Simons Investigators

Request for Nominations

The Simons Foundation’s Mathematics and Physical Sciences division invites nominations for Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, and Theoretical Computer Science.

Rationale: The Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, and Theoretical Computer Science programs aims to provide a stable base of support for outstanding scientists, enabling them to undertake long-term investigations of the fundamental questions in their fields. The intent of the program is to support these scientists in their most productive years, when they are establishing creative new research directions, providing leadership to the field, and effectively mentoring junior scientists.

Level and Duration of Funding: Investigators are appointed for an initial period of five years. Renewal for an additional five years may be considered, contingent upon the evaluation of scientific impact of the Investigator. Renewal beyond the ten-year period will not be considered. Appointments will begin August 1, 2016.

An investigator will receive $100,000 per year in research support. An additional $10,000 per year will be provided to the Investigator’s department. The award will be administered through the Investigator’s institution, which will receive an additional 20 percent per year in indirect costs.

An investigator position may be interrupted and resumed for reasons that would normally justify a leave from a university, such as illness, the need to care for family members, or time off for national service. Periods of sabbatical or research leave do not count as interrupting the Investigator position. Support may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the foundation, but it is expected that termination of the grant at times other than five or ten years would occur only in very rare cases.

Allowable Expenses: The funding provided to a Simons Investigator may be used at the Investigator’s discretion to support research expenses in the following categories:

- Up to one month of summer salary and related benefits.
- Salary support and related benefits, including tuition support, for postdoctoral, graduate, or undergraduate research assistants.
- Domestic or international travel for the Investigator and the Investigator’s postdoctoral and graduate students.
- Short- or long-term visitors and/or collaborators, including travel, meals, and lodging expenses.
• Research equipment, supplies, and other expenses directly benefiting the research, including computers, computer support, and publication expenses.

Expenditures in other expense categories may be possible but must be approved in advance by the foundation. Investigator funds may not be used for sabbatical salary support or teaching relief of any kind.

Funding provided for the Investigator’s department should be used at the discretion of the department chair to provide support for seminars, visitors, refreshments, and related expenditures that benefit the research activities of the department. The department is expected to provide appropriate administrative support to the Investigator.

Unspent Funds: The foundation’s intent is that the award be administered to allow the maximum flexibility in pursuit of scientific goals. To this end, unspent funds are automatically carried over from year to year during the period of appointment, allowing for larger expenditures in some years. In exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate to pre-spend a portion of the award.

Requests for accelerated disbursal will be considered by the foundation, subject to approval by the director of the Mathematics and Physical Sciences division and to budget availability. Investigators may apply for a no-cost extension for funds unexpended at the conclusion of the appointment.

Reporting: Tentative five-year spending plans will be due from the Investigator by December 1, 2016.

A financial statement and a brief activity report, summarizing research results achieved, people supported, talks given, and papers published, will be required from the Investigator annually, due within 60 days after the end of each grant year.

There will be a comprehensive review in the fourth year, at which a detailed progress report and statement of research plans is to be presented by the Investigator. This review will determine the reappointment of the Investigator for an additional five years.

At the conclusion of the appointment, at either year five or ten, a final report is required, due within 60 days of the appointment end date.

Eligibility: To be an Investigator, a scientist must be engaged in theoretical research in mathematics, physics, or computer science, must not have previously been a Simons Investigator, and must have a primary appointment as a faculty member at an educational institution in the United States, Canada, or the United Kingdom with a Ph.D. program (note that the appointment need not be in a mathematics, physics, or computer science department). At the time of the appointment start date, an Investigator should be tenured.
The foundation reserves the right to determine eligibility, but, generally, a ‘primary appointment’ is defined as one where the Investigator is a full-time employee of an academic institution with a teaching load that is comparable to that of other faculty members in the same department. Investigators may transfer their award to a new educational institution within the United States, Canada, or United Kingdom, subject to approval from the foundation and the old and new institutions. The award will be interrupted or terminated, at the foundation’s discretion, if an Investigator takes up a primary long-term position at (i) a research institute, national laboratory, or other institution outside the United States, Canada, or United Kingdom, (ii) a for-profit organization, (iii) or accepts a major administrative responsibility that significantly reduces the time available for research.

Investigators are not eligible to hold a Simons Fellowship for the duration of the Simons Investigatorship.

Investigators are expected to attend annual meetings held at the Simons Foundation. Costs associated with attending this meeting will be covered by the foundation.

**Number of Awards:** In 2016, the foundation expects to appoint up to three Investigators in mathematics, up to seven in physics, and up to three in theoretical computer science.

**Nomination Procedure:** The foundation asks each university to submit nominations, confidentially, up to two nominees for each of the three fields. Nominees for 2016 will be submitted through an online process via proposalCENTRAL (pC) ([https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp](https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp)). The deadline to submit nomination applications is **October 28, 2015, at midnight EST**.

Nomination applications must be submitted by an institutional representative via his/her pC account in coordination with the appropriate institutional officials and policies. **Please refer to the attached “Simons Investigators Nomination Instructions for Math, Physics, and Computer Science 2016” for further information on and requirements for submitting the nominee’s nomination material.**

**Required Nomination Materials Include:**

- Nomination Letter (two-page limit) written and signed by the nominator (someone other than the nominee) explaining the distinctive scientific contributions of the nominee, focusing on scientific accomplishments of the past five years, and including discussion of a few important papers.
• The nominee’s curriculum vitae, including Ph.D. year, institution, advisor, postdoctoral institutions and advisors, positions held subsequent to award of doctorate, and the nominee’s up-to-date publication list.

• 501(c)(3) equivalency determination letter from the IRS for international institutions.

Please note: nominations submitted via email will not be considered.

The foundation expects to notify nominees of the decision by May 31, 2016.

Important Dates:

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<tr>
<th>Nomination Deadline</th>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Award Start Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 28, 2015</td>
<td>May 31, 2016</td>
<td>August 1, 2016</td>
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