



Planning & Budgeting Committee | הוועדה לתכנון ולתקצוב

April 2024

Call for Proposals: Physician-Researcher Joint Appointments (University/Hospital)

Background - Israel Precision Medicine Partnership (IPMP) (2016-2022)

In January 2018, the Planning & Budgeting Committee (PBC) of the Israeli Council for Higher Education launched a research grants' program in the field of precision medicine – Israel Precision Medicine Partnership (IPMP) – to be operated by the Israel Science Foundation (ISF). The program goal was twofold: (1) to incentivize in-depth research in various fields of human health, using medical data collected by local HMOs and hospitals, thereby opening new channels for data sharing, and (2) to encourage a culture of clinical-research collaborations that are essential for the success of advanced biomedical research, and for accelerating the pace of discoveries and new therapeutic approaches.

The program was co-funded by the PBC alongside two other governmental bodies - Digital Israel and the Ministry of Health - and two philanthropic foundations - Yad Hanadiv and the Klarman Family Foundation. Over 150 principal investigators (about 65% from the research universities and 35% from health organizations), and over 260 research students and postdoctoral fellows received grants during the four cycles of the program (2018-2022) (see the program's [website](#) for more details.) The program proved a great success both academically (publications, additional grants, etc.), from a clinical perspective (e.g., implementation of novel diagnostics and imaging methods, updating protocols for prescribing antibiotics, etc.) and commercially (the creation of new startups). The large number of applications demonstrates the great interest in strengthening collaboration between researchers in academia and clinicians, and in combining the worlds of medical data, biological samples, and scientific analysis.

In light of the above, the PBC decided, in conjunction with the aforementioned philanthropic foundations, to launch a new flagship initiative – MAVRI – for the promotion of human oriented advanced biomedical research. Alongside a new research grants' scheme at the ISF (see the [ISF's website](#) for details), the MAVRI program includes investments in human capital to help encourage clinicians to engage more significantly in scientific research, of which this Call for Proposals is part.

Program Overview

1. The Physician-Researcher Joint Appointments Program will include up to five submission cycles, from 2024 to 2028, via which Israeli public universities can win financial support for hiring physician-researchers who have demonstrated outstanding research abilities, and who are interested in combining a high-level research career with significant clinical work in hospitals. The goal of the joint appointment (at least 50% clinician position, and at least 50% tenured or tenure-track faculty position at a university) is to promote clinicians'

collaboration with academia, and to increase the number of physician-researchers as part of a general effort to enhance and expand high-quality and long-standing biomedical research activity in Israel.

2. The Call for Proposals is open to Israeli public research universities for submitting candidates. The submitting university must commit to employ the candidate at the level of at least 50% tenured or tenure-track faculty position for at least five years. Each public research university may submit up to two candidates per submission cycle.
3. The candidate must be a physician who completed residency, and is employed at the level of at least 50% position at a hospital. Candidates must have training and/or significant proven experience as a principal investigator (e.g., publications, grants). The submission of candidacy is contingent upon the candidate's pursuing "the standard academic path" (and not the clinical path), and the candidate's recruitment as a tenured/tenure-track faculty at the university.
4. Financial support for the employment of the Physician-Researcher in a joint appointment will include:
 - a. A research grant of NIS 250,000 per year for three years, with the possibility of extension for another two years (subject to an in-depth assessment of achievements at the end of the first three years).
 - b. A one-time equipment grant that can be used for upgrading an existing laboratory or for establishing a new laboratory, up to a maximum of NIS 2.5 million. The procured equipment/laboratory will be situated at the hospital or at another site approved by the Evaluation Committee.
5. The Evaluation Committee will be nominated by the PBC, and the evaluation of candidates will be conducted according to criteria of research excellence.

Submission Guidelines

Candidates must be submitted by the university's Rector/VP for Research and not individually.

The following documents are required for submission:

1. The list of candidates. The University Rector/VP for Research may rank the candidates according to the university's preferences, but the evaluation committee will not be bound to this ranking in its decisions.
2. The candidate's application dossier (all documents should be in non-scanned PDF format, one dossier only per candidate).
3. For each candidate:
 - 3.1 An application letter signed by the candidate, including a commitment to adhere to the conditions of the program.
 - 3.2 A letter signed by the University Rector/VP for Research that explains the university's considerations in submitting the candidate and confirms the university's commitment to employ the candidate in accordance with the program described above.
 - 3.3 A letter signed by the hospital's director that includes a statement of the hospital's willingness to employ the candidate in the position of Physician-Researcher and to permit him at least 50% reserved time for research, as well as details about the planned location of the research lab.

- 3.4 The candidate's curriculum vitae (up to two pages, including contact information and information on the candidate's academic education, participation in conferences, scholarships/grants/prizes, not including publications).
- 3.5 A list of publications, including a distinction between articles published/accepted for publication, and articles under review. Please include links to articles where possible.
- 3.6 A research plan (up to five pages including diagrams and graphs, not including bibliography), and an abstract (up to 450 words), as well as details regarding the proposed location of the laboratory/equipment to be procured using the one-time equipment grant (as described in section 4b above).
- 3.7 Two or three letters of recommendation signed by senior faculty members and senior physicians in the candidate's field (no more than two pages each). The requests for recommendations will be made by the University Rector/VP for Research/Dean, or relevant department head, and not by the candidate her/himself. The recommendations will be specifically for this program; recommendations for other grants or scholarships, general evaluations, recommendations for appointments or promotions, or recommendations for any other purpose, will not be accepted. The recommendations cannot all be from the same academic institution. In addition, the submission should include a short background description of each referee's academic activity, the name of the institution where s/he teaches or conducts research, and a short description of the connection between the referee and the candidate.

For additional information, please contact Ms. Shira Efrat: shirae@che.org.il

Submission deadline for the 2024 cycle: 24.6.2024