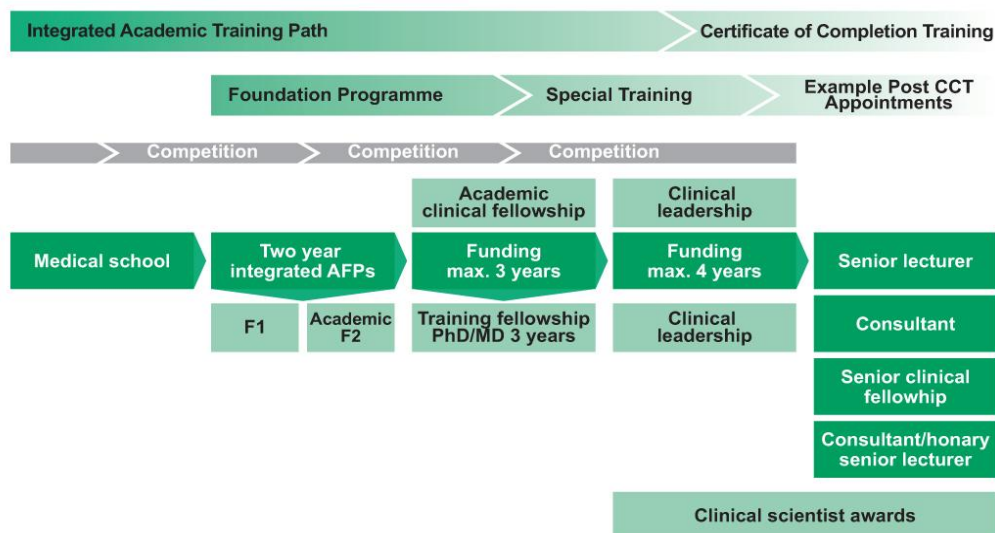


The Wellcome Trust Foundation Doctors Academic Meeting

INTRODUCTION - The Wellcome Trust Foundation Doctors Academic Meeting took place at the Wellcome Trust in London on the 31st March 2011. Distinguished speakers from the Wellcome Trust, the National Institute of Health Research and other universities were invited to talk to foundation doctors about their experiences as clinical academics, the research career structures in the UK and the research funding opportunities. The key areas / messages covered by the speakers are described below: -

- 1) Why should foundation doctors consider a career as a clinical academic?
 - It is fun
 - A stimulating career
 - Lifelong learning
 - Autonomy, including opportunities to write your own job description
 - Travel opportunities
 - The exciting people you will work with

- 2) Why is it a good time to do research now?
 - Advances in technology and new research techniques
 - Major funding organizations like the Wellcome Trust, NIHR and MRC have maintained their level of funding despite recent downturn in the economy
 - A more structured clinical research training pathway



- 3) Where can you find more information about an academic career?
 - Academics from universities and research institutes
 - Regional outreach
 - Clinical Research Champions

- The Wellcome Trust, The MRC and the NIHR
 - The Academy of Medical Sciences and the Medical Research Society
- 4) When should you do a PhD?
- 3 common entry points: 1) MB PhD, 2) soon after core training, and 3) during higher training
 - There's no right or wrong time to do a PhD, it's down to the individual
- 5) How to find the ideal PhD supervisor?
- Networking
 - Talk to current incumbent
 - Use the internet to find out more about the supervisors, their research expertise and the research institute
 - Look for a supervisor who is working in a centre of excellence and have the time to devote to your training
 - The supervisor should be approachable, available and acceptable
- 6) I want to apply for a project grant / research fellowship, what do I need to include in my proposal to ensure it will be successful?
- Relevant research questions
 - Good literature review
 - Impact of research findings
 - Sound research methods
 - Project fits with the remit of the funding organization
 - Do spell check before submitting the application
 - Meet application deadlines
 - Obtain the required signatures from the relevant people to support your application
- 7) What is an Academic Clinical Fellowship?
- Structured training programme with access to mentoring, support and training
 - 3 years (up to 4 years for GPs)
 - 25% of protected research time
 - Open to people with and without a PhD
 - Access to £1,000 bursaries
 - ACF provide the opportunity to obtain preliminary data to prepare for application of a higher fellowship

The foundation doctors academic meeting also provided an excellent opportunity for networking and I highly recommend this meeting to other foundation doctors.