

Houston Methodist boasts a robust support base for our graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, supporting some 375 research trainees with over 600 faculty. These faculty operate as mentors for our graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in the Houston Methodist Academic Institute (HMAI). The institute boasts \$174 million dollars in research and education endowment. As of 2018, this investment fostered 5,218 collaborations in 74 countries, 1,360 research projects, and 1,279 peer-reviewed publications. In support of the institute, Houston Methodist also established the Houston Methodist Education Institute (HMEI), which serves different types of learning and cultivation for a multi-disciplinary approach to innovation.

An important part of the HMEI is the Office of Graduate Studies and Trainee Affairs (OGSTA) supports and cultivates the academic and translational research environment for all trainees at Houston Methodist. We are dedicated to career and professional development, with an emphasis on collaboration, cultural diversity, and events that enhance learning and innovation.

OGSTA – Individual Development Plan

The Individual Development Plan document (IDP) is a tool that trainees can use to set goals, track their success, and pioneer their professional growth while training at Houston Methodist. Its primary purpose is to help trainees reach short and long-term career goals, as well as strengthen their current performance by providing a structured approach.

IDP's demonstrate intentional learning that is aligned with specific competencies needed in your field as well as mission, goals and objectives of their department. With goal setting at its heart, a professional development plan organizes our trainee's ideas into a cohesive plan with defined timeframes and expected results. The OGSTA IDP form is structured in such a way that will prompt you to identify learning activities that are experiential, social and workshop-focused so that your development is well rounded. As a mandatory process for our joint programs, it is also highly encouraged that all trainees use this tool as a recourse for success. Trainees and mentors decide on how frequent the IDP is reviewed and evaluated however it serves as a communication tool to encourage open dialogue about expectations and objectives.

Professional & Career Development

While providing a purposeful foundation of intentional learning, we also offer various career and professional development courses, as well as a support environment for all trainees. Many of our resources are led by the Methodist Association for Postdoctoral and Trainee Affairs, a trainee-led body of postdoctoral fellows and graduate students that represent the trainee body as key stakeholders in education initiatives.

The officer board sets an annual calendar of resources to our trainees. They lead many activities, such as an annual symposium where leading speakers in translational

research are brought in to speak, and all trainees are invited to share their research with the institution. MAPTA also offers bi-annual scientific writing workshops to international trainees who need alternative means of pursuing funding, as well as any trainee who needs assistance in their scientific writing.

The Office of Graduate Studies also has a partnership with the Postdoctoral Association of the Texas Medical Center, a multi-institution collaboration of postdoctoral trainees within the largest medical complex in the world. They provide professional development workshops, including resume and CV building, team building in mentor-mentee relationships, offering career panels of people from multiple fields, including academic, consulting, diagnostics, and start-up, and resources on how to network, negotiate, and collaborate amongst their peers in their institutional environment.

The Methodist Association for Postdoctoral and Trainee Affairs

The Methodist Association of Postdoctoral and Trainee Affairs (MAPTA) was established to provide career and professional development, networking opportunities, and research development for all trainees at the Houston Methodist Research Institute. The organization has several series that host thematic workshops and seminars, such as:

- The Career & Professional Development Series: Focused on networking, branding, scientific writing, resume/CV workshops (with one-on-one feedback) giving effective scientific presentations,
- The Postdoctoral Affairs Series: Focused specifically on postdoctoral development, applying for postdoctoral awards, salary negotiation, mentorship, and transitioning into faculty positions.
- The International Affairs Series: Focused on providing our international graduate students and postdocs research and administrative resources.
- The Cultural Exchange Series: Focused on providing cross-cultural education through social environments to provide trainee collaboration and community.

Development of our trainees is tracked through attendance, surveys. In addition to workshops, we offer a certification with Texas A&M University that gives our trainees a chance to take a free course, the Responsible Conduct of Research, a course that is required by the National Institutes of Health for many grant and fellowship applications. Although interdisciplinary networking can be achieved through our workshops, we also promote an environment that cultivates inter-institutional collaboration, and to this end, we co-sponsor events with institutions within the Texas Medical Center as well as sitting on the Texas Medical Student Affairs Council. This council offers collaborations and

shared opportunities for our trainees here at Houston Methodist Research Institute. Development does not stop at workshops and networking events but continues with professional exposure. Apart of our development philosophy is having our Trainees attend conferences in their discipline as well as present their publications.

Travel awards are granted to trainees that attend development workshops as well as trainees that showcase their publications at our Summer Science Symposium, an event that also serves as a trainee appreciation ceremony. Together, workshops, networking, and trainee events create a bi-weekly opportunity for trainees to engage in professional and career development.

Educational & Professional Networking

In addition to the Trainee Association, the Office of Education also works to best ensure that our trainees are kept aware and up-to-date on the latest translational research, we regularly offer seminars and host conferences so that trainees not only have exposure to cutting edge research, they also get to be kept up to date on the latest clinical developments. Additionally, we also have an affiliate membership with the National Postdoctoral Association, allowing every postdoctoral trainee additional professional and career development, as well as networking opportunities. The Office of Education has many opportunities for upper predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees to gain mentorship roles, as we often have visiting students as well as an annual summer

internship that allows our trainees to mentor undergraduates and visitors in innovating and directing research projects. The Office of Education also offers the opportunity for collaboration with other departments, including the Office of Academic Development,

the Office of Faculty Development, and the Office of Research Integrity. Additionally, we have national and international partnerships, including: Weill Cornell University (New York), Texas A&M University, Swansea University (United Kingdom), Monterey Tech (Mexico), and Xiangya School of Medicine (China). We are proud to offer many opportunities for education, enhancement, and collaboration beyond pure research outputs.