

The RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholars

Lessons Learned During the 2012 Selection Process

Prepared by

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Nurse Faculty Scholars



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholars

National Advisory Committee

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Nemours Eminent Scholar, Chair and Professor, University of Florida School of Medicine
- **Thomas Chapman, EdD, MPH, FACHE**
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- **Patricia Grady, PhD, RN, FAAN**
Director, National Institute of Nursing Research , National Institutes of Health
- **Divina Grossman, PhD, RN, FAAN**
Chancellor , University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholars

National Advisory Committee (continued)

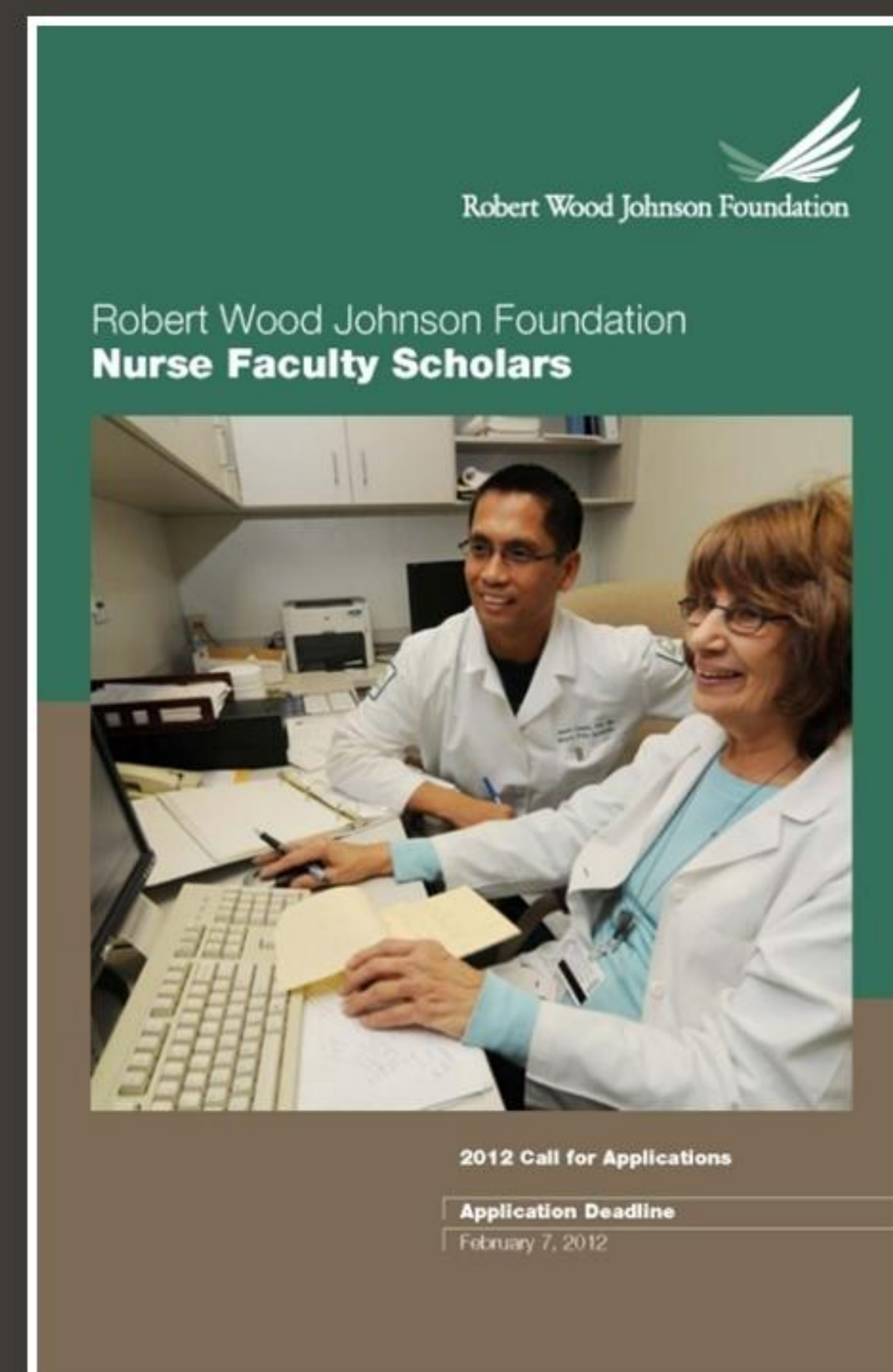
- **Courtney Lyder, ND, RN, FAAN**
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- **Beverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN**
Chief Executive Officer, National League for Nursing
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Associate Vice Chancellor for University Outreach, Professional Development and Distance Education, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
- **Nancy Fugate Woods, PhD, RN, FAAN**
Professor and Dean Emeritus, University of Washington School of Nursing

RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholars - Purpose

- Develop the next generation of national leaders in academic nursing through career development awards for outstanding junior nursing faculty.
- Strengthen the academic productivity & overall excellence of nursing schools by providing mentorship, leadership training, salary & research support to young faculty

NFS Key Dates and Deadlines

- **October 20, 2011** – Call for proposals launched
- **February 7, 2012** – Proposals Deadline
- **February 15 – March 23, 2012** – Proposals reviewed and scored by the NFS National Advisory Committee (NAC)
- **April 11, 2012** – Notification of semi-finalists
- **June 4-6, 2012** – NAC semi-finalist interviews
- **June 15, 2012** – Notification of finalists
- **September 1, 2012** – Appointments begin



The poster features the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation logo at the top right. Below it, the text reads "Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nurse Faculty Scholars". A central photograph shows two healthcare professionals, a man and a woman, both in white lab coats, sitting at a desk with a computer. The woman is pointing at the screen while the man looks on. At the bottom right of the poster, there is a box containing the text "2012 Call for Applications" and "Application Deadline February 7, 2012".

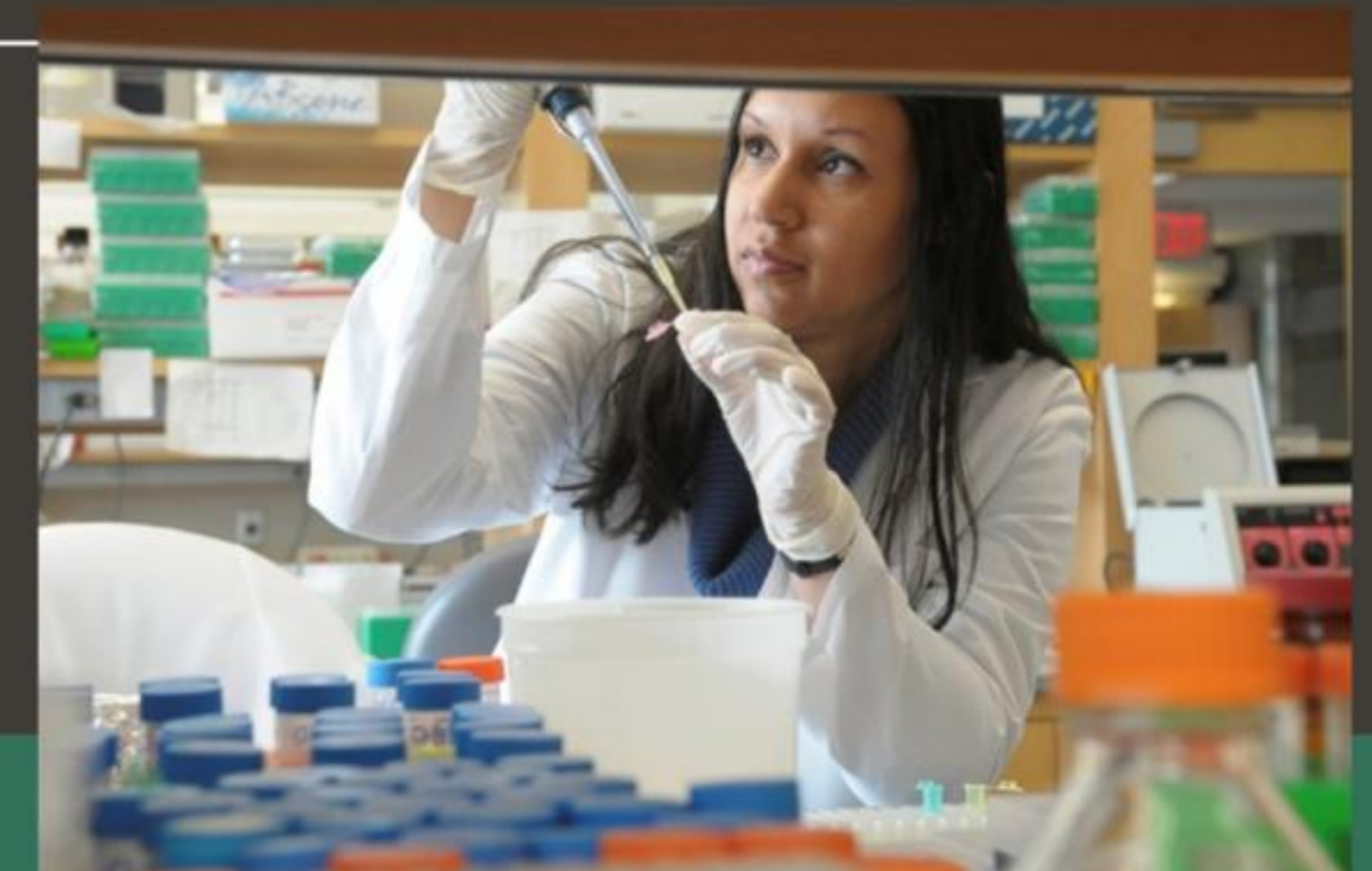
Eligibility Criteria

- Registered nurse with a research doctorate in nursing or a related discipline.
- Junior faculty member in an accredited school of nursing in an academic position that could lead to tenure.
 - Junior faculty are defined as those who have been in a faculty position after completing their doctorate for at least two and no more than five years at the start of the program – anyone wanting to check eligibility for next year, please email: rwjfnfs@jhu.edu
 - Usually assistant professors
- Identify at least one senior leader in the school of nursing as an primary nursing mentor for academic career planning & access to organizations, programs & colleagues helpful to the candidate's work as a Nurse Faculty Scholar.

Eligibility Criteria

- Identify at least one senior researcher in the university with similar or complementary research interests.
 - Strongly encouraged to be from a discipline outside of nursing
- Candidates must be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. or territories at the time of application
- Candidates must not receive support from other research fellowships/traineeships at time they begin the program
- We embrace racial, ethnic and gender diversity and encourage applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds.

NOTE: Candidates can apply more than once.



Selection Criteria

- Evidence of potential for & strong (**long-term**) commitment to a full career as an academic nurse leader, with the capacity to achieve rank of full professor
- Evidence that nominating institution & its senior leadership are committed to supporting the candidate's academic career and activities during the program
- Evidence of availability & commitment of qualified mentors & academic resources, including space as appropriate, at the candidate's institution
- Evidence of potential to become a national leader in scholarly focus area.



Selection Criteria

- Evidence of potential to become a national leader in scholarly focus area.
- Evidence of commitment to teaching excellence.
- Evidence of commitment to racial, ethnic, gender and cultural diversity in nursing
- Merit of candidate's proposed research/scholarly plan
- Potential of the proposed research and scholarship area to serve as a foundation for the candidates academic career and contribution to: nursing science, interdisciplinary knowledge in a focus area; and improvement of health and health care in the U.S.



Submission Statistics – 2012

- 42 proposals submitted
- 41 proposals reviewed by the National Advisory Committee
- 20 semi-finalists selected for interview
- 12 finalists selected

Disqualification for Technical Compliance or Ineligibility

Eligibility:

- Applicant had less than 2 years or greater than 5 years in a tenure track, faculty position after having completed their doctorate as of the start of the program
- Be sure to call or write if any questions about eligibility

Technical Compliance:

- No applicants in 2011 were disqualified on the basis of not meeting technical compliance (e.g., not meeting page limits, letter missing)

Non-Advancement to Semi-Finalist

- **Weaknesses in Proposal**

- Incongruence in proposal; disjointed research
- Sample size too small with limited proposal scope/vision vs. research problem too ambitious
- Protocol/s complicated and undeliverable
- Weaknesses in Methodology
 - Challenges and barriers to conducting research and how will address not fully articulated
 - Poor articulation of methodology – e.g. failure to measure key concepts
- Insufficient case as to the potential of this study as part of a program of research to improve health and healthcare in the United States (including direct clinical relevance of lab research)
 - Occasionally research was very limited – proposed study was more a pilot than substantive study

Non-Advancement to Semi-Finalist

- **Weaknesses in Proposal (continued)**
 - Insufficient specificity about research questions, methods, and data analysis
 - Unclear direction for research; no connection to one's program of research
 - Insufficient logical connections among parts of proposal (e.g. questions/hypotheses and analysis)

Non-Advancement to Semi-Finalist

- **Mentorship**

- Letters did not elaborate a clear commitment and/or detailed plan for mentorship
- Lack of academic leadership demonstrated on biosketch of primary mentor
- Poor match of research mentor to scholar – does not have to be exact but if not immediately apparent from biosketch, areas of match need to be articulated in letter and/or applicant's narrative
- Lack of research leadership of research mentor as demonstrated by publications, grantsmanship, and other benchmarks

Non-Advancement to Semi-Finalist

- **Lack of Academic Leadership Potential**
 - Lack of or limited publications on biosketch (dissertation not published)
 - Lack of prior small research funding and completion to publication
 - Limited research education and/or experience
 - Teaching goals non-specific; not well-described commitment to teaching
 - Unilateral focus on one element of leadership in academic nursing (e.g. research without attention to excellence in teaching)

Non-Advancement to Semi-Finalist

- **Diversity**

- Application did not address sufficiently commitment to racial, ethnic, gender and cultural diversity in nursing
 - Can be through committee membership, relevant organizational leadership, recruitment or retention activities of students &/or faculty, mentorship of minority faculty and/or students, &/or strong teaching in areas of culture, health disparities

- **General Issues**

- Unclear institutional commitment
- Not following guidelines of NIH biosketch in terms of publications
- Missing documents such as a letter from a mentor or mentor CV

Non-Advancement to Finalist – Interview Issues

- **Weaknesses in Proposal**

- Responses overly general - not concise, not providing specifics bearing on the question raised
- Poor articulation of plans for use of RWJF NFS resources for leadership development across domains in academic nursing
- Problems answering questions about the research plan (e.g. unable to articulate methodological challenges and potential solutions)
- Not having in-depth knowledge of background literature in one's research area
- Problems in articulating rationale for design choices
- Lack of appreciation for prior nursing research in one's area of expertise
- Nothing new or innovative in research – will become problem in securing future funding
- Insufficient scientific rationale for intervention
- Lack of understanding of evidence needed to translate research to policy

Non-Advancement to Finalist – Interview Issues

- **Mentorship**

- Non- research intensive environment without sufficient commitment from mentors
- Mentors accomplished, but with limited experience in research focus
- Mentors not well-funded or have no large funding experience
- Mentors do not have active or currently funded research in proposal focus

Non-Advancement to Finalist – Interview Issues

- **Lack of Academic Leadership Potential**
 - Unilateral focus on research to the exclusion of teaching or other aspects of academic leadership
 - Sounding as though anxious to “buy out of teaching” or get enough research funding so that not teaching anymore to any extent
 - Lack of teaching experience, especially without clear plan to become more active in teaching undergraduates as well as graduates
 - Lack of vision about career trajectory and goals in terms of
 - Academic leadership broadly – no clear passion about full spectrum of academic role
 - Where program of research is headed to improve health and health care in the U.S.

Non-Advancement to Finalist – Interview Issues

- **Diversity**

- Poor articulation of commitment and sensitivity to diversity issues that will shape the academic nursing role in the 21st century
 - Lack of understanding of student body and community context
 - Only concern for one's own ethnic/racial group
 - Student and faculty recruitment and retention
 - Attention to diversity and cultural issues in research
 - Diversity and cultural issues in teaching
 - Lack of understanding of health inequities and role of social determinants of health
- Not recognizing heterogeneity within racial groups
- Failing to recognize that faculty in one's institution needs diversity

Non-Advancement to Finalist – Interview Issues

- **Biosketch**

- Not in NIH format
- Putting chapters and books under peer-reviewed section, putting in-prep manuscripts under publications – a no-no

Tips from Successful Candidates and Their Institutions

- **Early Nomination**

- Candidates identified early so there as ample time to work with mentor for develop and polish application
- Candidate may benefit from technical assistance during preparation of the proposal
- Candidates are able to participate in December web conferences

- **Internal Support for Proposal Development**

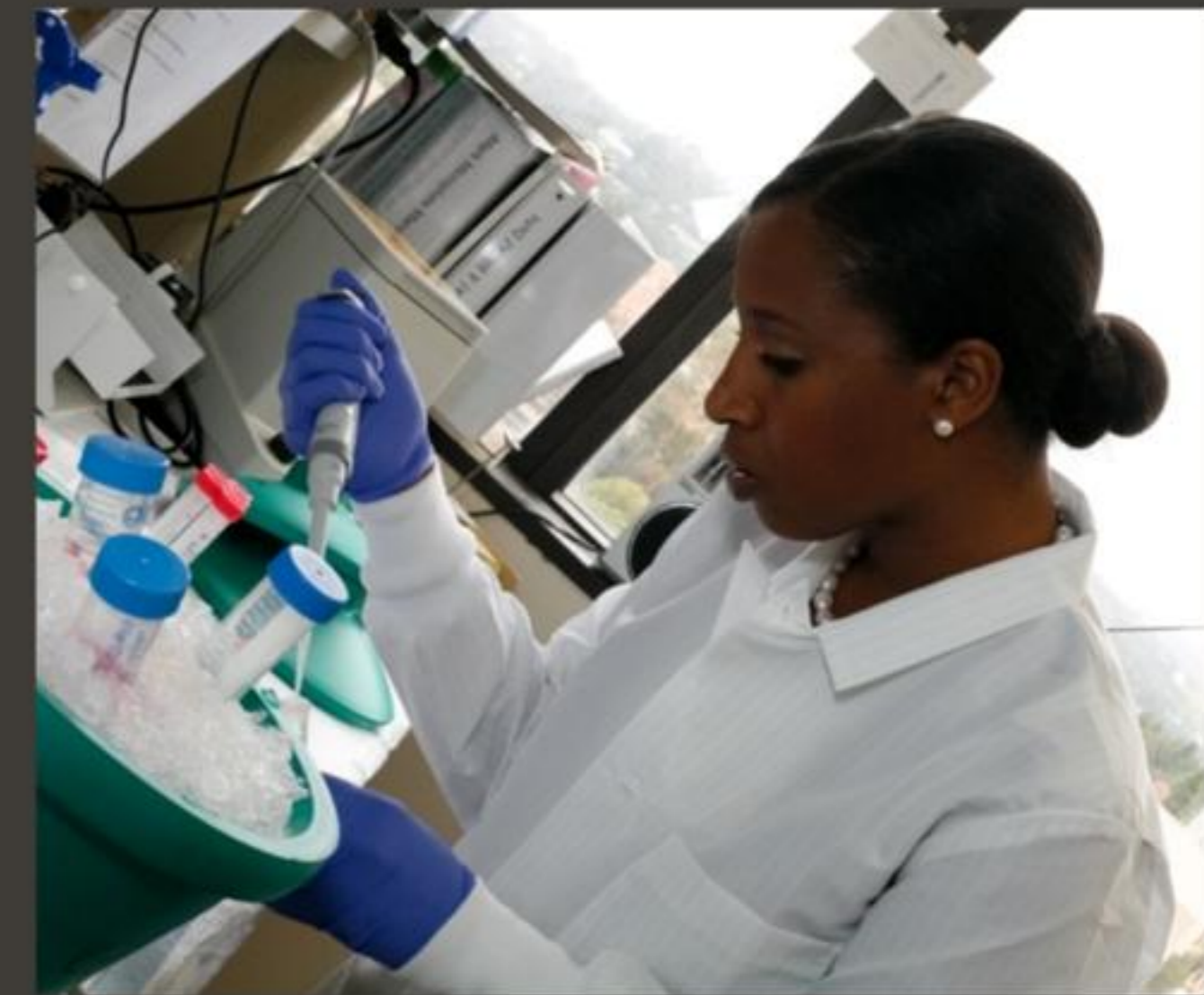
- Candidates and primary mentors benefit from an internal review process for feedback
- Candidates draw on mentoring relationship early, and show evidence of successful mentoring relationships



Tips from Successful Candidates and Their Institutions

- **Choosing the Right Mentor**

- Draw on mentoring relationship while developing proposal
- Clearly articulate role and specifics of how mentee will be mentored (e.g. frequency of meetings, proposed outcomes)
- Choosing mentor who will “stretch you,” beyond your dissertation
- Get help from dean and primary mentor to choose an appropriate research mentor at your university
- Research mentor funding and publications important
- Letter of references from previous mentor that speaks to your progression; evidence that you use mentoring relationships well



Tips from Successful Candidates and Their Institutions

- **Articulating one's career path and potential for leadership**
 - Articulating professional goals for the three-year scholarship and the future, making sure it reflects selection criteria
 - Obtaining input from one's Dean and mentors on professional goals for teaching, research, and service so these are addressed in letters of support
 - Identify and provide evidence of one's personal leadership strength and evidence of leadership potential



Tips from Successful Candidates and Their Institutions

- **Support for Proposal Development**

- Writing and re-writing, then revisiting to assess whether articulation of one's career trajectory is clear; then revising with input of mentors
- Proposals address the “So what?” question
- Well-rounded in scholarship, practice, leadership, and service activities
- Ability to connect dots between proposed research and impact on health of Americans, nursing science, interdisciplinary research, translating from bench to bedside practice with ability to show improved health outcomes
- Solid research plan with societal value; well articulated and has relevance for health care and policy
- Look at RWJF website for purposes of foundation, priority areas, etc. – remember they fund you!
- Look at www.rwjfnursefaculty.com – see what we brag about – our scholars, achievements, what our program might do for you

Tips from Successful Candidates and Their Institutions

- **Interviewing**

- Obtaining input from those who have gone through this or a similar process
- Conducting mock interview with a interdisciplinary team
- Pay attention to presentation guidelines
- Role play to build confidence
- Dress professionally
- Be poised and relaxed



Other Tips from the National Program Office

- **Application Process**

- Review selection and eligibility criteria closely. Please verify with the National Program Office if you are not sure.
- Provide ample guidance to proposed mentors and others writing letters to meet selection criteria.
- Start early to avoid delays with online application technology.
- Leave enough time to carefully check to make sure application meets technical requirements and all elements are included; double check after submitting.
- Follow directions given on templates, especially in regard to uploading of PDF documents.

Other Tips from the National Program Office

- **Interview Process**

- Be prepared to discuss limitations of research proposal.
- Answer questions concisely (know when to put a period to your comments).
- Give substantive answers to questions – use examples to make a point versus generalities.
- Make sure responses are thoughtful answers to specific questions you are asked rather than rehearsed generalities.

Important Dates for 2012

- **October 27, 2012:** Launch of 2012 NFS CFP
- **February 12, 2013:** Due date for applications
- **June 17-19, 2013:** Semi-finalist interviews
- **September 1, 2013:** 2013 Grants begin

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<http://www.rwjf.org/services/>

