

UWMDI International Diabetes Research Exchange Program Request for Applications

Program Overview

The UWMDI International Diabetes Research Exchange Program supports early career faculty members and trainees in pursuing short-term, high-impact visits to distinguished international partner institutions. This program is designed to foster international collaboration, accelerate research innovation, and provide exposure to cutting-edge clinical and translational diabetes research. Awardees will receive travel support to visit one of the following international partner institutions: Steno Diabetes Center in Copenhagen, Korea University, or the University of Poitiers, and engage with investigators, observe clinical programs, and explore opportunities for ongoing collaboration. Awardees will be required to present research experience at UWMDI seminar and have the opportunity to present their research to an international audience at partner institutions.

Partner Institutions

Steno Diabetes Center (Copenhagen, Denmark)

steno.dk/centres/steno-diabetes-center-copenhagen

- Growing research collaboration with investigators at the University of Washington in diabetes and its cardiovascular, kidney, and metabolic complications, including mechanistic clinical trials, tissue and biofluid multi-omics, and advanced imaging.
- Complications research program spanning diabetic kidney disease, cardiovascular disease and heart failure, retinopathy, autonomic and peripheral neuropathy, and foot disease, with an emphasis on early biomarkers of risk and individualized prevention.
- Additional program breadth in diabetes technology and automated insulin delivery, prevention and health promotion, precision medicine, and psychosocial, educational, and health services research.
- Multidisciplinary environment linking endocrinology, nephrology, cardiology, ophthalmology, neurology, radiology, pathology, and computational biology, established as a public-private partnership with the Novo Nordisk Foundation, with close ties to the University of Copenhagen and the Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for Basic Metabolic Research.
- Largest diabetes hospital in Scandinavia, caring for more than 11,000 people with diabetes, including nearly 1,000 children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes, which makes it Northern Europe's largest pediatric diabetes clinic and supports recruitment and training across the lifespan.
- Legacy of landmark randomized trials with decades of continuous follow-up, including Steno Study 1 (intensified insulin therapy and progression of complications in type 1 diabetes) and the Steno-2 trial of multifactorial intervention in type 2 diabetes with microalbuminuria, which showed benefit across renal, cardiovascular, retinal, and neuropathic endpoints and has now been followed for more than 21 years.

- Access to the Danish national health registries, linked at the individual level through the unique personal identification number, providing near-complete lifelong follow-up for cardiovascular, renal, and mortality outcomes, alongside population-based cohorts such as Inter99 with more than 20 years of follow-up.
- Ongoing deeply phenotyped prospective cohorts in type 1 and type 2 diabetes with plasma and urine multi-omics, measured GFR, arterial stiffness and autonomic testing, retinal imaging, and registry-linked long-term outcomes, together with widely used risk prediction tools such as the Steno Type 1 and Type 2 Risk Engines.

Korea University (Seoul, South Korea)

korea.edu

- Growing research collaborations with investigators at the University of Washington in diabetes, metabolism, and precision medicine, including clinical studies, multi-omics, and single-cell/spatial transcriptomics.
- Research programs spanning epidemiology, clinical cohorts, multi-omics, advanced imaging, and translational research.
- Access to the Korean Genome and Epidemiology Study (KoGES), a nationwide population-based cohort with over 25 years of longitudinal follow-up ($n \approx 10,000$), supporting research in diabetes, cardiometabolic disease, and other chronic diseases.
- Access to the KoGES Aging Study, with over 12 years of follow-up ($n \approx 2,500$), providing comprehensive phenotyping including cognition, brain MRI, sleep, and sarcopenia to support aging research.

University of Poitiers (Poitiers, France)

univ-poitiers.fr

The Clinical Investigation Centre (INSERM CIC1402) Poitiers focuses on organ function decline and cardio-renal-metabolic disease, combining clinical cohorts, physiology, and health data science.

- Diabetes, cardiovascular, and renal chronic complications; human physiology platform (hypoxia chamber, renal clearance techniques).
- Prospective cohorts: SURDIAGENE (diabetes, 20 years of follow-up) and HOPE (obesity-related hyperfiltration, 10 years of follow-up).
- Dynamic prediction of renal health trajectories from hospital and community health data.
- Multi-omics (lipidomic/metabolic) biomarkers linked to renal and cardiac MRI phenotypes.
- Cardiac rhythm analysis (Holter ECG) and cardiovascular-renal risk.
- Systems biology, bioinformatics, data science, and renal histology approaches.
- Emerging research on:
 - Cerebral and cognitive complications related to peripheral microvascular disease.
 - Adipose tissue dysfunction and its link to multi-organ complications.
 - Immuno-metabolism and its role in ageing and chronic cardiovascular-kidney-metabolic syndrome.

Eligibility

Applications are invited from early to mid-career faculty members, and trainees who meet the following criteria:

- **Eligible Positions:** Applicants must hold either a faculty or postdoctoral scholar appointment at the University of Washington. Early and mid-career faculty will be prioritized for funding, but all faculty ranks will be considered.
- **UWMDI Affiliation:** Applicants must be a core member of UW Medicine Diabetes Institute. This typically involves designation as a UWMDI member/faculty and having primary laboratory space or office located within UWMDI facilities at the South Lake Union campus. If unsure, please email us.
- **Departmental Affiliation:** Priority for funding will be for applicants that hold a primary or secondary faculty appointment within the University of Washington School of Medicine's Division of Metabolism, Endocrinology and Nutrition. This requirement ensures that the funding directly supports investigators within the core academic unit closely associated with the UWMDI's leadership and research programs.

Award Details

- \$5,000.00 to \$10,000 travel funding to support a short-term visit to one of the three partner institutions (Steno Diabetes Center in Copenhagen, Korea University in Ansan, or the University of Poitiers in France) (between February 1st, 2027 and July 31st, 2027)
- Funds may be used for airfare, lodging, and reasonable travel expenses in accordance with UW Travel Policy
- Anticipated number of awards: 5-7

Program Goals

- Establish new research collaborations with investigators at Steno Diabetes Center, Korea University, or the University of Poitiers
- Advance an existing research project through access to partner institution expertise or resources
- Lay the groundwork for future joint funding applications or publications
- Provide opportunity to deliver research presentation to an international audience

Application Instructions (1 page maximum)

The UWMDI aims for a straightforward application process to minimize the burden on applicants. Applications must adhere to the following format requirements:

- **Format Requirements:**

- **Page Limit:** Maximum one (1) single-sided page. Applications exceeding this limit will **not** be reviewed. While one page is the maximum, applicants are encouraged to aim for approximately three-quarters of a page if feasible. Bullet points recommended.
- **Font:** Arial, 11-point.
- **Spacing:** Single-spaced text.
- **Margins:** Standard margins (e.g., 0.5 to 1.0 inch on all sides).

- **Content Requirements:**

- Applicant Information: Name, title, department/division, and contact information
- Purpose of Visit: Brief description of proposed activities at the selected partner institution (Steno Diabetes Center, Korea University, or the University of Poitiers), including any identified collaborators. If applicant needs help identifying a potential collaborator at any of the partner institutions, please reach out to rkorpi@uw.edu
- Relevance to Research and Career Development: Description of how this experience will benefit the applicant's research program, clinical work, and/or career trajectory

- Expected Outcomes: Anticipated output (new collaborations, pilot data, manuscripts, grant proposals)

Submission Instructions

Please submit your application as a single PDF to: uwdi@uw.edu cc: rkorpi@uw.edu

Due Date: October 5th, 2026

For questions, please contact: Rachael Korpi rkorpi@uw.edu