



# IGNITE Program

A Funding Opportunity for Department of Medicine Fellows!

## MSCR Overview

The Master of Science in Clinical Research (MSCR) graduate degree program provides training for physician scientists in the design, analysis, and conduct of high quality clinical and translational research. More than 160 students have completed the program since its inception in 2002.

MSCR accepts medical students, residents, fellows, and junior faculty from the UCLA School of Medicine and its affiliated hospital institutions, including Harbor-UCLA, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, and Charles R. Drew University. Students have the choice of focusing their clinical research education through a **Clinical Trials/Translational Research Track**, a **Biomedical Informatics Track**, or an **Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning Track**. Degree requirements include coursework completion, independent study with a quantitative mentor, and defending a capstone project to the student's assigned committee.



## Introducing the IGNITE Program

MSCR IGNITE is a Department of Medicine (DoM) program that offers funding support for up to 4 qualified fellows per year to take the MSCR graduate program. IGNITE provides 50% fellow salary for each of the two years and covers tuition for two years. The purpose of IGNITE is to develop a pipeline of talented physician scientist clinical researchers interested in clinical research/biomedical informatics who can successfully apply for and obtain NIH funding.

## Who can Apply to IGNITE?

Fellows who are interested in developing an academic career in clinical research should apply to IGNITE. This can be a first-year fellow of a two-/three-year program or second-year fellow of a three-year program. Prospective applicants must get approval from their program director prior to applying. In addition, candidates must have a scientific mentor and feasible clinical research project to complete within the two-year MSCR program. Candidates interested should contact and schedule a meeting with Dr. Elashoff and Dr. Ranganath, prior to submitting the application.

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David A. Elashoff, PhD: [delashoff@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:delashoff@mednet.ucla.edu)

**Candidates who are not accepted into IGNITE are welcome to apply to the standard MSCR program.**

## IGNITE Application Deadlines

- January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Extended deadline for submission of application materials (must have met with Drs. Ranganath and Elashoff)
- Candidate interviews will be held throughout late January/early February.
- IGNITE review committee decisions will be finalized by the end of February.

## *IGNITE Program Requirements*

Candidates accepted into the IGNITE program will attend monthly seminar meetings in addition to the required courses. Students will complete and defend their Capstone project and develop a grant application by the end of the 2-year program.

## *Long-Term Expectations of IGNITE Graduates*

After culmination of the IGNITE program, graduates are expected to:

1. Critically evaluate the medical literature to identify unmet needs
2. Design a clinical study and compete for funding through NIH, foundations, and/or industry
3. Conduct the clinical study and analyze the data
4. Successfully publish the research in high impact journal and improve clinical practice