

Clinical Research Graduate Program - FAQ

Fall 2009

Dear Candidate:

Thank you for your interest in the Clinical Research Graduate Program at the Tufts University Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences. As of August 15, 2009, we are accepting applications for admission for the graduate program beginning in July 2010. For detailed information about the Clinical Research Graduate Program, including application information, visit the Sackler web site: <http://sackler.tufts.edu/Admissions/Apply-to-Degree-Programs/MS-in-Clinical-Research.aspx>.

We also encourage you to review the responses to **Frequently Asked Questions** below, which may address questions you might have about the Clinical Research Graduate Program's application process, structure, eligibility requirements, and costs. If, after careful review of this information, you have further questions or require additional information, please contact Nina Bonnoyer, Clinical Research Education Coordinator, Tufts CTSI, at nbonnoyer@tuftsmedicalcenter.org.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I apply for the Clinical Research Graduate Program?

You must submit your application through Sackler's online application system called EMBARK. The link to the online application is located in the left navigation bar in the "[apply online box](#)" on the Sackler Admissions web page. When you have completed all of the requirements through EMBARK, Sackler will inform the Clinical Research Graduate Program of your completed application and interest in the CR Program. In addition to Sackler's requirements, the CR Graduate Program will request a copy of your current CV and relevant diplomas.

Q: How do the Clinical Research Graduate Program, the Postdoctoral Fellowships in Clinical Care Research (NRSA), and the Tufts CTSI Certificate Program in Clinical Research relate?

Prospective students may elect to apply for the Clinical Research Graduate Program at the Tufts University Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences as a traditional, self-paid, tuition-based master's degree program. The Institute for Clinical Research and Health Policy Studies (ICRHPS), the Tufts Medical Center home of the Program's teaching faculty and mentors, also sponsors a limited number of Post Doctoral Fellows. These highly competitive fellowships include full tuition for master-level study in the Clinical Research Graduate Program, annual stipends, research and travel funds, and assigned ICRHPS office space. ICRHPS' post doctoral fellowship opportunities vary by candidate eligibility, required activities, and stipend amount, but all require full-time enrollment in the Clinical Research Graduate Program at the Tufts University Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences. Finally, the Tufts CTSI Certificate Program in Clinical Research is designed to provide a basic foundation in clinical research for physicians, and other doctorally-trained clinicians who are unable to devote two or more years of full-time study to obtain an MS or PhD degree. The Certificate Program is designed to be compatible with a part-time commitment for one academic year. It is intended for fellows in training and for mid-career clinicians who are considering a career change and want to strengthen their clinical research skills. The Certificate Program is based on

the MS/ PhD Graduate Training Program in Clinical Research. Click [here](#) for the Certificate Program in Clinical Research brochure or go to www.tuftsctsi.org.

Q: I am interested in the Clinical Research Graduate Program but do not want to do a fellowship. May I apply for admission to the Graduate Program only?

Yes, students may apply for admission into the Clinical Research Graduate Program only. Students admitted into the Program without fellowship support do not receive stipends and are direct billed for the full tuition cost of the program.

Q: What is the duration of the program?

The MS degree is structured as a two-year full-time commitment. The program calendar runs July to May in Year 1 and September to May in Year 2.

Q: Do I have to write a thesis for the MS?

Yes, all students must undertake independent clinical research and submit a final thesis in order to graduate with a MS in Clinical Research.

Q: I am interested in the Clinical Research Graduate Program but do not want to write a thesis. Is there a Certificate Program?

Yes, there is a Certificate Program which is offered as a one year commitment. Click [here](#) for the Certificate Program in Clinical Research brochure or go to www.tuftsctsi.org.

Q: Does the Clinical Research Graduate Program offer online courses?

Some of the courses for the Clinical Research Program have Distance Learning options; however, the program is not offered as an online only degree program.

Q: Is it possible to take courses without applying for admission to the MS program?

Individuals who have not been admitted to a Sackler School degree program may take PhD or Master's courses as Special or non-matriculated students. There is no limit to the number of courses Special Students may take; however, those who are subsequently admitted to a Sackler School degree program may only count two Sackler courses that were taken toward their degree. Thus, it is recommended that those interested in seeking a degree apply for admission and matriculate before registering for a third course. <http://sackler.tufts.edu/Admissions/Apply-to-Non-Degree-Programs/Special-Students.aspx>

Q: I have or plan to apply for my own fellowship or career development award; may I use it to enroll in the Clinical Research Graduate Program?

Yes, past students have included individuals with NIH Mentored Career Awards (KL2); NIH/Fogarty Clinical Research Training Scholars Program awards; non-US government fellowships; and awards from private foundations and professional associations.

Q: What are the tuition rates for the Clinical Research Graduate Program?

For current full-time tuition and per course tuition, please go to <http://sackler.tufts.edu/Admissions/Financing-Your-Education.aspx>.

Q: Am I eligible for admission into the Clinical Research Program?

Eligible candidates are individuals who are already trained in the medical and health sciences. The Program primarily seeks fully trained physicians, but welcomes other individuals with clinical degrees (e.g. DDS, PharmD, DVM, etc.) or individuals with PhDs in health services fields who seek further preparation to pursue a clinical research career.

Q: Do I have to be currently working in a clinical setting in order to apply?

No, however, the most successful candidates intend to pursue careers as independent investigators in clinical research and are able to demonstrate commitment to this goal in their application. The Program employs the AAMC Task Force on Clinical Research/AAMC/NIH definition of clinical research.

Clinical research is a component of medical and health research intended to produce knowledge essential for understanding human disease, preventing and treating illness, and promoting health. Clinical research embraces a continuum of studies involving interaction with patients, diagnostic clinical materials or data, or populations, in any of these categories: disease mechanisms; translational research; clinical knowledge, detection, diagnosis, and natural history of disease; therapeutic interventions including clinical trials; prevention and health promotion; behavioral research; health services research; epidemiology; and community-based and managed care-based research. This broad and inclusive definition of clinical research, first developed by the Clinical Research Summit, a convening of representative stakeholders from across the U.S. health care system, is responsive to dynamic changes that are taking place within the biomedical and health sciences and in the organization and financing of health care. The support and conduct of this research enable advancements across diverse fields of science to be applied to human health and may well transform the practice of medicine and the delivery of health care in the next century.

Q: Can I apply to the Clinical Research Graduate Program if I have completed my coursework and thesis, but have not yet received my doctoral degree?

No. The Clinical Research Program does not accept applications from candidates who do not have doctoral degrees or terminal professional degrees (e.g., MBBS) in the case of international candidates.

Q: Must I submit GRE scores with my application?

No. The Clinical Research Graduate Program does not require GRE scores.

Q: I have a copy of my transcripts; can I just send a copy?

No. A complete application to the Clinical Research Graduate Program requires official transcripts sent directly from your alma mater to the Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences.

Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate study are required. Transcripts should be mailed directly from the institution to the Sackler School Dean's Office. However, transcripts may also be sent by a student in an official, signed and sealed envelope from the University Registrar's Office. Photocopied transcripts, faxed transcripts, and student copies of transcripts are not acceptable. If your official transcript is in a language other than English, you will need to have the transcript translated before we can determine if you meet the admission requirement.

Q: Do I have to come to Boston to interview?

All fellowship candidates must be available for in-person interviews. Candidate interviews will take place January 2010 to March 2010.

Q: What are the application deadlines?

The Tufts University Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences application deadline has been changed to December 15th. **The Clinical Research Graduate Program application and fellowship application are one in the same**; candidates seeking fellowship support should state so in their application essay, and if warranted, make a case for their qualifications to receive the fellowship.

Clinical Research Graduate Program Application Deadlines for 2010

Opportunity	Deadline	Start Date
Postdoctoral Fellowships in Clinical Care Research (NRSA) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Full-time position- U.S. Citizenship or Permanent Residency Status Required	December 15, 2009	July 2010
Clinical Research Graduate Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Self-pay Tuition- No fellowship stipend or other financial support- May be part-time	December 15, 2009	July 2010

For International Candidates

Q: Must I submit TOEFL with my application?

Applicants who are not native speakers of English must demonstrate an adequate command of the English language. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores or other evidence of English proficiency are required. The Tufts University Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences requires a minimum TOEFL score of 550 points on the written exam, 213 on the computerized exam, or 79-80 on the internet-based exam.

Q: If I just plan on taking classes as a non-matriculated student, would I be eligible for a student visa?

No. Student Visa eligibility criteria include full-time enrollment in a degree program.

Q: Must I be a U.S. Citizen or have Permanent Resident status to enroll in the Graduate Program?

No. For more information about student visas for Tufts University students, see The Tufts Office for International Affairs web site at: <http://www.tufts.edu/iao/>. Please note that Student Visa eligibility criteria include full-time enrollment in a degree program.

Q: Must I be a U.S. Citizen or have Permanent Resident status to receive fellowship support?

Yes, at the present time, US citizenship or Permanent Resident status is a requirement for all available fellowships.

Q: Does the Program accept students with medical degrees from a non-US institution?

Yes.

Q: Is ECFMG Certification required?

No. Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification is not required. The most competitive post doctoral candidates, however, have completed clinical training and/or work experience in U.S. based medical or health services institutions.