

# Institute for Clinical Research Education

# Annual Report 2025



**Director**  
Doris Rubio, PhD

**Associate Director**  
Thomas Radomski, MD, MS

What if career development wasn't a phase,  
but a *continuum*?

What if training in research and education evolved  
as fast as *science itself*?



For twenty years, the Institute for Clinical Research Education (ICRE) has been answering these questions by reimagining how people learn, lead, and collaborate.

From undergraduate students to senior faculty members, the ICRE is both an anchor and a catalyst, grounding scholars in strong mentorship while propelling them toward new frontiers.



The ICRE is the University of Pittsburgh's  
**comprehensive hub for clinical and translational  
science and health professions education.**



This year, the ICRE community continued to shape  
clinical and translational science nationally.

Our alumni, faculty, and programs **advanced discovery,**  
**secured competitive funding,** and expanded Pitt's  
**leadership footprint across disciplines.**

# Twenty Years of Excellence

Key accomplishments this year include:

## **Establishing a PhD in Health Professions Education**

for clinician-educators and other health professionals who are interested in transforming and improving higher education in the health sciences

## **Launching the Undergraduate Certificate in Clinical and Translational Research**

marking the expansion of our training to earlier stages of professional development

## **Securing a new U24 grant**

to support clinician-scientists' career development and strengthen the Complementary and Integrative Health workforce

## **Continuing alumni success in securing National Institutes of Health (NIH) R01-level grants**

advancing leadership roles, and shaping practice and policy across health disciplines

# 3,600

trainees and alumni from 90+ disciplines across all six Schools of the Health Sciences



# 90

core faculty members

# 2,366

alumni and 292 current trainees supported by ICRE career-development programs

# 389

active mentors

# 954

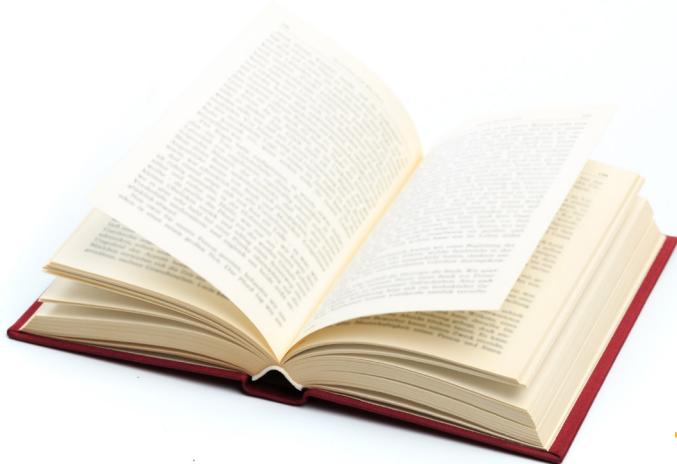
graduates of ICRE degree and certificate programs

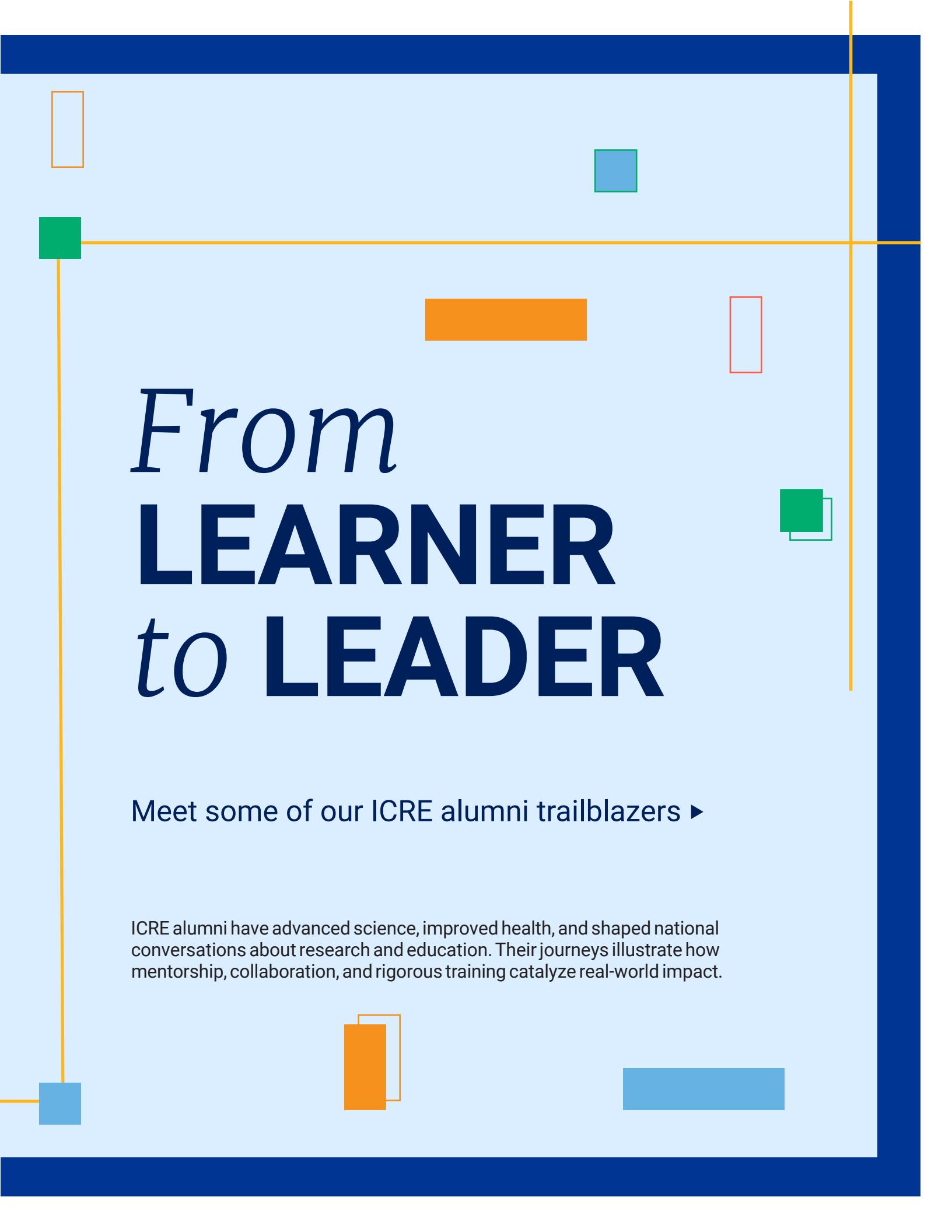
# \$73.3M

in NIH funding across 689 grants secured by KL2 alumni, with 90% of these alumni remaining in active research careers

# 6,400+

peer-reviewed publications by ICRE-affiliated trainees and alumni





# *From* **LEARNER** *to LEADER*

Meet some of our ICRE alumni trailblazers ►

ICRE alumni have advanced science, improved health, and shaped national conversations about research and education. Their journeys illustrate how mentorship, collaboration, and rigorous training catalyze real-world impact.



CLRES Certificate - 2014  
CTS KL2 - 2016  
TRANSFORM - 2024

## Octavia Peck Palmer, PhD

**Associate Professor and Vice Chair for Health Equity, Department of Pathology  
School of Medicine**

Peck Palmer has led major laboratory modernization initiatives. Her NIH-funded research is breaking new ground in health equity, investigating how genetic variations in zinc proteins contribute to racial disparities in pneumonia susceptibility and sepsis outcomes. She combines cutting-edge laboratory innovation with a commitment to reducing health disparities.



CLRES Certificate - 2009  
CTS KL2 - 2011

## Steven R. Little, PhD

**Distinguished Professor and Chair, Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering**

**George M. and Eva M. Bevier Chair  
Swanson School of Engineering**

Little has earned over 50 national and international awards and was recently inducted into the National Academy of Inventors. He has authored over 100 publications, secured more than 40 patents, co-founded two Pittsburgh-based companies, and is the only person in University of Pittsburgh history to receive all three Chancellor's Distinguished Awards for research, teaching, and service.

*“The ICRE has been an instrumental part of my career progress . . . Many of the skills that I learned from my instructors during my time as an ICRE student I still teach to my own students in my research laboratory.”*



Ramp to K - 2015  
CLRES Master's - 2017  
CTS KL2 - 2018

## Maisa Feghali, MD, MS

**Associate Professor, Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences  
School of Medicine**

Feghali is investigating novel approaches to treating diabetes in pregnancy. She leads multiple national clinical trials, including the GO MOMs Study and the DECIDE trial comparing metformin to insulin. As Director of the Diabetes in Pregnancy Program, she's transforming the standard of care through evidence-based innovations in obstetric pharmacology and individualized treatment strategies.

*"The ICRE helped me shape and strengthen my research trajectory. Through its formal training in grant writing, study design, and clinical research methods, I gained the skills and confidence needed to develop competitive proposals and lead rigorous clinical trials. The tools I learned through the ICRE directly contributed to securing funding for my current projects and advancing my work in designing and implementing clinical studies in pregnancy."*



ADVANCER - 2018  
CTS KL2 - 2019

## Alison Culyba, MD, PhD, MPH

**Associate Professor and Division Director of Adolescent Medicine, Department of Pediatrics  
School of Medicine**

Culyba leads multiple federally funded studies (CDC, NIH, SAMHSA) using cutting-edge social network and geospatial analysis to design community-based interventions, including serving as principal investigator of the CDC's Forging Hopeful Futures study. She earned the Philip Excellence in Medical Student Research Mentoring Award for her dedication to training the next generation of health equity researchers.

*"The ICRE is a truly special place that brings people together in a collective mission towards learning, towards engaging, and towards improving the health of our broader community. I think it inspires people who are engaged in classes... [and] programs to really bring out the best in all of us, and does that in a way that is incredibly nurturing while also challenging, helping us to develop into future leaders within academia and beyond."*



CLRES Master's - 2013

## Enrico M. Novelli, PhD

**Associate Professor and Division Chief,  
Classical Hematology, Department of Medicine  
School of Medicine**

Novelli's NIH-funded research has uncovered critical mechanisms underlying vascular dysfunction in sickle cell disease. As principal investigator of the NIH T32 Multi-disciplinary Research Training in Hematology program and director of the UPMC Adult Sickle Cell Disease Program, he combines groundbreaking translational research with compassionate clinical care, earning him exceptional patient ratings and recognition for his commitment to global health initiatives.

## Early-Career Leaders to Follow

### Aniruddh Ajith | TL1



**ICRE Doctoral Student, Medical Scientist Training Program  
School of Medicine**

Ajith's research examines how social networks and community environments shape youth violence and substance use.

### Justin Yu, MD, MS | TL1, KL2



**Assistant Professor of Pediatrics  
School of Medicine**

Yu received his MS from the ICRE. His research focuses on improving the health and well-being of children with medical complexity and their family caregivers through pediatric palliative care interventions.

### Anna Wang-Erikson, PhD | KL2



**Assistant Professor of Pediatrics  
School of Medicine**

Wang-Erickson's work focuses on improving children's health by fighting infectious and inflammatory diseases through catalyzing new multi-disciplinary collaborations.

### Jordyn Ting | TL1



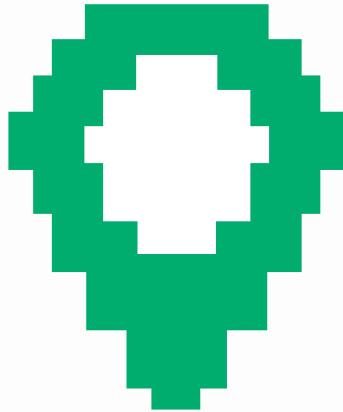
**Postdoctoral Associate,  
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
School of Medicine**

Ting's current work involves the application of deep brain stimulation technology to improve motor function in individuals with stroke and other neuro-degenerative conditions.

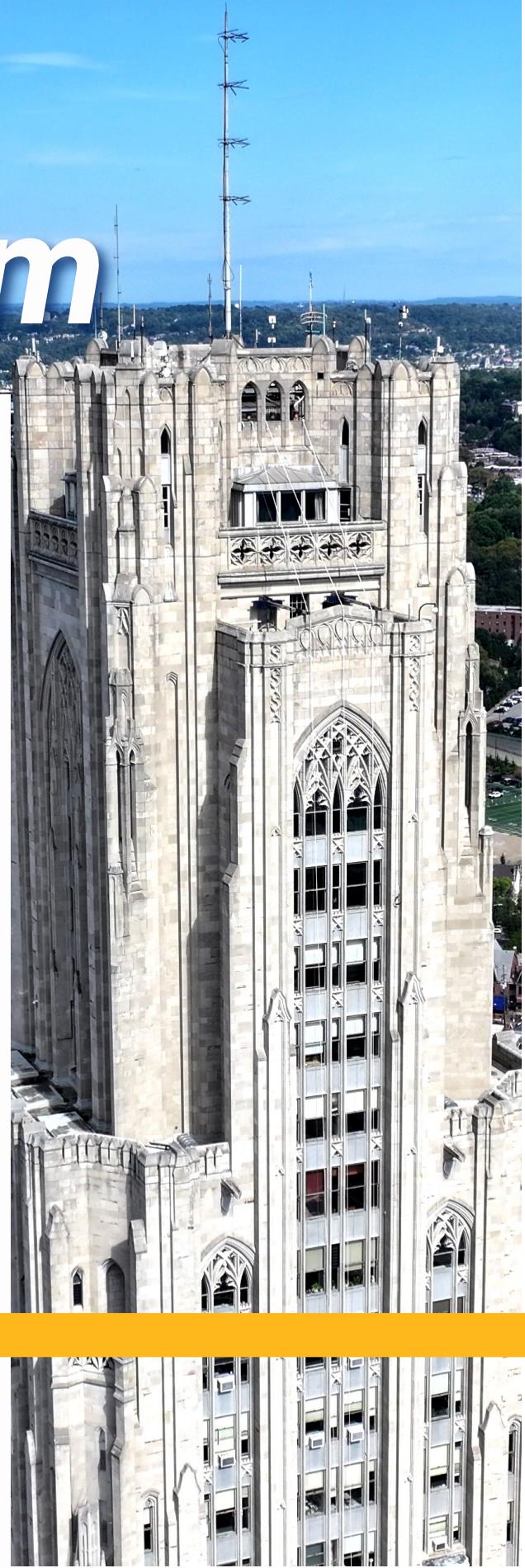
# Forward Momentum

The next chapter of the ICRE's journey will expand early-career research training, strengthen national partnerships, and continue to build a vibrant, inclusive community of scholars.

From supporting an undergraduate's first research project to guiding faculty members toward national leadership, the ICRE remains Pitt's launchpad for discovery.



**Start Here ▶**  
Opportunities at  
every career stage



# There for every career step

The ICRE is proud to offer a wide selection of high-quality degree, mentorship, and training programs.



## Undergraduate

### ► Certificate in Clinical and Translational Research

Expands Pitt's research training pipeline to the earliest stages of academic development

### ► Certificate in Clinical and Translational Science

Develops trainees' practical skills in the design, conduct, and interpretation of clinical research

### ► ADVANCER II

Exposes medical students to health care research skills and mentoring

### ► CSTP

Offers clinical research training to support medical students' investigative careers

## Resident

### ► IST/CST

Mentors residents and provides core training in clinical research

### ► REACH

Cultivates physicians' fundamental clinical research skills

## Medical Student

### ► MS and Certificate in Clinical Research

Provides essential skills to design and conduct high-quality clinical and translational research

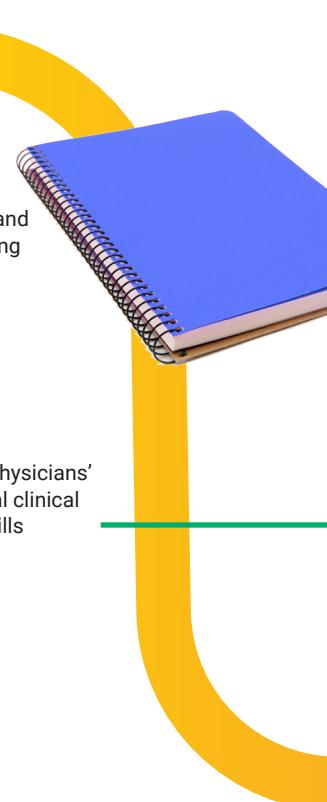
### ► PhD in Clinical and Translational Science

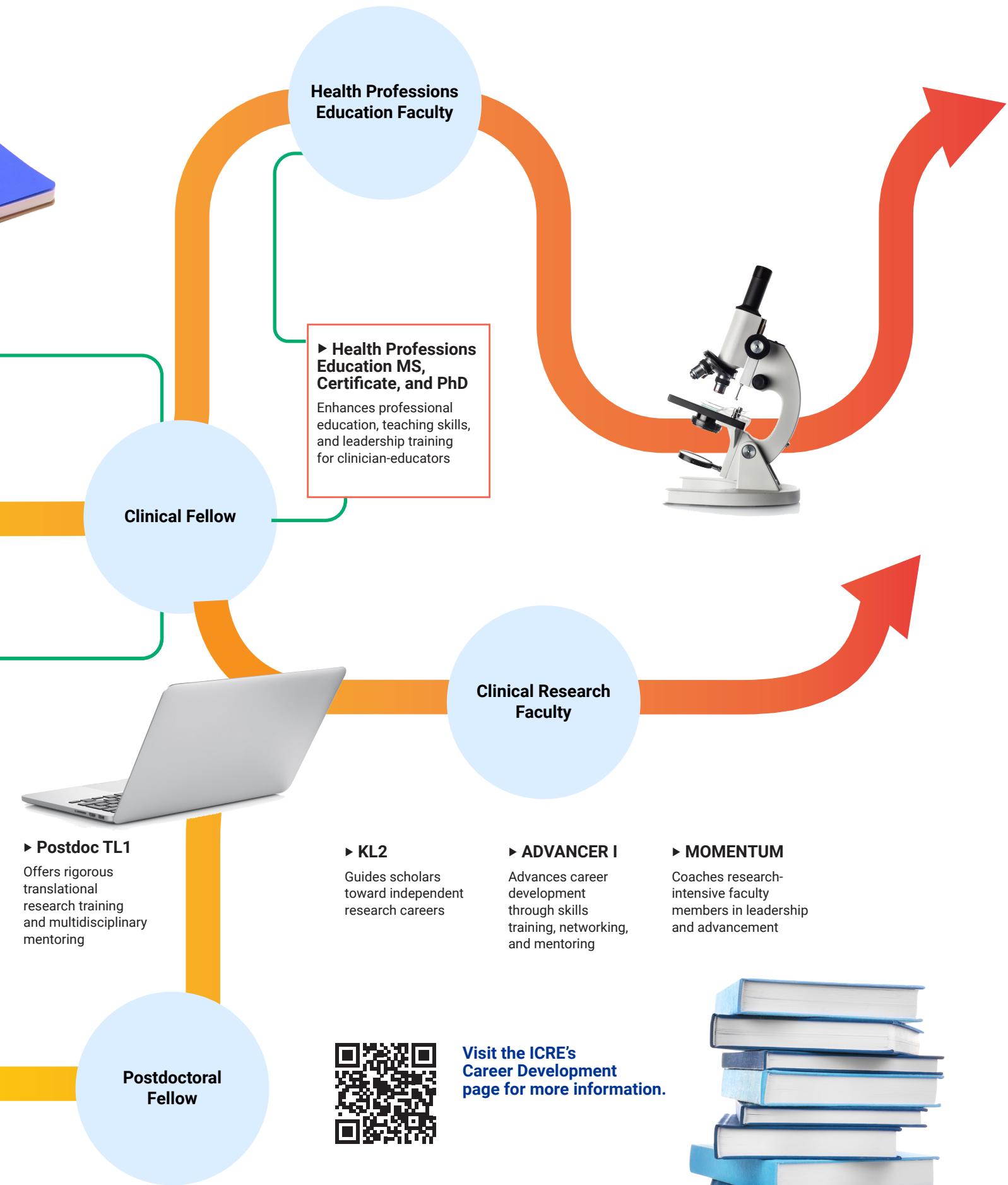
Delivers rigorous advanced training for conducting clinical and translational studies

## Graduate Student

### ► Predoc TL1

Equips researchers to translate scientific discoveries into improved patient outcomes and health policy







[www.icre.pitt.edu](http://www.icre.pitt.edu)