

To: Distribution List

From: Faculty Research Development Office
Office of the Vice President for Research

Subject: Limited Competitions: Simons Foundation *Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science*

Date: July 22, 2021

The Office of the Vice President for Research is requesting statements of interest concerning nominations for the Simons Foundation *Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science*. Within the Physics program, the foundation also invites nominations for *Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences Investigators*.

The Simons Investigators program aims to provide a stable base of support for outstanding theoretical midcareer 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. For information on the typical profile of successful nominations, please visit their website, where a list of current awardees may be found: <https://www.simonsfoundation.org/grant/simons-investigators/?tab=awardees>

In 2022, the foundation expects to appoint up to four Investigators in Mathematics, up to seven in Physics (including up to two in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences), up to two in Astrophysics and up to three in Theoretical Computer Science. A Simons Investigator is appointed for an initial period of five years. Appointments will begin August 1, 2022. An Investigator will receive research support in the amount of \$100,000 per year. An additional \$10,000 per year will be provided to the Investigator's department. The award will be administered through the Investigator's institution, which will receive an additional 20 percent per year in indirect costs. The deadline to submit nomination applications is October 20, 2021, at 11:59pm EST. Please see the attachment for further information.

Eligibility Requirements: To be eligible to be nominated for an Investigator award, a scientist must be engaged in theoretical research in mathematics, physics (or theoretical physics in life sciences), astrophysics or computer science and must not have previously been a Simons Investigator. He/she must be midcareer (typically, early-stage tenured full professors), 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, astrophysics or computer science department). A nominee must be in place at the institution submitting the nomination at the time of the appointment start date.

Eligibility Requirements — Investigator in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences: To be eligible to be nominated for an Investigator in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences award, a nominee must be a well-established, midcareer researcher who develops and applies advanced theoretical physics ideas and methods in the life sciences.

This is a limited competition. The foundation will accept up to two (2) nominations *in each* of the Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science programs (e.g., two in Mathematics, two in Physics) and up to one additional nomination in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences (e.g., three total in Physics — two for Theoretical Physics and one for Theoretical Physics in the Life Sciences).
<https://www.simonsfoundation.org/grant/simons-investigators/>

The Foundation asks that nominations be treated confidentially — the nominees should not know they are being nominated if possible.

If you are interested in nominating someone please send a statement of interest with a brief abstract identifying the applicable field (*Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science, Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences*) explaining the distinctive scientific contributions of the nominee focusing on scientific accomplishments of the past five years and including discussion of a few important papers. (maximum 1-page pdf) via e-mail to limited@unm.edu by **noon, Thursday, August 5, 2021**. Based on the e-mail responses received, the Limited Competition Management Team may announce a call for preproposals. Please distribute this notice to departments and individuals whom you believe would be interested.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact us at limited@unm.edu.

If you are affiliated with HSC, please contact Corey Ford (CFord@salud.unm.edu) or Cassandra Misenar (CMisenar@salud.unm.edu) for more information.

SIMONS FOUNDATION

Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science

Request for Nominations

The Simons Foundation's Mathematics and Physical Sciences division invites nominations for Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science. Within the Physics program, the foundation also invites nominations for Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences Investigators.

The foundation strongly encourages the nomination of scientists from underrepresented groups.

In 2022, the foundation expects to appoint up to four Investigators in Mathematics, up to seven in Physics (including up to two in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences), up to two in Astrophysics and up to three in Theoretical Computer Science.

Rationale: The Simons Investigators program aims to provide a stable base of support for outstanding theoretical/ midcareer 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: A Simons Investigator is 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 10-year period will not be considered. Appointments will begin August 1, 2022.

An Investigator will receive research support in the amount of \$100,000 per year. An additional \$10,000 per year will be provided to the Investigator's department. The Investigator's institution will receive up to an additional 20 percent per year in indirect costs.

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.

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.

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

Eligibility Requirements: To be eligible to be nominated for an Investigator award, a scientist must be engaged in theoretical research in mathematics, physics (or theoretical physics in life sciences), astrophysics or computer science and must not have previously been a Simons Investigator. He/she must be midcareer (typically, early-stage tenured full professors), 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, astrophysics or computer science department). A nominee must be in place at the institution submitting the nomination at the time of the appointment start date.

The foundation reserves the right to determine eligibility, but generally, a 'primary appointment' is defined as one where the scientist 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. A scientist cannot be nominated if he or she holds a primary long-term position 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 that falls outside the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom or Ireland, or at a for-profit organization or will hold an administrative position at the time of the appointment start date that significantly reduces the time available for research, including departmental chair or institute director.

Investigators are not eligible to hold a Simons Fellowship or another Simons Investigator award for the duration of the Simons Investigator award. Candidates from previous years are allowed to be renominated.

Eligibility Requirements — Investigator in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences: To be eligible to be nominated for an Investigator in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences award, a nominee must be a well-established, midcareer researcher who develops and applies advanced theoretical physics ideas and methods in the life sciences.

A spectrum of research areas within the life sciences will be considered ranging from cellular-level issues of organization, regulation, signaling and morphogenic dynamics to the properties of organisms and ecology, as well as neuroscience and evolution; however, preference will be given to areas in which modeling approaches are less established, and for that reason, bioinformatics- and genomics-related proposals fall outside the scope of the program. Furthermore, researchers whose primary theoretical activity is the application of existing computational platforms to fit or parametrize experimental data will not be considered in this program.

The foundation's expectation is that an Investigator in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences nominee would have a level of theoretical sophistication on par with the best practices used in theoretical condensed matter physics. The theory must eventually connect with an experiment, suggesting new questions and new classes of experiments, introducing important new concepts and explaining data, thus fostering a scientific culture of theory-experiment collaborations, which is characteristic of physics.

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. Investigators may apply for up to a 12-month 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.

Nomination Procedure: Each institution may submit up to two nominations in each of the Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science programs (e.g., two in Mathematics, two in Physics) and up to one additional nomination in Theoretical Physics in Life Sciences (e.g., three total in Physics — two for Theoretical Physics and one for Theoretical Physics in the Life Sciences).

Nominations must be submitted via proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.com/>). The deadline to submit nominations is **October 20, 2021, at 11:59:59 p.m. EDT.**

We ask that nominations 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 2022 for further information on submitting a nomination. Please note that a nomination for a Theoretical Physics in the Life Sciences

Investigator must be indicated on the title page section of the Investigators in Physics application.

The foundation expects to notify institutions of the decision by May 31, 2022. Please note that notifications will be sent to the institutional official and corresponding email address that submitted the nomination.

Please see the Simons Foundation's general [grant policies](#) for more information regarding foundation funding.

Important Dates:

Nomination Deadline	Notification	Award Start Date
October 20, 2021	May 31, 2022	August 1, 2022

Contact Information:

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Program or Administrative Questions:

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Technical Questions:

proposalCENTRAL
pcsupport@altum.com
800-875-2562

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Many of the greatest ideas and discoveries come from a diverse mix of minds, backgrounds and experiences. The Simons Foundation is committed to grantmaking that inspires and supports greater diversity and inclusiveness by cultivating a funding environment that ensures representation of all identities and differences and equitable access to information and resources for all applicants and grantees.

The Simons Foundation provides equal opportunities to all applicants for funding without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex, pregnancy, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic disposition, neurodiversity, disability, veteran status or any other protected category under federal, state and local law. The foundation also funds programs directed at supporting scientists from disadvantaged backgrounds or underrepresented groups, often working closely with professional societies and other funding agencies.