Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science

Request for Nominations


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

Level and Duration of Funding: Investigators are appointed for an initial period of five years for up to $132,000 per year. Renewal for an additional five years may be considered, contingent upon the evaluation of scientific impact of the Investigator prior to the end of year five. Renewal beyond the ten-year period will not be considered. Appointments will begin August 1, 2019.

An Investigator award provides $100,000 per year in research support for the Investigator and $10,000 per year to the Investigator’s department. The Investigator’s institution 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 Support may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the foundation, but it is expected that termination of the award at times other than five or ten years would occur only in 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 per year for the Investigator.
- Salary support and related benefits, including tuition support, for postdoctoral fellows and research associates, graduate students or undergraduate research assistants.
- Domestic or international travel for the Investigator and the Investigator’s
postdoctoral fellows and research associates, graduate students or undergraduate research assistants.

- Short- or long-term visitors and collaborators, including travel, meals and lodging expenses.
- Research equipment, supplies and other expenses directly benefiting the research, including computers, computer support, publication expenses and professional membership dues.

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 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. Funds may also be used to subsidize meals for faculty, students and visitors. In addition, these funds may be used to help pay for furniture and research infrastructure, such as copiers, computer servers and computer support.

**Eligibility:** To be eligible to be nominated for an Investigator award, a scientist must be engaged in theoretical research in mathematics, physics, astrophysics or computer science and must not have previously been a Simons Investigator. He/she must have a primary appointment as a tenured faculty member at an educational institution in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom or Ireland, on a campus within these countries and the primary department affiliation must have a Ph.D. program (note that the appointment need not be in a mathematics, physics or computer science department).

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 awards to new educational institutions within the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom or Ireland, 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 (i) at a research institute, national laboratory or other institution outside the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom or Ireland or another campus of their current institution, which falls outside the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom or Ireland or (ii) at a for-profit organization; or (iii) accepts a major administrative responsibility that significantly reduces the time available for research.

Investigators are not eligible to hold a Simons Fellowship or another Simons
Investigator award for the duration of the Simons Investigator award.

Investigators are expected to attend the MPS annual meeting, held at the Simons Foundation in October of each year, to discuss their activities. Costs associated with attending this meeting will be covered by the foundation.

**Spending Rules:** With the exception of summer salary and fringe benefits for the Investigator, unspent funds are automatically carried over from year to year during the period of appointment. In exceptional circumstances, requests to reallocate funds between award years may be considered on a case-by-case basis, which must be approved in advance by the foundation.

Investigators may apply for a no-cost extension for non-PI salary and fringe benefit funds unexpended at the conclusion of the appointment. Unspent funds at the end of the award must be returned to the foundation.

**Reporting:** A financial statement and an activity report will be required within 60 days following the end of each appointment year.

**Number of Awards:** In 2019, the foundation expects to appoint up to four Investigators in Mathematics, up to five in Physics, up to two in Astrophysics and up to three in Theoretical Computer Science.

**Nomination Procedure:** The foundation asks each university to submit nominations confidentially, **up to two nominees in each** of the Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science programs.

Nominations must be submitted via proposalCENTRAL (pC) ([https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp](https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp)). The deadline to submit nominations is **October 31, 2018, at 11:59:59 p.m. EST**.

We ask that nominations for the Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science programs be treated confidentially — the nominees should not know they are being nominated, if possible.

Please refer to the “Simons Investigators Nomination Instructions for Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science 2019” for further information on submitting a nomination.

The foundation expects to notify nominees of the decision by May 31, 2019. Please note that notifications will be sent via proposalCENTRAL to the institutional official, and corresponding email address, that submitted the nomination.
Important Dates:

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<tr>
<th>Nomination Deadline</th>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Award Start Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 31, 2018</td>
<td>May 31, 2019</td>
<td>August 1, 2019</td>
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