



ROSALIND FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY

of MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

**Director
Center for Genetic Diseases
Rosalind Franklin University
of Medicine and Science
North Chicago, Illinois**

THE SEARCH

[Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science \(RFU\)](#) seeks an innovative, ambitious research scientist for the role of Director of the Center for Genetic Diseases (CGD). This is an exciting opportunity to lead the growth of a recently-established research center to a new level of excellence and discovery with a continued significant impact in genetic diseases research. It is expected that the new Director will be a strategic and inspiring leader at the cutting edge of research.

Ideal candidates on the tenure-track Associate or Full Professor level will have a strong research portfolio and record of achievement in DNA/RNA biology of genetic diseases and/or novel gene-based therapeutic strategies for the treatment of genetic diseases at the basic science, translational, or clinical levels. The ideal candidate will have a national or international reputation in their field and a track record of high-impact research. This individual will be highly energetic and collaborative. The successful candidate will have strong personal and professional integrity, fairness and flexibility, the ability to recruit faculty, and a deep commitment to diversity and inclusion. We offer an exceptionally rich environment for creative, interdisciplinary biomedical research in the recently opened Innovation and Research Park with high-performance computing facilities, state-of-the-art laboratory space and equipment, and a full-time administrator to support the research activities of CGD faculty. A wealth of institutional core facilities is available to support the research mission.

The [Center for Genetic Diseases](#) was established to solidify a key area of research excellence at RFU. The Director will work with the Executive Vice President for Research to craft and execute a shared vision for the building and success of the Center. The Director will partner with senior leadership to recruit world-class researchers to expand and elevate the Center's prominence and impact and will set ambitious goals for scholarly productivity and research funding through individual and multi-PI grants, philanthropy, and the development of innovative intellectual property. The Director will promote a vibrant, collaborative, and collegial environment, and will actively develop interdisciplinary partnerships and collaborations with researchers across RFU and with industry partners. We offer competitive start-up funds, laboratory space, salary, and the opportunity to recruit and hire new faculty for the center.

The new Director will hold a faculty appointment in the Chicago Medical School with a 12-month hard salary and the expectation that primary effort is devoted to research, with a small contribution to teaching at the university. Founded more than 100 years ago, the Chicago Medical School is one of 6 colleges of Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, enrolling a total of 2000 students, and named in honor of Dr. Rosalind Franklin's pioneering contributions to modern biology. RFU is known for its innovative, collaborative culture and excellence in interdisciplinary biomedical and health-related research and education. RFU also comprises 13 research centers and institutes. Located in the city of North Chicago, between Chicago and Milwaukee, this area offers the nearby big city benefits in a suburban environment, with a rich diversity of cultures, religions, and heritages.

Inclusiveness and diversity are integral to Chicago Medical School's commitment to excellence in research, engagement, and education, and we encourage applications from candidates that identify with groups that are historically underrepresented in biomedical science and medicine.

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist with this important recruitment. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed confidentially to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document.

ROSALIND FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

More than 100 years ago, three Chicagoans came together around a common vision: a medical school that would provide greater access to women, African Americans, and working-class students. The Chicago Hospital College of Medicine (later the Chicago Medical School) opened its doors in 1912. That same year, Dr. William M. Scholl formed the team that founded the Illinois College of Chiropody and Orthopedics. Both schools rejected the prevailing practice of setting quotas that limited the enrollment of persons from certain ethnic and racial groups, and today, RFU remains deeply committed to providing access and opportunity for students from groups historically underrepresented in medicine.

A private, non-profit university, RFU is dedicated to improving wellness for all through the interprofessional education of health and biomedical professionals and the discovery of knowledge. RFU offers 35 graduate-level programs of study through six specialized colleges:

- [Chicago Medical School](#)
- [College of Health Professions](#)
- [College of Nursing](#)
- [College of Pharmacy](#)
- [Dr. William Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine](#)
- [School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#)

When students are asked what sets apart their experience at RFU, they inevitably mention the interprofessional approach to teaching and learning. RFU established the DeWitt C. Baldwin Institute for Interprofessional Education in 2013, one of only a handful of such institutes in the country, to serve as a coordinating hub for all interprofessional learning and clinical opportunities on campus as well as a center for research on interprofessional practices. That same year, four Chicago Medical School students initiated the Interprofessional Community Clinic to provide care for persons in its neighboring communities. These

approaches to providing care demonstrate the heart of an institution focused on preparing diverse teams of health providers to care for increasingly diverse populations in the U.S. and around the world.

[RFU's Innovation and Research Park \(IRP\)](#) exemplifies the institution's commitment to improving the health of the community, the nation, and the world. With 100,000 square feet of laboratory and office space, the IRP provides a fertile environment for creativity and collaboration for academic and industry scientists, innovators, and entrepreneurs. Leveraging RFU's proximity to the highest concentration of biomedical science companies in the Midwest, the IRP provides additional opportunities for investigators to translate their discoveries into startup companies and novel products and services. Structured as a public-private partnership, the IRP is funded by RFU, Lake County, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and not-for-profit developer TUFF (The University Financing Foundation).

RFU attracts world-renowned scientists through a strategic commitment to research, which includes generous lab space and state-of-the-art facilities, a highly collaborative culture, and a 100% FTE salary guarantee.

Research laboratories are organized into interdisciplinary, discovery- and disease-oriented centers and institutes spanning a wide range of disciplines, with particular strengths in neuroscience, genetic diseases, and molecular cellular processes. The Centers and Institutes include:

- [Brain Science Institute](#)
 - [Center for Neurodegenerative Disease and Therapeutics](#)
 - [Stanson Toshok Center for Brain Function and Repair](#)
 - [Center for Neurobiology of Stress Resilience and Psychiatric Disorders](#)
- [Center for Genetic Diseases](#)
- [Center for Proteomics and Molecular Therapeutics](#)
- [Center for Cancer Cell Biology, Immunology, and Infection](#)
- [Center for Lower Extremity Ambulatory Research](#)
- [Resuscitation Institute](#)
- [Center for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine](#)
- [Michael Reese Foundation Center for Health Equity Research](#)
- [DeWitt C. Baldwin Institute for Interprofessional Education](#)
- [Center for Interprofessional Evidence Based Practice](#)

The close-knit research community consists of 55 tenured and non-tenured research faculty members plus 98 additional researchers (graduate students and staff at various ranks). Annual research funding of approximately \$10 million includes grants from federal funding agencies, nonprofit organizations and foundations, and industry partners.

CENTER FOR GENETIC DISEASES

Almost 300 million people across the world suffer from genetic disorders, with no known treatment for 95 percent of the more than 7,000 disorders identified to date. Depending on the type and severity, individuals with genetic disorders and their families may face a host of devastating physical, emotional, and economic hardships; some of the most severe disorders are ultimately fatal. However, recent groundbreaking innovations in RNA/DNA research, including RNA-based therapeutics and gene modification

techniques, are accelerating progress in identifying effective treatments and cures, offering new hope for those living with genetic disorders.

Founded in 2018 as part of the University's strategy to accelerate innovative, interdisciplinary research in high-impact areas, the CGD investigates genetic diseases to understand the mechanisms of dysfunction and discover new therapeutics through small-molecule- and nucleic-acid-based approaches. Growing the research portfolio and prominence of the CGD is a strategic priority, and resources will be made available to the Director for the growth and development of the CGD, including the recruitment of new faculty members.

THE ROLE

Reporting to Executive Vice President for Research, the Director will serve as an inspiring leader and will articulate and implement a strategic vision to elevate the Center's research portfolio in areas related to DNA/RNA biology of genetic diseases and gene-based therapeutics applied to genetic diseases. Key to assuring the Center's long-term success will be the strategic recruitment of top faculty researchers. Equally important, the Director will foster a strong team ethos and provide strong leadership to create a welcoming culture of inclusion. Key opportunities and challenges for the Director include:

- ***Define and implement an ambitious, compelling vision and strategy for the CGD***

The Director will partner with senior leadership and key stakeholders to articulate an inspiring vision and implement a long-term strategy to build a world-class portfolio of innovative, groundbreaking research in genetics and gene-based therapeutics for genetic diseases that enables outstanding basic science, translational, and clinical research to grow and flourish.

- ***Ensure the long-term financial success of the CGD***

The Director will be accountable for the CGD's overall financial position, and a key priority will be to expand overall funding support for the research enterprise. Achieving financial sustainability will require that the Director secure robust federally sponsored research funding, including larger awards such as multi-PI, multi-unit, and program project grants. Lake County is a hub for more than 120 biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, including Abbott Laboratories/AbbVie and Baxter International, and the region between North Chicago and Chicago includes some of the wealthiest zip codes in Illinois. Thus, there is ample opportunity for the director to secure additional revenue through tech transfer and innovation, corporate partnerships, and private philanthropy.

- ***Strengthen and embed the values of diversity, inclusion, and equity within the CGD's culture***

The Director should have proven experience promoting diversity and inclusion and will be expected to promote a culture of belonging that embraces and recognizes the contributions of all team members. A key goal is strengthening the systemic support for all students, trainees, staff, and faculty through outreach, recruitment, training, and development opportunities.

- ***Build a cohesive, collaborative team***

In alignment with the university-wide culture of openness and collaboration, the Director will promote a sense of community, camaraderie, and collaboration within the CGD and across the University. The Director should develop a reputation for fairness, transparency, and equity in relating to and negotiating with all stakeholders.

- ***Encourage and expand research activities***

The Director will shape a long-term research strategy that builds on existing strengths, develops new areas of research, and takes advantage of emerging research funding opportunities. Equally important will be efforts to increase collaborative, transdisciplinary research and partnerships with colleagues in key academic disciplines and within the biotech industry.

- ***Recruit, retain, and develop faculty***

The Director will recruit world-class talent into priority areas that offer the greatest potential for groundbreaking discoveries and the development of intellectual property. Beyond the need to recruit and retain top researchers, the Director will provide career guidance and mentor faculty and staff, recognizing the unique goals of each and identifying opportunities to provide professional growth and advancement.

QUALIFICATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES

Ideal candidates will bring a well-rounded combination of the following qualifications and attributes:

- PhD, MD, MD/PhD, or equivalent degree required
- Eligible for appointment at the rank of Associate or Full Professor with tenure at Rosalind Franklin University, in one of six academic disciplines at Chicago Medical School (Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Cell Biology & Anatomy, Cellular & Molecular Pharmacology, Microbiology & Immunology, Neuroscience, Physiology & Biophysics)
- Experience with and commitment to research, education, and service, including teaching experience
- National reputation as a thought leader in the molecular bases and treatment of genetic diseases
- Background in RNA/DNA/protein biology and/or gene transcription/translation modification toward the understanding or novel treatment of genetic diseases
- Experience with translational research in genetic diseases
- Experience in establishing and growing a research program with substantive external individual and collaborative funding. Of particular interest is ongoing research on molecular bases of genetic diseases and/or gene-based therapeutics that target RNA or DNA (e.g., antisense oligonucleotide, RNAi, or CRISPR-based approaches) and/or multi-omics approaches in disease models
- Inclusive management style
- Administrative experience, including budgetary oversight
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with interprofessional faculty and staff
- Strong sense of integrity
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills

LOCATION

Rosalind Franklin University is situated in Lake County on a campus of approximately 100 acres in North Chicago, roughly halfway between Chicago and Milwaukee. The location offers a variety of living options in both rural and suburban communities that are within easy commuting distance. Residents of [Lake County](#) enjoy a high quality of living - housing is affordable, public schools are excellent, the crime rate is low, and the region has much to offer in the way of culture, entertainment, and dining. Downtown Chicago is less than an hour's drive from campus and is accessible through the nearby Metra Union Pacific North line. Milwaukee, Wisconsin's largest city, is an hour's drive to the north. Lake Michigan's sandy shoreline lies just a few miles from campus, offering many opportunities for sailing, kayaking, swimming, and relaxation. RFU is also close to Lake County Forest Preserves land—more than 30,000 acres containing 182 miles of trails for hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing.

TO APPLY

Rosalind Franklin University has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist with this important recruitment. Inquiries, nominations, and application materials, including a current CV, cover letter, and research statement that includes prior research accomplishments and future research plans, should be directed to: Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Daniel Rodas, Partner
Jean Jacoby, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller

www.imsearch.com/8776

Please note that applications will be considered until the position is filled.

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and is dedicated to creating and fostering a diverse academic environment. Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science is especially seeking and encouraging nominations and applications from individuals belonging to groups underrepresented in their respective fields, as well as others who would enrich and add unique perspectives to the University. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, skin color, religion, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, genetic information, military status, or family status.