

Director, Preclinical Translational Research Program

Company Summary: The Foundation Fighting Blindness has one clear objective: accelerating therapeutic advances for the treatments and cures of rare genetic diseases of the retina, including retinitis pigmentosa, macular degeneration, Usher syndrome, Stargardt disease and related conditions. These diseases, which affect more than 10 million Americans and millions more throughout the world, often lead to severe vision loss or complete blindness.

Working with preeminent scientists, the FFB has funded breakthroughs in gene therapy, stem cells and bionic retinas, providing a historic opportunity for a promising new era in human clinical trials. We are the largest non-governmental source of research funds for inherited retinal degenerative diseases. Over the past four decades, FFB has raised more than \$750 million to fund research studies in both academic and industry labs worldwide.

Position Summary: We are currently seeking a **Director, Preclinical Translational Research Program** to provide financial awards along with guidance from experienced industry consultants to accelerate promising projects towards IND submission for clinical trials. The grants support a wide range of technologies including small molecules, biologics, genetic and cell therapies. Under the direction of the Sr. Director, Grants & Awards Program, the Director will provide management for TRAP. **This position is based in Columbia, MD**

Primary Responsibilities:

1. Facilitate awards through the Translational Research Acceleration Program (TRAP)
2. Support a successful award applicant to develop appropriate milestones and implementation plans as well as organize and manage a project team of consultants to help ensure the project achieves its objectives
3. Perform research and analyses on program success and trends, the retinal degeneration therapeutic landscape, awardee progress and other TRAP support as needed
4. Facilitate the entire award process including:
 - a. The issuing of Requests for Proposals;
 - b. The receipt and scientific review of applications through to the approval determination;
 - c. Award of the contracts;
 - d. Organization of consultants;
 - e. Oversight of scientific progress; and
 - f. Ensure progress reports and financial statements are processed appropriately
5. Build rapport and work with the Foundations Scientific Advisory Board for the scientific review of proposals and their progress
6. Build relationships with key opinion leaders in the field
7. Responsible for maintaining awareness of the advances in preclinical and clinical research in the disease areas of interest to the Foundation, monitoring technologies that may be relevant to our interests and assisting in scientific reviews of information that may be presented by researchers and industry
8. Provide scientific support to the Foundations venture philanthropy RD Fund

9. Work directly under the guidance of the Senior Director, Grants and Awards Programs and closely with the My Retina Tracker registry staff, Executive Vice President Research, and Chief Scientific Officer to provide scientific support as necessary

Qualification Requirements The ideal candidate will offer:

- M.S. or Ph.D. in a field of science, preferably with expertise in biochemistry and genetics
- 5+ years post-doctoral or equivalent work experience, in research and/or research management with at least 3 years relevant experience in industry
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Broad scientific knowledge of small molecules, proteins, gene and cell therapies
- Experienced and knowledgeable of the FDA regulatory process for the above therapeutic approaches
- Experience in due diligence, relationship and collaboration building
- Experienced with the translational pathway from bench to clinic and the requirements for submitting an IND
- Self-motivated, with consistent on-time delivery of goals
- Able to work independently with minimal oversight
- Proficient in concise, accurate writing of scientific reports
- Assumes responsibility for producing final work products
- Able to make clear and concise verbal presentations at all scientific levels, including patient groups, Investigator meetings, and Board of Director meetings
- High level of proficiency in Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, Power Point, Project Management tools
- Experience with grants/database software and GANTT charts
- Outstanding project management skills with the ability to meet competing deadlines and manage multiple projects at once
- Exceptional interpersonal skills; judgment, trust, integrity, sensitivity, diplomacy
- Able to organize virtual meetings and webinars
- Passion for FFB mission and values
- Willingness and ability to travel
- Able to travel to conferences and trainings as needed, including overnight and weekend travel required on occasion
- PMP certification or training preferred
- Experience in the Ophthalmology field preferred
- Experience in the philanthropic or nonprofit sector preferred