



Congratulations Bala Madduri, Ph.D. on achieving a K99/R00 award! (Postdoctoral Fellow)

Dr. Bala Madduri, a dedicated postdoctoral fellow at Rutgers Biomedical Health Sciences, has made remarkable strides in infectious diseases research and grant writing. Her passion for studying *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and collaborating with like-minded colleagues reflects her commitment to advancing scientific knowledge. Before joining the National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN) core group, Dr. Madduri faced challenges in grant writing, exemplified by her initial unsuccessful application for the American Heart Association (AHA) Postdoctoral Fellowship in 2023. However, her participation in the NIH Bootcamp in July 2024 proved transformative. Introduced to the NRMN group, Dr. Madduri leveraged its resources to strengthen her specific aims page for the AHA fellowship, ultimately securing the award in her resubmission.

The NRMN experience significantly influenced Dr. Madduri's approach to grant writing. Through peer discussions and feedback on specific aims, she mastered the art of articulating the "why," "what," and "how" in grant applications. This process sharpened his skills and prepared her for future applications, including the prestigious K99/R00 award. Dr. Madduri values the NRMN group's structured feedback and peer review, which mirror the rigor of formal grant evaluations. By consistently submitting drafts and receiving constructive criticism, she remained disciplined and on track. She now advocates for NRMN as a platform for researchers seeking to refine their grantsmanship and achieve career milestones.

Looking ahead, Dr. Madduri plans to continue her active involvement with NRMN, using the insights gained to mentor others and pursue innovative research opportunities. Her journey exemplifies resilience, learning, and the transformative impact of mentorship in scientific careers.