



The Center for Diversity in Public Health Leadership Training

Dr. James A. Ferguson Emerging Infectious Diseases RISE Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions

Fellowship Description and Activities

1. What is the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

The Dr. James A. Ferguson Emerging Infectious Diseases Research Initiatives for Student Enhancement (RISE) Fellowship is up to a ten-week summer program funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The goal of the fellowship is to provide educational and professional development opportunities for under-resourced and underrepresented graduate-level scholars interested in infectious diseases, public health, mental health, maternal and child health or health disparities research. The overarching goal of the Ferguson RISE Fellowship is to promote diversity among future public health research leaders. Fellows may also gain clinical experience and develop leadership skills.

2. What are the site locations for the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

The Ferguson RISE Fellowship is located at two sites: the CDC in Atlanta, GA and Kennedy Krieger Institute at Baltimore, MD. In your application, we request that you specify at which site you prefer to attend the fellowship this summer. Fellowship activities that involved fellows at both sites occur in-person in Baltimore, MD with fellows at the CDC participating virtually. We use rich, interactive learning designed to integrate the in-person and virtual learning context to create interpersonal and collaborative connections among fellows across sites. Research activities and mentorship occur in-person at both sites. During the last week of the program, fellows at the Baltimore, MD site travel to Atlanta, GA and attend the CDC Showcase and Expo with fellows on-site at the CDC.

3. What research experiences are available to graduate fellows in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

Fellows are paired with research mentors who support their development of an independent research project. These research projects may be in infectious diseases, public health, mental health, or health disparities research. We seek to match fellows with research mentors that broadly share their research interests. Examples of research projects that fellows have completed can be found at the locations below:

- [2019 Ferguson Fellows' Presentations](#)
- [2018 Ferguson Fellows' Presentations](#)

Eligibility

4. Who is eligible for the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

Individuals eligible to apply are:

- Actively enrolled as a full-time graduate student in a medical, dental, pharmacy, veterinary, public health, allied health, or social sciences degree program during the entire summer program.
- Able to demonstrate a GPA of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 (or equivalent grading on a Pass/Fail scale)
- Willing to commit to the length of the Ferguson RISE Fellowship
- Designated as a U.S. Citizen, U.S. Nationals, or Permanent Resident

5. I am not an underrepresented student. Can I apply to the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

Yes, you can. All full-time graduate students, as described in question #4, are eligible for the Ferguson RISE Fellowship.

6. Can international students participate in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

No, international students (i.e., students with F1 or K1 visas) are not eligible to participate in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship.

7. I graduate before the Ferguson RISE Fellowship starts, can I apply?

No, students must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student in a medical, dental, pharmacy, veterinary, public health, allied health, or social sciences degree program during the entire summer program. For example, if you graduate during the summer, you would not be eligible, but if you graduate in December of the program year, you would be eligible.

8. Can undergraduate students participate in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

No, the Ferguson RISE Fellowship is only for enrolled, degree-seeking graduate students. If you are an undergraduate student or a recent baccalaureate degree student (within 12 months of program orientation), please consider applying to our MCHC/RISE-UP or MCH-LEARN programs.

9. Can students without health insurance apply to the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

Students without health insurance can apply to the Ferguson RISE Fellowship but will need to obtain health insurance.

Program Accommodations and Expectations

10. Do students receive a stipend for participating in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

Yes, graduate fellows receive a stipend during their participation in the summer program (visit KennedyKrieger.org/Ferguson for details).

11. Are travel and housing costs subtracted from the stipend?

No. All travel costs related to the program are covered including one to two pieces of luggage. Housing costs are covered throughout the summer program.

12. Does the program sponsor the cost of meals?

Meals are covered during Orientation Week, Wednesday Research Accountability Groups, and the CDC Showcase week.

13. Can the Ferguson RISE Fellowship provide necessary accommodations for varying ability levels?

Yes, we will provide accommodations. We are committed to supporting ADA-compliant learning environments across program activities. There is space in the application to note accommodations applicants may need to participate in the Ferguson RISE-UP Fellowship fully. Requesting accommodations will not influence the review of applications or decision-making about program acceptance.

14. Does the Ferguson RISE Fellowship count towards academic credit?

Maybe; the student's degree-granting institution determines if academic credit can be given for participating in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship.

15. How many hours per week should students dedicate to the program?

Students should expect to devote 40 hours per week to their research project and program activities.

16. Are the program dates flexible (i.e., start later; take time off to work)?

No, all students must commit to participation for the whole length of the program.

Application Details

17. Where can I apply to the Ferguson RISE Fellowship program?

The online application is available at KennedyKrieger.org/Ferguson .

18. What is the best way to answer the essay questions?

Applicants should strive to write well-organized essays that reflect on social determinants and research perspectives related to health disparities, developmental disabilities, mental health, maternal and child health, or infectious diseases. You are encouraged to use references/citations as necessary in your essays.

19. What if my graduate program is only graded on a Pass or Fail scale?

Students who have successfully passed all courses may substitute their final transcript showing these results to meet our program criteria of a 3.0 or better GPA.

20. What if my university does not provide unofficial transcripts?

Students may request an official transcript for themselves and then upload it with their application materials.

21. Who can write my recommendation letters?

References must come from two faculty at your previous or current university. The format includes a brief questionnaire and a letter of recommendation with up to 850

words that must be added to the electronic form provided to the referee. The referee should use their university email address. **The deadline for letters of recommendation is January 31.**

22. To whom should recommendation letters be addressed?

Please address recommendation letters to the “Ferguson RISE Fellowship Selection Committee”.

23. Is there a standard recommendation form to complete?

Recommendations include a brief questionnaire and recommended questions referees are asked to address within the letter of recommendation.

24. How many applicants are selected to participate in the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

The number of applicants varies from year to year. Slots are competitive.

25. When should I expect a decision letter?

Decision letters are emailed at the end of March.

26. Where can I find more information on the Ferguson RISE Fellowship?

Please visit our website, KennedyKrieger.org/Ferguson for more information on the Ferguson RISE Fellowship.

All program activities are contingent on CDC funding.

Address additional questions to: Ferguson_Fellowship@kennedykrieger.org