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Entrepreneur Postdoctoral Fellows Program

The more than 48,000 postdoctoral researchers at United States institutions are at the forefront of new discoveries, but few have an opportunity to develop the entrepreneurial skills necessary to move their innovations from the lab to the market. With the aim of cultivating entrepreneurs from among the postdoctoral community, the Kauffman Foundation's Entrepreneur Postdoctoral Fellows program will educate and train scientist-founders who will create the high-growth technology companies of tomorrow.

[Application Form](#) ▶

"The critical role that scientists play in our economy is compromised because faculty, graduate students and postdoctoral researchers do not have a base level understanding of the commercialization process," said Lesa Mitchell, vice president of the Kauffman Foundation's Advancing Innovation initiative. "This Fellowship will propel selected researchers to recognize and advance their own innovations, which also will bring enormous benefits to society."

In 2009, twelve of the nation's top scientific postdoctoral researchers will be chosen to participate in a one-year program to learn how to evaluate their research for commercial potential and the process to take promising research forward to commercialization. Each Fellow will have a



[View a video of entrepreneurs from PureTech Ventures, NeoGuide Systems, Baxano, StemCor Systems, and De Novo Ventures sharing their experiences in balancing academia, scientific or clinical research, and entrepreneurship](#) ▶

[Entrepreneurship](#)
business mentor, a customized internship experience and intensive entrepreneurship workshops at the Kauffman Foundation, where they will network and learn from each other and from entrepreneurship experts.

By focusing on a subset of postdocs with entrepreneurial aspirations, the Foundation's Postdoctoral Fellowship will empower postdoctoral researchers to take their ideas forward.

Fellows Program Menu

[Application Preview \(PDF\)](#)

[Application Form](#)

[Program Elements](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Deadlines and Schedule](#)

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[Entrepreneurship](#)

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Fellowship Program Elements

The Kauffman Postdoctoral Fellows will receive education, mentoring, and real-world experiences to increase their potential to successfully found a company. The following elements comprise the year-long program:

- **Key advisors/mentors.** In addition to their specific expertise, the advisors and mentors will open up their networks to the postdoc Fellow:
 - Academic advisor—mentors the Fellow on matters beyond research efforts, such as translational research, entrepreneurship, navigating the university, licensing, industry consulting, intellectual property, and other policies required to take a technology forward.
 - Business mentor—an experienced business person, either in venture capital, angel investor, serial entrepreneur, or leadership role in an existing company (such as a vice president of R&D or vice president of business development).
- **Educational objectives.** Using research from their particular field, Fellows will learn how to evaluate early-stage ideas for commercial potential and how to determine viable commercialization pathways. Fellows will meet several entrepreneurs and other distinguished faculty during the year and will learn the fundamental skills around starting and running a company.
 - Entrepreneurship is a multi-disciplinary endeavor, and each Fellow will be required to leverage resources outside his or her home department and academic institution. The Fellow will engage in resources such as courses and programs in the business school or the law school and events in the community such as special interest networking groups and entrepreneurship workshops.
 - The Foundation will arrange for each Fellow to have an industry

internship experience during the Fellowship year. Internships will be customized around each Fellow's interests, objectives, and regional resources and may occur at a venture capital firm, a startup or large company, or other organization as appropriate. Internships will vary in duration as appropriate to each situation, but all will provide the Fellow with real-world business experiences.

For more information, contact us at postdocs@kauffman.org.

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2009-10 Fellowship Deadlines and Schedule

Note: you will be able to save a partially completed application. We strongly encourage each applicant to review the entire application before applying to determine candidacy.

May 1, 2009-Application deadline

May 15, 2009-Deadline for applicant's Academic Advisor submission

June 2009-Finalist candidates are notified

July 2009-Finalist candidates will be required to travel to the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City, Mo., for a day of interviews. Date to be determined. See Frequently Asked Questions for more info about candidate status notification.

Fall 2009-Fellowship kick-off event at the Kauffman Foundation. See FAQs for more info about the kick-off event.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How can I apply for the Kauffman Postdoctoral Fellowship?

All applications must be submitted through our online application. No paper applications will be accepted.

Does the candidate need to have a Ph.D. or M.D.?

Yes. The candidate must have received either a Ph.D or M.D. and be in a postdoctoral research position by the start of the Fellowship (fall 2009) to be eligible. Recent doctoral degree (less than one year) recipients may be less competitive. We encourage candidates who have at least one year of postdoctoral research experience to apply.

Are postdocs in postdoctoral positions at universities outside of the U.S. eligible for this fellowship?

No. Only postdoctoral researchers (U.S. citizens, residents, and all others legally in the U.S.) at U.S. institutions are eligible.

Will the Kauffman Foundation sponsor my visa?

No. Visa sponsorship should be arranged through the candidate's institution.

What is the Kauffman Postdoctoral Fellowship award?

Each Fellow will receive a salary stipend and benefits for a one-year period, beginning with the program launch in fall 2009. Compensation will be based on the Postdoctoral Researcher Salary Guidelines and benefits policies of the Fellow's home institution. Upon approval, the Fellow will also receive a travel and conference stipend to attend a business or entrepreneurship conference.

Does the award include overhead or indirect costs for the applicant's institution?

No. Kauffman Foundation policy does not permit funding overhead or indirect costs.

Are there limits to how the Fellowship award may be utilized?

Yes. Fellowship funding cannot be used to support the work of graduate students and/or research assistants, as well as other activities directly related

to the Fellows' academic research.

What if I want to include confidential information in my application?

Don't. Under no circumstances should you submit any confidential information as part of your application. When answering questions related to your research, for research that has not been published or patented, use non-confidential language. Your institution's technology transfer/licensing office can advise you more specifically.

Who will select the Fellows?

The Kauffman Foundation has assembled a distinguished group of advisors who have a range of entrepreneurial expertise and experiences across industry sectors and academic disciplines, who are doctoral degree recipients and have been/are founders and entrepreneurs.

How will applicants be notified?

Applicants selected as finalists will be notified of their status in June. Finalist candidates will travel to the Kauffman Foundation for a day of interviews in July. The Foundation will cover the costs of travel and accommodations. Offer letters will be sent to the top 12 finalists late July/early August, and finalists ranked 13 through 16 will be notified of their waitlist status. The final 12 Kauffman Postdoctoral Fellows will attend a four- to five-day kick-off event at the Foundation in the fall. The Kauffman Postdoctoral Fellowship Web page will be updated as various dates are determined.

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