

SIMONS FOUNDATION

Mathematics & Physical Sciences

Simons Investigators

Request for Nominations

The Simons Foundation's Mathematics and Physical Sciences division invites nominations for Simons Investigators in Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science.

Rationale: The Simons Investigators in Mathematics, (Theoretical) Physics, (Theoretical) Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science 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. Renewal for an additional five years may be considered, contingent upon the evaluation of scientific impact of the Investigator. Renewal beyond the ten-year period will not be considered. Appointments will begin August 1, 2018.

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 award will be administered through the Investigator's institution, which 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 Support may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the foundation, but it is expected that termination of the award at times other than five or ten years would occur only in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 provided 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.

Spending Rules: The foundation's intent is that the award be administered to allow the maximum flexibility in pursuit of scientific goals. To this end, 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, it may be appropriate to pre-spend a portion of the award, but this must be approved in advance by the foundation.

In addition, Investigators may apply for a no-cost extension for 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, summarizing research results achieved, people supported, talks given and papers published, will be required from the Investigator and institution annually, due within 60 days after the end of each appointment year.

The foundation will conduct a review of the Investigator award prior to the end of year five to determine if the Investigator will be appointed for an additional five years. The Investigator will be evaluated on the basis of the promise of continued research activity during the renewal term year; the information in the yearly activity reports and the cumulative year-four report will be important in this decision.

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 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). At the time of the appointment start date, an Investigator must be tenured.

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 (i) takes up 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, which falls outside the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, or Ireland; (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 annual meetings, held at the Simons Foundation each fall, to discuss their activities. Costs associated with attending this meeting will be covered by the foundation.

Number of Awards: In 2018, the foundation expects to appoint up to three Investigators in mathematics, up to five in physics, up to two in astrophysics and up to two in theoretical computer science.

Nomination Procedure: The foundation asks each university to submit nominations confidentially, **up to two nominees in each of Mathematics, Physics, Astrophysics and Theoretical Computer Science programs**. Nominations must be submitted via proposalCENTRAL (pC) (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp>). The deadline to submit nomination applications is **October 31, 2017, 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.

Nomination applications must be submitted by an institutional representative via his/her pC account in coordination with the appropriate institutional officials and policies. **Please refer to the attached "Simons Investigators Nomination**

Instructions for Math, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science 2018” for further information on and requirements for submitting the nominee’s nomination material.

Required Nomination Materials include:

- Nomination Letter (two-page limit) written and signed by the nominator (someone other than the nominee) on letterhead 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. The nominator does not have to be at the nominee’s institution.
- The nominee’s curriculum vitae, including Ph.D. year, institution, advisor, postdoctoral institutions and advisors, positions held subsequent to award of doctorate, a list of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows mentored by the nominee, and the nominee’s up-to-date publication list.
- 501(c)(3) equivalency determination letter from the IRS for *international* institutions, if available. Please see the “**Simons Investigators Nomination Instructions for Math, Physics, Astrophysics and Computer Science 2018”** for further information on this requirement.

Please note: Nominations submitted via email or by the nominee will not be considered.

The foundation expects to notify nominees of the decision by May 31, 2018.

Important Dates:

Nomination Deadline	Notification	Award Start Date
October 31, 2017	May 31, 2018	August 1, 2018

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