

2020

# Application and Interview tips for MD-PhD Programs

Communications Committee of the MD-PhD  
Section of the Group of Research, Education,  
and Training (GREAT) AAMC



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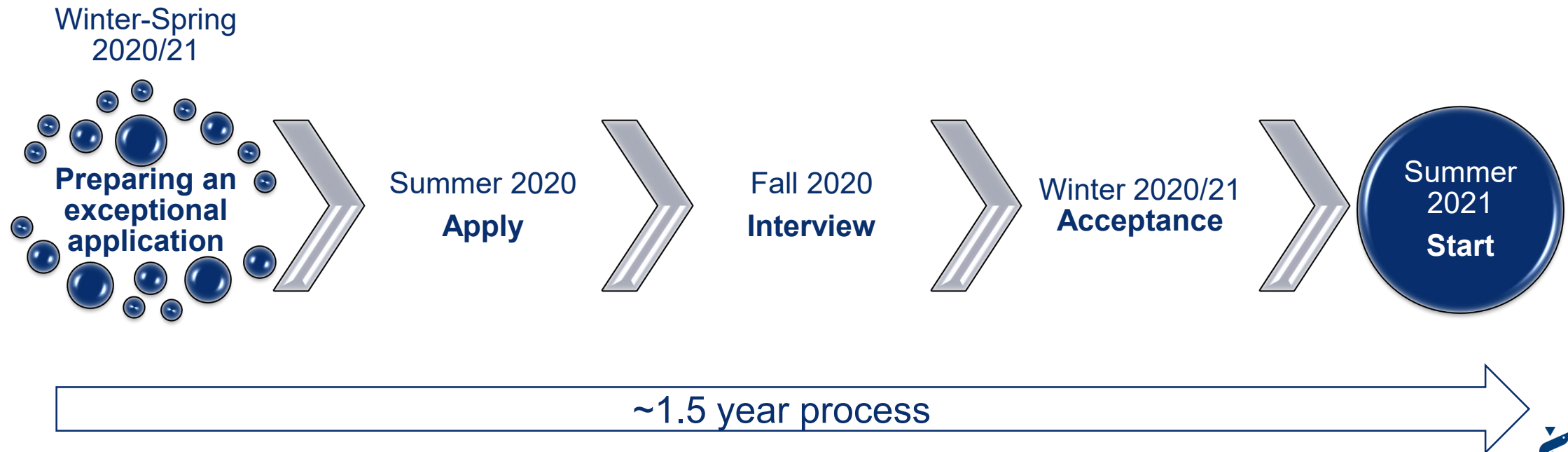
Association of  
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# Application Timeline

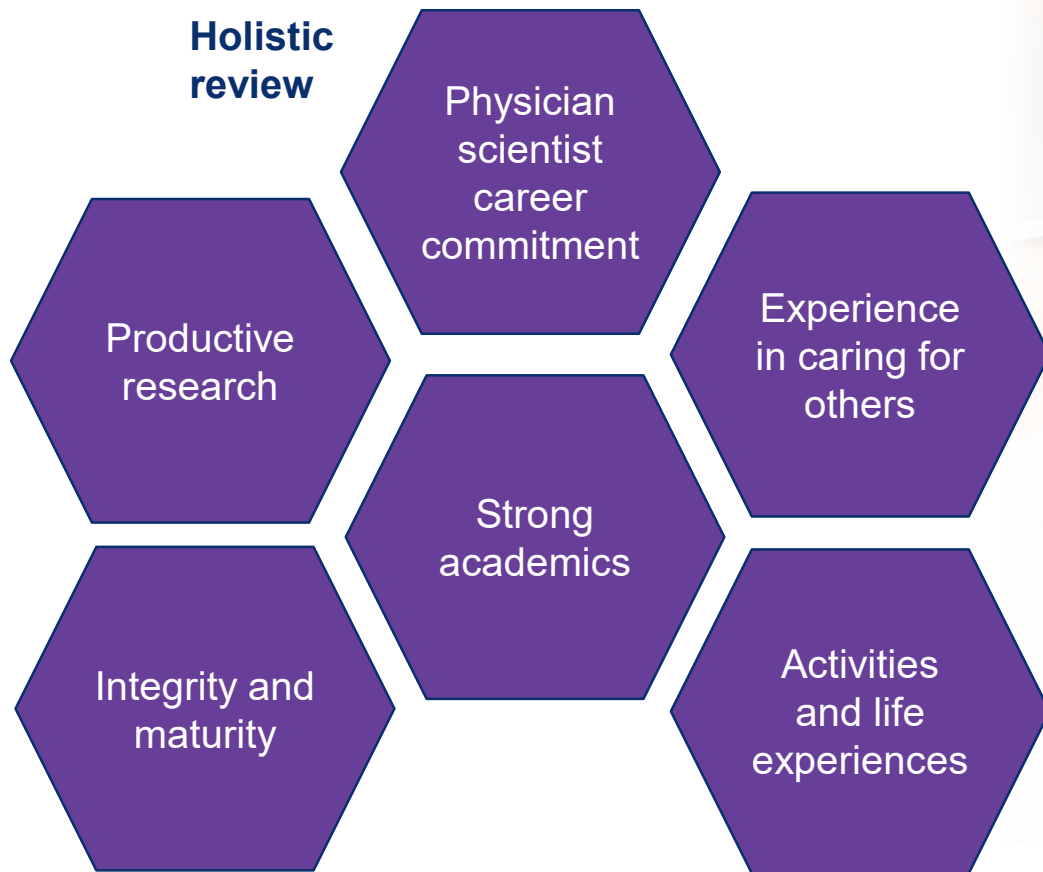
## Candidates Matriculating in the Summer of 2021

### Pre-application (2-3 years)

- Courses
- Research
- Clinical exposures
- Activities and life experiences



# Elements of a successful MD-PhD application



# MD/PhD Application process

- **Apply via the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)**
  - **3 essays; 2 are MD/PhD specific:**
    - **Personal Comments (all MD applicants)**
    - **MD-PhD Motivation Essay (why pursue MD-PhD Degree?)**
    - **Significant Research Experience Essay**
  - **MCAT and GPA**
  - **Experiences (up to 15)**
- **Request Letters of Recommendation**
- **Request official transcripts**

**This application and LORs are the only information we have about you**

# Application Process – Research Experience

## Significant Research Experience

- **Describe the research in your lab**
- **Describe your research project**
- **Did you test a hypothesis or conduct discovery research?**
- **Describe your role on each project**
- **What did you learn?**
- **What did this project teach you about your career path.....?**

# Application Process – Letters of Recommendation

- Individual schools have specific letter requirements
- May have up to 10 letters, but we don't want to read that many!
- **Critical letter(s) are from your research mentor(s)**
  - Submit one LOR from each substantial research experience
  - LOR should attest to your potential as a physician scientist

# Application Process – Work and Activities Descriptions

- **Can enter up to 15 different experiences**
- **Pick up to three as “most meaningful”, but be prepared to discuss each experience**
- **Experience includes:**
  - **Shadowing, volunteering, research, leadership activities, presentations, employment**
  - **Include start and end dates, total hours**

# Interview Day – General Tips

- **Smile and make eye contact**
- **Maintain a positive attitude throughout the day**
- **Actively engage interviewers and students**
- **Be able to address all the items in your application**
- **Be prepared for certain questions, but do not over-rehearse**

**Try to enjoy the experience**



# Interview Day – Questions

**Questions may be open ended or address a specific point in your application**

- **What experiences shaped your decision to pursue an MD/PhD dual degree?**
- **What are your long-term career goals as a physician scientist?**
- **Tell me about your research**

# For more information:

- <https://www.aamc.org/mdphd>
- [NIH.gov/training](https://www.nih.gov/training)
- Role models
- Knowledgeable people who care about you:
  - Directors and Mentors (Summer Program and Post-Bac)
  - Professors, Lab Heads and Department Chairs
  - MD-PhD Students, Graduate Students and Post-Docs
  - Career Advising Offices
  - PhD and MD-PhD Program Directors



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