CATALyST LHS K12 Scholar Program Handbook

Note to readers: The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and expectations for CATALyST LHS K12 scholars and mentors. It is considered a living document and will be periodically reissued with updates. Please contact the Program Administrator, Susan Brandzel (susan.x.brandzel@kp.org) to request additional information for future versions.

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PROGRAM GOALS
The CATALyST K12 scholar program is a scientific training endeavor, funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). It is administered by Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute (KPWHRI). CATALyST is a collaborative program that includes faculty and learning opportunities based at KPWHRI, the University of Washington, Washington State University College of Medicine and the VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

CATALyST is aimed at instilling methodologic and practical knowledge about learning health system (LHS) research in early-career scientists. This goal is accomplished through didactic, interactive, observational and experimental opportunities for scholars.

CATALyST scholars are expected to be proactive learners and leaders during their tenure in the program. Scholars and their mentorship teams should feel welcome to make suggestions and requests to the program’s leadership team to maximize the relevance and impact of this concentrated time of professional development. CATALyST is intended to provide a meaningful, nourishing and ambitious learning community to scholars and other scientists interested in expanding their understanding and practice of learning health system research.

For reference while reading this handbook, the CATALyST budget year begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th of every year.

PROGRAM MATERIALS
The current versions of key CATALyST materials are located on the CATALyST website: https://www.kpwashingtonresearch.org/about-us/careers/catalyst-k12-washington-learning-health-system-scholar-program. When in need of a program form, scholars should seek the document directly from the site to avoid using an outdated version. Links to other materials such as articles of interest are also housed on the program website. If a scholar or faculty member wants a document or link added to the site, they should make a request to the Program Administrator.
REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOLARS

Minimum FTE

At the time of their application submission, scholars commit to the funding agency requirements regarding the use of their time while in the program. Specifically, CATALyST scholars are required to dedicate a minimum of 75% of their FTE to the scholar program. Scholars can commit more time to the program, but there are no additional funds available to support these efforts. Each scholar will work with their mentors to develop a curriculum and timeline that takes this expectation into consideration. Mentors and program Co-Directors will regularly check to ensure milestones are being met.

General Communication

Scholars are asked to respond to program queries in a timely and complete manner. Scholars are also asked to proactively relay anticipated absences to program leadership and mentors in advance of departure (bar unforeseen circumstances), and to make arrangements for any responsibilities needing coverage during longer outages.

Works in Progress (WIP) Meetings

CATALyST WIP meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Monday of the month. However, they are subject to change and to special additional sessions. A successful training environment requires an intellectual environment formed by a “critical mass” of excellent clinical investigators including mentors and scholars in a network of colleagues. Therefore, in person and complete attendance for scholars is required barring pre-arranged or unexpected circumstances.

The content of CATALyST WIPs is established based on the goals of the program as well as scholar and mentor input. Should a scholar want a specific topic covered at a WIP, s/he should make a request to program leadership, including, if known, subject matter experts who may be able to present at a future meeting. Scholars will present a progress update during an a WIP meeting on a quarterly basis.

Each quarter, one scholar is assigned the role of WIP Coordinator. This responsibility rotates during each scholar cohort’s tenure in the program. While most of the WIPs are held at KPWHRI, the WIP Coordinator is expected to schedule and coordinate one WIP per quarter at either the UW or the VA. Scholars based at WSU will be provided guidance about WIP coordination once they are part of a CATALyST cohort.

Coordination of the WIPs includes arranging for presentations, composing and circulating an agenda at least one week in advance of the event that includes times associated with the agenda and specific goals the scholars have requested the speaker address, ensuring technologic support is available in meeting rooms away from KPWHRI, tracking action items emerging from each meeting and thanking presenters by email or note after the WIP.

WIP sessions are intended to be highly interactive. Scholars’ engagement at WIPs will be taken into consideration as part of our annual evaluation. Scholars will practice multidisciplinary skills by providing unique perspectives on their own research and that of their peers, and by working cohesively to
improve one another’s research. This process enables real-world application of research principles that develops proficiency in lead investigator competencies within a translational setting.

Annual Symposium

The Annual CATALyST Symposium is a one-day event hosted by KPWHRI and intended to provide a deeper dive into the execution of LHS research. All scholars are required to attend the annual CATALyST symposium in its entirety. The Symposium agenda is designed to include opportunities to hear LHS-related presentations from and have interactions with researchers and stakeholders. Scholars may also be asked to read or provide preparatory materials for the Symposium, make presentations or facilitate discussion sessions and report outs. Program leadership will provide ample advance notice to scholars when these responsibilities are assigned.

Individual Development Plans

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a form drafted by the scholar, with input from their mentors, in the first quarter of their stint as a CATALyST scholar. The IDP template can be found on the CATALyST website. The IDP is intended to serve as a road map for the scholar to navigate the completion of their goals both while in the program. It includes key goals, milestones and the link between the seven core LHS competencies (see Appendix A) and scholar plans. The IDP is considered a living documented and will evolve during the course of a scholar’s tenure in the program.

Program leadership may request and review IDPs throughout the year.

Research Fund Management

Each CATALyST scholar is allotted $25,000 annually (+8% in indirects) to support their learning and research. Scholars are strongly encouraged to strategically use these funds to help secure independent funding. These funds can be used for myriad opportunities, including, but not limited to:

- Course tuition
- Conference travel & attendance
- Data collection
- Transcription services
- Analytic and design support
- Participant incentives
- Specialized software relevant to research goals

At the onset of each budget year, a budget containing these funds will be established for each scholar either at their home institution or at the institution where their research will be taking place. To use these funds, scholars must complete and submit the Request for CATALyST Research Funds Application Form for each activity. The CATALyST Research Fund Committee will review requests and determine approval. No expenses can be incurred until the scholar has received formal approval for their request. Requests ≤$1,000 will be reviewed by a sub-set of the committee. Requests >$1,000 will be reviewed by the full committee. Scholars should plan for a minimum of five business days in turnaround time for full committee reviews.
On a quarterly basis, scholars should meet with the Program Administrator or their designated budget manager to review their balance. If a scholar anticipates that they will not use all of their funds during a given budget year, they must notify the CATALyST Program Administrator no less than two months before the end of the budget year to discuss whether a request for carryforward to the sponsor should be made.

**IRB Approval**

All CATALyST scholar data collection activities deemed to be human subjects must be IRB-approved before initiation. Scholars should work with their mentors to determine which IRB(s) which activities require review and approval and which IRBs should be engaged. IRB submissions and approvals should be included in scholar milestone tracking.

**Working with Mentors**

Scholars are encouraged to take a strong leadership role with their mentorship teams. They are responsible for keeping their mentor teams informed about their decision-making and progress. They must schedule mentor meetings on a regular basis, including meetings with their full committee at least twice annually. Scholars should keep minutes from their mentoring team meetings to document major decisions and action items and be prepared to provide minutes and/or updates to program leadership upon request.

Toward the end of each year, scholars will also be asked to complete a structured summary of their mentoring committee meetings, approved by the primary mentor, to report to the program leadership on their progress.

**Activity Tracking**

Scholars are asked to use the activity tracking template available on the CATALyST website to track their activities while in the K12 program to allow them, and the program as a whole, to demonstrate relevant, goal-oriented productivity. This tracking should include classes and courses, lectures given and attended, key meetings with stakeholders, report development and delivery, manuscript development, submission and acceptance, grant application development, submission and acceptance, and any other activity indicative of program-related learning or output.

**Annual Progress Reporting**

The CATALyST program is responsible for submitting the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) on an annual basis in early July. This report includes the tracking of scholar milestones and budgets. Starting in 2020, scholars will be asked to compose a progress update summarizing their milestones during the given budget year. The Program Administrator will initiate this process and provide guidance and deadlines to scholars.
Grant Applications

While each scholar works at a different pace, the two-year mark for scholars in the CATALyST program has a distinct target: the submission of a large (typically R01) grant application that will capitalize on the skills learned during their tenure in the program and that will support their subsequent LHS research.

Grant Support Acknowledgement and Publication Requirements

All published reports, both formal and informal, should acknowledge grant support with the following footnote: "This project was supported by grant number K12HS026369 from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality."

When a manuscript resulting from this grant is accepted for publication, the scholar must promptly notify the CATALyST Program Administrator so that the project officer can be alerted about its acceptance and the date it is scheduled to be published.

EXPECTATIONS FOR MENTORS

Primary Mentor Role

Each primary CATALyST mentor will be offered $5,000 (total) in compensation per year to offset the time required for carrying out this role. The Program Administrator will facilitate the budget necessary for this compensation and work with the mentors to ensure the provision of these funds.

Primary mentors are responsible for direct supervision, training, and scholar support. The role of a CATALyST scholar’s primary mentor is essential to the scholar’s success. Therefore, it is a responsibility to be taken seriously and in compliance with program requirements, including prompt responsiveness, regular meetings, WIP, symposium and retreat attendance, progress tracking, troubleshooting, role modeling and provision of learning opportunities.

Primary mentors are expected to attend all WIPs and the CATALyST annual Symposium, bar unforeseen circumstances. Anticipated absences should be rare and should be communicated to the scholar and CATALyST Program Administrator in advance.

Primary mentors are expected to be advocates for their scholars. However, mentors should always let scholars lead communications and other initiatives to foster their sense of ownership and responsibility. Mentors should feel welcome to make requests or suggestions to the Program Administrator and Co-Directors about ways in which the scholars’ experiences and learning can be optimized.

If a primary mentor is unable to fulfill their obligations to the scholar, they must arrange for a meeting with the CATALyST Co-Directors and Program Administrators to develop an alternative plan. It is the responsibility of the mentor and the scholar to ensure a good working relationship with open communication.
Primary mentors are expected to meet on a regular basis with their scholar and to participate in the full mentorship team meetings, which should occur in person at least twice a year. Each full committee meeting will be summarized in minutes (by the scholar) with an action plan for the scholar, which will be circulated to all committee members and the scholar for comment and approval. Once approved, scholars are to submit these minutes to the Program Directors and Program Administrator.

Secondary Mentor Role

Secondary mentors are typically subject matter experts whose research and experience are highly relevant to a scholar’s CATALyST research and professional goals. Although not the lead mentor, a secondary mentor has some of the same responsibilities as the primary, including being responsive to scholar requests for meetings, expert opinion, reviews and introductions. When possible, secondary scholars should attend CATALyST WIPs, particularly when the scholar is presenting their progress update, which occurs on a quarterly basis. Secondary mentors will be asked to participate in program and scholar evaluations and will be evaluated on an annual basis for their contribution to the scholar’s development.

Annual evaluations will also identify any unmet mentoring needs by the primary mentor or the mentorship team. Program leadership will work with the scholars to address mentorship issues with a plan for remediation and, if warranted, potential replacement.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

CATALyST Evaluation Philosophy

The CATALyST program espouses a learning mindset, meaning every aspect of the program will be subject to review to ensure the program and those associated with it are providing the optimal experience for scholars and that scholars are maximally and appropriately using the program for their professional development.

Program Evaluation Plan

A program evaluation team, headed by Dr. Cara Lewis and including Leah Tuzzio, MPH, both from KPWHRI, is responsible for leading performance data collection and interpretation for the program. Program leadership works in partnership with Dr. Lewis and Ms. Tuzzio to design and execute evaluation exercises, but also ensure that they maintain a separation from this process so as not to bias it. Output from the evaluation will be furnished on individual and group bases, as appropriate.

The CATALyST leadership team is responsible for holding meetings with mentors and scholars on an annual basis, at minimum, to discuss review general program expectations, plans and timelines. At the end of their tenure in CATALyST, each scholar will be provided with an opportunity to give comprehensive feedback about the program.
Annual Mentoring Review

On at least an annual basis, scholars will be asked to provide a review of their mentors. As of July 2019, this review system was still in development. It will be updated in future issues of this handbook.

Performance Remediation Procedure

If a problem is identified with a scholar’s progress or performance, one or both Program Directors will meet with the scholar’s mentoring committee to discuss the issues that are affecting the scholar’s performance, and subsequently generate and provide written recommendations for improvement to the scholar. Such recommendations may include revising or refocusing the research project, identifying additional resources to help complete research projects, additional coursework, tutoring or coaching, or potentially a change in mentors or mentoring committee. If progress does not improve by a subsequent review in 3 months, the CATALyST Program Directors may elect not to renew scholar support.

Conflict and Grievance Procedure

If a scholar encounters a conflict or has a grievance as part of the CATALyST program, their first step should be to attempt a direct resolution with the person or people with whom the problem occurs. If resolution is not achieved, or the scholar feels uncomfortable acting directly, they should request mediation from the program Co-Directors and Program Administrator. CATALyST scholars also have access to the UW ITHS confidential research consultation service (https://www.iths.org/investigators/services/bioethics/), to help scholars manage these conflicts. If a solution remains unreachable, the scholar will document in writing the specific problem, supporting facts, and a summary of previous attempts at resolution. Should more formal mediation be required, the UW Office of the Ombudsman will be engaged as needed. The program Co-Directors will seek advice from the Program Steering Committee, and, if indicated, from Office of the Ombudsman, before making a written decision or forming an adjudicating ad hoc committee.

THIRD YEAR SCHOLAR OPPORTUNITY

CATALyST scholar positions all begin as two years in duration. There are a limited number of opportunities for a third year. At approximately the 18 month point of a scholar cohort’s second year, scholars will be notified if a third-year opportunity is available. Scholars interested in being considered for this third year will be required to submit an application which will be reviewed and decided on by a set of members of the CATALyST Admissions Committee. Given that this third year is not available to everyone in the program, scholars should aim to meet all program milestones within the initial two years.

Questions about this handbook should be address to the CATALyST Program Administrator

V1.0

July 5, 2019
### LHS core competencies: knowledge and skill in the proposed program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>WIP &amp; career development sessions</th>
<th>Mentored research experience</th>
<th>Formal course work</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>System Science</strong>: how health systems operate &amp; how to apply systems theory to research &amp; implementation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Research Questions &amp; Standards of Scientific Evidence</strong>: ask meaningful questions &amp; evaluate the usefulness of scientific evidence &amp; insights</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Research Methods</strong>: conduct research within the context of complex health systems using appropriate study designs &amp; analytic methods to assess outcomes of interest to health systems stakeholders</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Informatics</strong>: know how to use information systems to conduct LHS research &amp; improve patient &amp; health system outcomes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Ethics of Research &amp; Implementation in Health Systems</strong>: ensure that research &amp; quality improvement done in healthcare settings adheres to the highest ethical standards</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Improvement &amp; Implementation Science</strong>: reduce avoidable variation in process &amp; outcomes &amp; ensure the systematic uptake of research findings in a health system</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>Engagement, Leadership, &amp; Research Management</strong>: engage stakeholders in all aspects of the research process &amp; effectively lead &amp; manage LHS research teams &amp; projects</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

✓ = primary means of providing competency; R = reinforcing means of providing competence