

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Faculty Forward?

A: Faculty Forward is a collaboration between the AAMC and medical schools that works to ensure that academic medical centers are great places to work. Faculty Forward offers tools and resources to help medical schools improve faculty satisfaction, retention, and vitality, and ultimately, to enhance institutional culture.

Starting in 2009, 23 medical schools joined Faculty Forward as "founding partners" for a multi-year renewable cycle.

Q: What is the participation fee for Faculty Forward?

A: The participation fee for Faculty Forward is \$25,000 per year.

Q: Why is there only one tier of participation in Faculty Forward?

A: There are two primary reasons to move ahead with Faculty Forward with just one level of participation. The first is that this program is designed as a pilot. Therefore, it will be important to evaluate the program over the next 1 to 2 years before making any long-term commitments. If there were multiple tiers (some schools participating at one level of engagement, others at a different level), it complicates the ability to evaluate with our medical school partners if the program really works in the initial stages of the program.

A second reason to move ahead with one pathway is that the faculty satisfaction survey and results, plus the additional resources, are powerful interventions. At the August 2008 Group on Faculty Affairs (GFA) meeting, participants stated that if a school is going to measure satisfaction, it must be prepared to act on the results, which takes time. This multi-year commitment reflects and ensures the institutional leadership's full resolve to action.

We understand the interest in different pathways, and ultimately, we see that as a possibility in the future--but in the early stages, we think we need a single approach.

Q: If my school didn't participate in 2009, will there be other opportunities to participate?

A: Yes. Additional schools can join Faculty Forward in subsequent years. Faculty Forward information sessions will be held at the GFA Professional Development Conferences to update the GFA community and to offer Faculty Forward participants the opportunity to report on their experiences.

Q. Is this program just for the medical school or for the academic affiliated hospital as well?

A: Currently, Faculty Forward is open to medical schools and their full-time faculty members. Hospitals affiliated with participating medical schools can be a part of Faculty Forward via their medical school partner. In the future, we will explore having participation available directly for affiliated and independent teaching hospitals.

Q: How can all schools benefit from the community of learning around faculty satisfaction?

A: No institution or organization has all the answers when it comes to improving faculty workplace environments. The annual GFA Professional Development Conference is an important gathering of collaboration and learning to share promising practices from all institutions—both those that are participants in Faculty Forward and those that are not.

In planning the Faculty Forward program, the AAMC intentionally did not design a separate Faculty Forward annual conference. Rather, the intent is that the GFA remains the focal point for learning, sharing, and collaboration around the issues of faculty satisfaction, retention, and vitality.

Q: How does the \$25,000 annual investment fee compare to similar services in the market?

A: A strong business case underlies Faculty Forward. Studies have indicated that cost of losing one medical school faculty member can exceed \$300,000. If participation in Faculty Forward enables a medical school to retain a single faculty member from leaving for other employment, the school can recoup its investment many times over.

Market research indicates that the cost to purchase a comparable satisfaction survey from a commercial provider (without any follow-up activities or resources) would range from \$25,000 to \$80,000 or more, depending on the level of service.

Q. How can I learn more?

A: For more information about Faculty Forward go to: www.aamc.org/facultyforward or email: facultyforward@aamc.org