



Redefining the future of basic scientific research at Salk

Overview of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Every cure has a starting point. The Salk Institute embodies Jonas Salk's mission to dare to make dreams into reality. Its internationally renowned and award-winning scientists explore the very foundations of life, seeking new understandings in neuroscience, genetics, immunology, plant biology and more. The Institute is an independent nonprofit organization and architectural landmark: small by choice, intimate by nature and fearless in the face of any challenge. Be it cancer or Alzheimer's, aging or diabetes, Salk is where cures begin.

Funding Opportunities

Salk features four key funding opportunities available for your support:

- **Salk Innovation Grants:** Selected by Salk's scientific review committee, these support early stage research that would be unlikely to receive funding from traditional sources such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- **Salk Cancer Center Director's Fund:** This fund was established to accelerate discovery and advance priorities at the Salk Cancer Center in the form of general annual support. An NIH-designated cancer center, Salk's cancer research comprises approximately half of the Institute's overall research.
- **The Irwin Jacobs Rockstar Recruitment Fund:** This fund is used to recruit new faculty to Salk and empower them to pursue the leads that hold the most promise for ushering in the next generation of transformative breakthroughs. It is named in honor of longtime Salk Board Chair Irwin Jacobs.
- **The Salk Fellows Program:** Salk Fellows are scientists from a broad range of disciplines who come to the Institute to catalyze interdisciplinary innovation and perpetuate the collaborative spirit upon which Salk was founded. Gifts to this program support the Institute's ability to bring these experts to Salk.

Please contact Senior Director of Foundation Relations Amy Fouts-Wampler at wampler@salk.edu with any general inquiries.

Salk Innovation Grants

Building the Future of Salk Science

Purpose and Focus

The goal of the Salk Innovation Grants (SIG) program is to support innovative projects from Salk Institute faculty that are unlikely to be funded by traditional sources, such as the NIH. Projects that can transform existing research programs, taking them in new directions, are particularly encouraged. A successful award will provide seed funding to launch a new research program, generating the preliminary data needed to successfully leverage SIG funding into new support from external sources. To date, \$9.9 million have been distributed through the Salk Innovation Grant Program. These funds have been developed into research programs that have secured an additional \$70.9 million from public, private and corporate sources.

Who is Eligible

Salk faculty may apply for SIG awards either as principal investigator (PI) or can collaborate as co-PIs. Core Directors may also apply as a co-PI in collaboration with a Salk Institute faculty member.

Application and Review

Awards are made on the basis of innovation, scientific impact, and the potential for future support, with the understanding that innovative research is often risky. Ranking of proposals will be determined entirely by the scientific review committee. Any members of the review committee who have proposals under consideration must recuse themselves from that round of review. Proposals will be accepted for review twice a year and the review committee will endeavor to meet within 1 month of the proposal submission deadline. If too few applications meeting the selection criteria above are received, as determined by the review committee, then not all the available funds will be disbursed during that round of review.

Type of Support

Awards range from \$20,000-\$100,000 in direct costs. The award period is flexible (e.g., 3-12 months) with the possibility of renewal, depending in part on the successful accomplishment of predetermined milestones. Salk faculty may receive one SIG award per calendar year as PI. Alternatively, faculty and Core Directors can receive up to two SIG awards as co-PI collaborators annually.

To learn more about this program, please contact Kurt Marek, Director of Research Development, at kmarek@salk.edu.

Salk Cancer Center Director's Fund

Supporting Salk's Conquering Cancer Initiative

Purpose and Focus

The Salk's Cancer Center Director's Fund was established to accelerate discovery and advance priorities at the Salk Cancer Center in the form of general annual support.

Salk Cancer Center was established in 1970 and two years later became one of the first NCI-designated basic research cancer centers in the United States. This designation recognizes the Institute's scientific rigor across its laboratory research, scientific discoveries and therapeutic cures. The Salk Institute Cancer Center, led by Reuben Shaw, PhD, comprises half of the research at the Salk Institute, including 32 faculty members, 199 postdoctoral researchers, 41 graduate students and 101 research assistants.

Who is Eligible

This fund will support Salk Cancer Center scientists, who range from young postdocs to distinguished mid-career and senior-level researchers.

Application and Review

Funding is administered under the guidance of the Cancer Center Director and the Institute's Chief Science Officer.

Type of Support

The Director's Fund provides discretionary support for Salk's Cancer Center and will be applied where it is most needed. It supports strategic priorities, training, scientific advisory board activities and pilot research projects.

Multiple opportunities exist for support of this fund and the Salk Cancer Center researchers. To learn more, please contact Senior Director of External Relations/Cancer Center Sandy Liarakos at sliarakos@salk.edu.

The Irwin Jacobs Rockstar Recruitment Fund

Purpose and Focus

The Irwin Jacobs Rockstar Recruitment Fund was established in 2016 to honor Irwin Jacobs' commitment to improving human health and to provide the Salk Institute with the resources to recruit and retain the very best scientists—today and in the future. Rockstar support means Salk can continue to recruit and empower new faculty to pursue the leads that hold the most promise for ushering in the next generation of transformative breakthroughs.

Who is Eligible

Rockstar awardees are scientific explorers that Salk would like to recruit to join the Institute. They embody the spirit of maverick entrepreneurship and determination that Jacobs (co-founder of Qualcomm) and Jonas Salk (discoverer of the first polio vaccine and founder of the Salk Institute) relied on as they transformed their fields.

Application and Review

Open positions are posted on academic websites and candidates are encouraged to apply. An internal committee of faculty and leadership evaluate candidates, which includes providing an academic lecture. Upon recommendation of the faculty, the Institute will determine what type of recruitment package is appropriate to offer.

Type of Support

The Fund is used to create startup packages for the next generation of Salk Rockstar faculty.

For more information, please contact Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration Kim Witmer at kburns@salk.edu.

The Salk Fellows Program

Purpose and Focus

The life sciences are rapidly becoming highly interdisciplinary. Salk is interested in bringing fellows from broad disciplines to the Institute to trigger innovation and perpetuate the collaborative spirit upon which Salk was founded. Interdisciplinary interactions amongst the Fellows and faculty will substantially change the approach to science and create future intellectual leaders in the biological sciences.

Salk Fellows will be independent group leaders of postdocs, research technicians and undergraduate students. The Fellows will be appointed for an initial period of three years, which may be followed by a two-year extension subject to a positive performance review. The maximum total appointment period for Salk Fellows is five years.

Who is Eligible

Salk Fellows will be young scientists, often straight out of a PhD or MD program, and selected from a variety of disciplines ranging from biology to physics, mathematics to engineering, statistics to computational biology and expertise in novel technologies.

Application and Review

Successful candidates will propose research that is not simply an extension of their graduate work but builds on their previous expertise in unique and interesting ways. The work should be exciting and have a combination of originality and risk, two factors that often lower the chances of obtaining support through traditional channels.

Type of Support

Fellows are given the space, financial resources and support needed to be independent group leaders and researchers. A Salk faculty member will meet with the Fellow every six weeks for one-on-one discussions. In addition, the Fellow will have a mentoring committee that will meet annually to discuss the Salk Fellow's goals, progress, lab management and future research and career plans.

For more information, please contact Martin Hetzer, Vice President & Chief Science Officer, at arodriguez@salk.edu.