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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

September 29, 2010

George H. Davis, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  
University of Arizona  
Office of the President  
512 Administration Building  
P.O. Box 210066  
Tucson, Arizona 85721-0066

**RE: 2010-2011 HHMI-GBMF Competition in the Plant Sciences**

Dear Dr. Davis:

We are pleased to inform you that the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (GBMF) will hold a new national competition to select as many as 15 outstanding investigators for the Program in the Plant Sciences.

This new initiative—the first of its type for either organization—comes at a critical moment for the nation and for the long-term health of its research infrastructure in the plant sciences. The purpose of the Program is to provide at least five years of targeted support to academic researchers working in the plant sciences in the United States in a manner that (a) increases fundamental knowledge in plant biology, (b) enables the potential transformation of the field of plant science, (c) encourages top scientists to enter the field, and (d) attracts additional support for the field. We believe our competition responds to very real challenges faced by academic researchers in an era of constrained research funding.

Your institution is one of the approximately 200 across the nation whose faculty members are eligible to participate in this competition. We seek scientists of exceptional promise who have led research laboratories for four years or more and ask that you encourage relevant faculty to apply.

**Robert Tjian, Ph.D.**

President  
Howard Hughes Medical Institute  
4000 Jones Bridge Road  
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president@hhmi.org

Complete information about the application process and eligibility requirements for this competition may be found at

[www.hhmi.org/research/application/plant2011](http://www.hhmi.org/research/application/plant2011)

Candidates may apply directly via this site. We will place no limits on the number of applicants from any eligible institution. **Candidates may apply at any time, but no later than Tuesday, November 9, 2010 at 3:00 pm Eastern Time.**

**Steven J. McCormick**

President  
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation  
1661 Page Mill Road  
Palo Alto, California 94304-1209  
650.213.3100 • Fax 866.913.8930  
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At the time of application, the applicant must

- Have an Ph.D., M.D. or M.D./Ph.D. degree or the equivalent.
- Hold a tenure-track position as assistant professor or higher academic rank at one of the eligible institutions or, if at an eligible institution that has no tenure track, hold an appointment that reflects a significant institutional commitment. Federal government employees are not eligible.

- Have begun their first faculty position as assistant professor or equivalent no later than December 31, 2006.
- Be the principal investigator on one or more active, national, peer-reviewed research grants that provide at least three years of support, such as a National Science Foundation research grant, or a grant from another federal agency such as the Department of Energy, the Department of Agriculture, or the National Institutes of Health, or a competitive research grant from a nonprofit organization. Mentored awards or training grant awards do not qualify.

HHMI expects that successful candidates will be among the most outstanding in the nation, and we encourage applications from scientists in broad areas of the plant sciences, including biochemistry, bioengineering, bioinformatics, biostatistics, biophysics, cell biology, chemical biology, computational biology, developmental biology, ecology, evolutionary biology, genetics, microbiology, molecular biology, organismal biology, physiology, and structural biology.

Together, HHMI and GBMF will employ a review process that utilizes a panel of distinguished scientists to evaluate all applications, leading to the selection of semifinalists by February 2011. Institutions whose applicants are selected will be notified and will be asked to confirm that the candidate's status at the institution meets all eligibility requirements. Following further review, finalists will be offered appointments as HHMI-GBMF investigators beginning in May 2011.

Universities and research institutions at which investigators in the plant sciences are located will become HHMI host institutions (if they are not already), and each investigator will become an HHMI employee. HHMI will make payments to the host institution for occupancy of an HHMI-GBMF investigator's research and office space. At the same time, GBMF will provide a grant to each investigator in support of the research operations taking place in the laboratory.

HHMI and GBMF will share responsibility for the competition and the Program in Plant Sciences. The program to select and sustain HHMI-GBMF Investigators in Plant Sciences will be led by Vicki Chandler, Ph.D., Chief Program Officer for the GBMF Science Program and Jack Dixon, Ph.D., Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer for HHMI.

HHMI and GBMF welcome applications from outstanding women and minorities underrepresented in the sciences. As an equal opportunity employer, HHMI does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, or other characteristics, in accordance with applicable law.

With best regards,



Robert Tjian, Ph.D.  
President  
Howard Hughes Medical Institute



Steven J. McCormick  
President  
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation