

CTSI Spotlight



An Essential First Step to Launching Your Independent Research Career Early career researchers pursuing independent research careers need a clear roadmap.

The Program for Early Research Career Development (PERC) is designed to assist early career researchers in developing this roadmap. By engaging senior postdoctoral fellows, instructors, and assistant professors (MDs and PhDs), the program directors, [Karen Lasser, MD, MPH](#), Professor of General Internal Medicine and Community Health Sciences; and [Manish Sagar, MD](#), Associate Professor of Medicine and Microbiology, assist participants to:

- Improve CVs and NIH Biosketches
- Write effective Specific Aims pages and evaluate manuscript drafts
- Identify useful tips and strategies in finding mentors and funding
- Leverage research consults, tools, and other resources needed to move toward research independence.

Using an interactive small group format of thought-stimulating presentations, engaging hands-on review and critiquing participant documents (aims pages and manuscripts), the directors inspire participants to assemble a requisite professional portfolio by the end of the program. The portfolio serves to attract funding through mechanisms consistent with the success of early-stage investigators awards such as NIH K grants and Pilot awards. The training catapults participants to reach the next step in their career development planning, which can include taking the BU CTSI Career Development Award Writing Workshop Series. Participants in this workshop series go on to write K and other career development awards submitted at the end of the workshop.

“Launching a research career can be tough and isolating. In this course, we provide support and camaraderie that we hope will extend beyond the end of the course, through peer mentoring.”
Said Karen Lasser, MD, MPH.

With support from the BU CTSI Staff and Faculty, participants learn more about and are encouraged to use [CTSI's Offerings & Resources](#) to help them build their research support networks to ensure the success of their research projects. Participants can also request no-cost consultations and assistance from various BU CTSI services at any point during their research study through the [Research Navigator Team](#).

The program consists of seven two-hour sessions that are offered twice a year in the fall and spring. Co-sponsored by the Clinical and Translational Science Institute and the Department of Medicine, the program closes a known gap in the early career research development support that will enrich workforce development opportunities across the university. (See PERC Fact Sheet [here](#))

Please visit our [website](#) for more information, and sign up for the CTSI Newsletter [here](#).

“I finished feeling like I was pointed in the right direction and knew what my next steps should be... everyone should have this opportunity... this program was an important step in getting me moving in the right direction of what to do and where else to get assistance.”

Anonymous Participant Feedback

“I got a lot of excellent feedback on my specific aims pages. It was very, very helpful... Karen and Lee [prior director] have worked on NIH study sections and know first-hand what reviewers look for and talk about. They know what gets funded and not funded...I could not get these insights from a book or other resources. They gave us a lot of insights and tips to think about from someone who knows what happens during study section reviews... It was a great course and they are passionate about what they do and with making us feel like they truly want us to be successful.”

Anonymous Participant Feedback