



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

NIH Oxford-Cambridge Scholars Program:

*A Student's Perspective*

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# Just to preface things...

- I'm not the end-all be-all authority on OxCam!
- I'm giving information more on what I've had exposure to.
- For specific application questions or nuances, ask OxCam leadership:
  - Dr. Kristi Porter, Director of Recruitment & Student Affairs ([kristi.porter2@nih.gov](mailto:kristi.porter2@nih.gov))
  - Dr. Katie Stagliano, Executive Director ([staglianoke@mail.nih.gov](mailto:staglianoke@mail.nih.gov))
  - Full website: <https://oxcam.gpp.nih.gov/>

# Outline

- My journey
- Tips for MD/PhD applicants
- OxCam
  - Background
  - How to apply
  - Alumni outcomes
- Some parting thoughts

# My Journey...

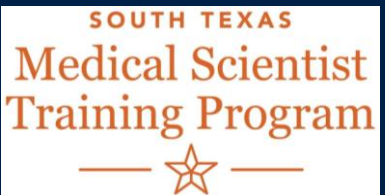


Neha Wali  
GS1  
NCI/Oxford



BS Biochem  
and Mol Bio

UMBC



2018



MS1 @

2019

Applied to  
OxCam via  
Track 2

MS2 @



2020



Summer projects (cancer epigenomics, tumor immunology)

2017

Applied to MSTPs  
and MD/PhD  
programs



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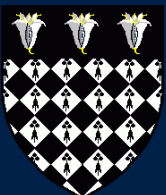
NIH Oxford-Cambridge Scholars Program



NATIONAL  
CANCER  
INSTITUTE



LUDWIG  
CANCER  
RESEARCH  
Oxford



Projects across school  
year and summers  
(tumor immunology,  
immunotherapy, cancer  
genomics)

2014



UMBC



# Tips for MD/PhD applicants

1. CRUSH THE MCAT!
2. Apply widely
3. Have a backup plan
4. Do your homework
5. Look for PI depth and variety
6. Check all the boxes

# What is OxCam?

- PhD via international collaboration (NIH and Oxford or Cambridge)



NIH



Oxford



Cambridge

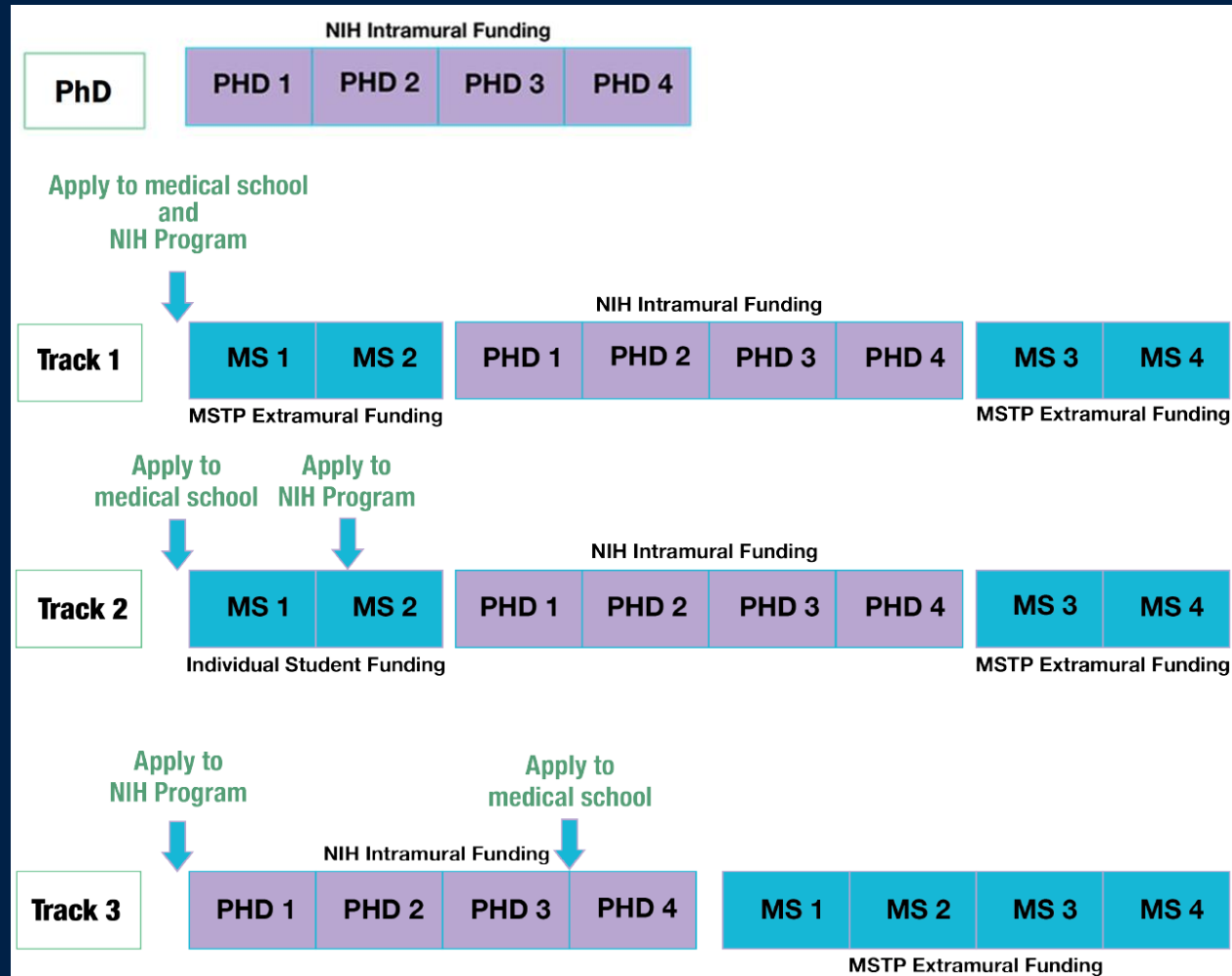
- No required graduate school coursework
- Finish the PhD in 4 years (50:50 time split between NIH and UK)

# How does one pursue OxCam?

List of all MSTPs (required for Track 1) here

Already in MSTP or MD/PhD program

List of all MSTPs (required for Track 3) here



# What are the odds of getting in?

~ 200	applications (PhD + Track 1 + Track 2)
~ 55	interviewees
~ 35	offers of acceptance
20*	matriculants (class of 2020 – largest ever)

\*This final number of 20 also includes Track 1 students who were accepted in 2018 and are now starting the PhD. It does not include the newly-accepted Track 1 students who will start the PhD in 2022.



# What do I need to apply?

## Requirements:

- US citizen or permanent resident with bachelor's degree
- MCAT scores (for Track 1 and Track 2 applicants)
- 3 letters of reference

## Perks:

- No application fee to OxCam (but will have UK application fees if accepted into OxCam)
- No GRE
- Can concurrently have Rhodes, Gates Cambridge, etc.

# Application Timeline (2021 Admission)

## Step 1: Application

- Portal opens – Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020
  - Monthly info sess. (conf. call/Zoom)
- Deadline – Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

## Step 2: Interview

- Notifications – Jan 2021
- Interviews – Feb 2021
  - VIRTUAL this year
  - 3 days of events/info sessions
  - Interview itself ~25 min
  - Can schedule time to talk to PIs

## Step 3: Acceptance

- Notifications – Late Feb 2021
- Final decisions – May 2021

Program officially begins Aug 2021

# How do I apply online?

Go to the following link: <https://www2.training.nih.gov/apps/publicForms/gpp/forms/login.aspx>

Create an account, click “Apply Now”, and select GPP APPLICATION (LONG FORM)

For Partnership Selection:

Regular PhD applicants:

University of Oxford (England)/University of Cambridge (England)/NIH – PhD

MD/PhD Track 1 applicants:

University of Oxford (England)/University of Cambridge (England)/Consortia of Universities – NIH – MD/PhD – Track 1

MD/PhD Track 2 applicants:

University of Oxford (England)/University of Cambridge (England)/NIH – MD/PHD – Track 2

# What is the application comprised of?

## Components of Application:

- Academic institutions and coursework for bachelor's, MD, and PhD (if dual-degree program)
- MCAT (from Track 1 and Track 2 applicants)
- Research Interests
- Research Experiences
- Publications and Presentations
- Awards and Honors
- Extracurricular Activities
- Personal Statement
- List of References (automatic emails to rec writers go out once you start application)
- Additional Information (can suggest potential PIs if you've started looking, but not required)

# How do I start to find potential PIs?

- The OxCam site has a [Collaboration Opportunities page](#) where NIH and UK PIs post OxCam project opportunities.
- Consult the OxCam [Alumni page](#) for previous collaborators.
- Reach out to OxCam leadership who can help facilitate contacts.
- Consult the [NIH IRP page](#) to see PIs by research area or name.
- Consult Oxford and Cambridge pages.

# How do OxCam alumni fare?

- Residencies and fellowships at top-tier institutions, including physician-scientist training programs (PSTPs)
- Academic postdoctoral fellows or faculty members
- Government PIs or postdoctoral fellows, including at NIH
- CEO/founders of own companies
- Directors and Managers in industry
- Global health and public policy

# Some parting thoughts...

OxCam is best suited for students who:

- Are independent-minded and don't need a highly structured experience
- Are problem-solvers who can navigate through logistical hurdles without getting bogged down
- Possess managerial qualities to work well across 2 continents and labs and PIs
- Are driven and have a desire to seek things out on their own
- Enjoy traveling, meeting new people, experiencing new cultures

# OxCam leadership contact info and site

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