

General Principles for the Prospective Mentor

A. Program overview

The American Society of Hematology (ASH) created the Minority Recruitment Initiative in 2003 to increase the number of underrepresented minorities in hematology. MMSAP is a part of this initiative, and is designed to introduce minority medical students to both hematology and hematology research. The program has grown since its inception as a summer research experience typically between the first and second years of medical school to a more flexible program with three options:

The summer research experience is an opportunity for medical students completing their first or second year of medical school to conduct an 8 –12-week hematology research project under the guidance of an ASH member. Most applicants for MMSAP summer are first year medical students. This is because the summer between the first and second years of medical school is typically the last significant opportunity to dedicate a summer break to a research experience.

B. Connecting with potential mentees

As a potential mentor in the MMSAP, it is important in this competitive application process that reviewers get a strong sense that you and your prospective mentee have directly connected with each other, either in person or by phone, and that you have had follow-up discussions of the proposed research project. Your involvement is critical in both helping the student develop and conduct a hypothesis-based research project and in providing them with an intellectually stimulating hematology research experience. Students are expected to develop self-contained research projects that can be completed within the allotted time for the research experience (Eight-to-12 weeks for summer/flex applicants or within one (1) year for yearlong applicants.) Research proposals should be written in the student's own words. It is important that the applicant understand the project to a sufficient degree that they are able to write up the project in their own words in a way that is convincing, and have an understanding of the hypothesis as well as the methods proposed to test it. If the project involves a clinical trial, biospecimens, or other activities that require IRB approval or approval by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee or similar regulatory body, it is important that the approvals be obtained in advance of the start date of the project. The date of approval needs to be clearly indicated in the application. In addition to helping the student develop their research project and supervising them in the lab, you will be expected to guide them in preparing their oral presentation to be delivered at the American Society of Hematology annual meeting in the December that follows the completion of their research project.

C. Assisting the applicant in development of their proposal – what criteria do the reviewers use to score applications?

1. Research (Academic Potential)

- a. Is this a well written proposal with a clearly defined role for the student?
- b. Can the project be completed within the allotted time for the research experience? (8-12 weeks for summer/flex applicants or within one year for year-long applicants.) If not, will there be preliminary results available for the student to present at the Promoting Minorities in Hematology event during the ASH annual meeting?
- c. Is this a significant problem in hematology and will the student's participation in this project potentially lead to further interest in hematology for the student?

2. Mentor's NIH Biosketch

- a. Does the mentor have a sustained record of NIH grant support or support from relevant scientific grant awarding agencies?
- b. Does the mentor have relevant publications in competitive journals?
- c. Is the mentor's biosketch included? If both a junior and senior mentor will be supervising the student, are biosketches for both mentors included?

