The NIH Director’s Early Independence Awards provide an opportunity for exceptional junior scientists to accelerate their entry into an independent research career by forgoing the traditional post-doctoral training period. Though most newly graduated doctoral-level researchers would benefit by post-doctoral training, a small number of outstanding junior investigators would benefit instead by launching directly into an independent research career. For these select investigators, who have established a record of scientific innovation and research productivity and who have demonstrated unusual leadership, drive, and maturity, post-doctoral training would unnecessarily delay their entry into performing independent research. The NIH Director’s Early Independence Awards also provide an opportunity for institutions to invigorate their research programs by bringing in the fresh perspectives of the awardees that they host. By the end of the award period, the Early Independence investigator is expected to be competitive for continued funding of his/her research program and for a permanent research position.

Eligibility & Requirements:

- At the time of application, the individual either 1) within the preceding twelve months must have received a terminal doctoral degree or completed medical residency or 2) within the following twelve months must complete all the requirements for a doctoral degree or complete a medical residency. The fellowship training period is NOT included in the clinical residency or equivalent training period.
- At the time of award to the grantee Institution, either 1) the Early Independence investigator must have received a PhD, MD, DO, or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited domestic or foreign institution (it is the responsibility of the sponsoring institution to determine if a foreign doctoral degree is equivalent), OR 2) an authorized official of the degree-granting institution must certify that all degree requirements have been met and that the date of graduation as appearing on the transcript will be within one year of the date of application submission.
- The candidate must not already be a PD/PI on an NIH R01 or R01-equivalent award.
- See full eligibility based on research independence here.

Internal Nomination Process:

Interested applicants should send the following documents in sequence in one PDF to resapp@jhu.edu no later than 4 p.m. on December 14, 2015:

1. JHU Limited Submission Cover Sheet
2. Abstract (one page, double-spaced)
3. Proposal (maximum of four pages of text only, single spaced: 12-pt font and one-inch margins) (Note: figures, tables, and other reference material should not be included as text)
4. Curriculum Vitae of investigator, including current external research support and publications
5. Budget (two pages maximum)
6. Letter of Recommendation from the Department Chair/Director: Letters of Recommendation can be submitted separately to resapp@jhu.edu stating applicant’s name in the subject line)

Each applicant should expect to receive a confirmation of receipt of their materials. If an applicant does not receive an acknowledgement, or has any questions, please contact Charles Bartunek via resapp@jhu.edu.