
GP2 Underrepresented Populations PhD Program Description

We are inviting supervisors who identify as belonging to an underrepresented group in Parkinson's disease (PD) research to apply for funding for a trainee who is also from an underrepresented group to pursue a PhD in the genetics of PD or a related subject. Applications may be submitted with or without a potential trainee having already been identified. Overseas training (where possible) and cross-institutional collaboration with other GP2 member laboratories during the studentship is strongly recommended in order to maximize the benefit to GP2 and additional funds can be made available.

About GP2

The Global Parkinson's Genetics Program ([GP2](#)) is an ambitious project supported by the Aligning Science Across Parkinson's (ASAP) initiative and executed in partnership with The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. GP2 aims to:

- Expand understanding of the genetic architecture of PD through large genotyping and sequencing efforts in more than 200,000 individuals around the world.
- Create infrastructure to accelerate the discovery of novel disease causing mutations.
- Democratize efforts, with a significant focus on training, to create a global generation of scientists and provide opportunities for groups that are traditionally underrepresented in research.

This collaborative effort will dramatically accelerate the identification of genetic contributors to disease and establish a network of researchers who can best leverage this understanding to research, diagnose, and treat PD worldwide. To find out more, please visit www.gp2.org.

Supervisor and Trainee Specification

Supervisors must demonstrate the following:

- Experience training students to obtain a higher research degree and affiliation with an institution authorized to offer such training culminating in a degree.
- A background in PD research and preferably PD genetics.
- Commitment to collaboration and data-sharing as part of the wider GP2 project.
- Willingness for the student to gain experience at laboratories and centers in other countries as part of their training.

Secondary supervisors are allowed to be listed on a maximum of three applications. In cases where they are listed on more than one application, they are required to provide a statement of support and rank applications according to priority.

Trainees must meet the following person specifications. If a trainee has been identified, then please include their information in the application form. If a trainee has not yet been identified, then these criteria should be applied during the selection process undertaken by supervisors who are awarded funds.

- Undergraduate degree (as a minimum) in a relevant discipline
- Clear interest in developing an understanding of neurodegenerative disease genetics
- Computer literate and understands the principles of data management and analysis
- Committed to collaborative work, locally and globally
- Good written and oral communication (sufficient to present work and write a thesis)

Funding Notes

We will support the costs of a 3-year PhD studentship starting between October 2024 and May 2025. The award will cover:

- A stipend or salary for the trainee that is commensurate with the usual costs of a PhD in the country where the training will take place.
- University fees that are directly related to training (i.e. student fees).
- Limited consumables with clear justification.

The final funding decision and offer will be made by a panel of GP2 Steering Committee members in September 2024. The offer will be contingent on the trainee registering/enrolling between October 2024 and May 2025.

The GP2 Training and Networking Working Group and a panel of GP2 Steering Committee members will be involved in the review process when selecting candidates. The first payment installment will be released once the trainee has enrolled in the PhD program. The release of funds for years 2 and 3 will follow satisfactory progress outlined in an annual report.

Note: Costs for overseas travel for training and meeting attendance will be applied for separately through the GP2 Training and Networking Working Group and should not be included in this application.

FAQs

What should the proposed research focus on?

The proposed research should be directly related to the GP2 mission, which centers on expanding our genetic understanding of PD and making this knowledge globally relevant.

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from supervisors with or without an identified student who identifies as belonging to an underrepresented group in PD research.

Can the trainee be a clinician?

Yes. A trainee can be a clinician, but the time contributed to clinical work should be no more than 20% of the trainee's time.

I am a potential student but I do not have a supervisor. Can I apply?

Thank you for your interest in GP2. GP2 regional leads will be able to put you in touch with potential supervisors. Please email us at training@gp2.org.

I am a supervisor without an identified student. Can I apply?

Thank you for your interest in GP2. You can apply for this opportunity if you and the institution to which you are affiliated commit to enrolling a PhD student by May 2025 and the student meets the essential criteria above.

What is meant by overseas training and cross-institutional collaboration?

These PhD opportunities are designed to 1) increase research capacity and opportunities within a region currently underrepresented in PD research, and 2) contribute to the overarching goals of GP2. We believe that visits and collaboration with sites that are well established PD research sites and existing GP2 members will maximize the impact to all.

Who will review the application?

Applications will be screened for eligibility by the GP2 Training and Networking Working Group. Eligible applications will then go through peer review by GP2 Steering Committee members and members of other relevant working groups. The highest scoring applications will be reviewed by a decisions panel and funding decisions made.

What if I want to ask further questions about the project and training?

You are welcome to contact the GP2 Training and Networking Working Group at training@gp2.org with any queries. We can help you decide how closely your proposed project aligns with GP2 aims.

Ethical approval for research?

All studies involving patient samples will require ethical approval. Clear methods outlining how ethical approval will be achieved or has been gained should be included in the application.

What else is required to apply?

In addition to a completed online application form, a short CV or biographical sketch, a commitment from the supervisor, and their affiliated institution to enroll the prospective student by May 2025 is required.