding as Principal Investigator (co-investigator is not sufficient) for at least 8 years while serving as a VA clinician.
- 4) A strong record of contribution to local and national VA research and/or clinical programs.
- 5) In good standing with their Service Chief and/or Chief of Staff.

**Nomination process:** Outstanding clinician scientists will be identified at the time of their competitive Merit renewal either by their ACOS for R&D or by the Portfolio Manager who manages their current Merit award. Each station may nominate at most 2 candidates per review cycle and each Portfolio Manager may nominate at most 1 top ranking candidate from each Merit Review panel per review cycle. The window for receipt of nomination packets opens at the time that scores are released to the investigator and closes two weeks before the funding decision meeting date for the review cycle.

**Submission of the Nomination packet:** The nomination packet must be submitted to the [VHABLRD-CSR@va.gov](mailto:VHABLRD-CSR@va.gov) mailbox by the nominee's research office as a single document. The nominee's scientific Portfolio Manager should be copied on this e-mail. The deadline for receipt of nominations package is two weeks prior to the BLRD funding decision meeting.

**Nomination packet:** The nomination packet should be a single pdf file with the following items:

- 1) A [cover sheet](#) for the CSI program. A letter of support from the ACOS for R&D outlining how the longer-term award will be used to expand the investigator's program and support the VA research program more broadly.
- 2) A complete and current curriculum vitae for the nominee.
- 3) A one-page summary of future studies that will be done if an extension is granted.

**Review and approval of nominations:** Nomination packets are reviewed at the time of funding decisions on renewal Merit awards for the review cycle and approved by the Service Director. Decisions made by the Service Director are not subject to appeal.

**Non-competing review at 3 years:** The station must submit a project modification request for a cost extension on the 3-year anniversary of the Merit award which should include: (i) a summary of progress made on the project (can be taken directly from the RPPR); (ii) an outline of specific aims and new methods for the extended funding period; (iii) a summary budget worksheet and budget justification; and (iv) current Other Support document for ALL key personnel with a statement about the present or absence of scientific, budgetary, or commitment overlap. The project modification request will be reviewed by the Portfolio Manager and approved by the Service Director.

For more information about BLRD's Clinician Scientist Award program please send an e-mail to Dr. Kimberlee Potter ([Kimberlee.potter@va.gov](mailto:Kimberlee.potter@va.gov)).