

Scientist Development Grant

Application Deadline: Tuesday, February 14, 2017

Award Activation: July 1, 2017

The application must be submitted by 5 p.m. Central Time in Grants@Heart on the deadline date. The application will be submitted to the designated grant officer, who will submit it to the American Heart Association (AHA).

Program Description, Eligibility and Peer Review Criteria

Objective

To support highly promising beginning scientists in cardiovascular and stroke research between their initial research training and their complete independence.

Science Focus

All basic, clinical, and population research broadly related to cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Disciplines

Proposals are encouraged from all basic, behavioral, epidemiological, and community and clinical investigations that bear on cardiovascular and stroke problems.

Target Audience

At the time of application, the applicant must hold an M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M. or equivalent post-baccalaureate doctoral degree.

At the time of award activation:

- Must hold a faculty/staff position up to and including the rank of assistant professor (or equivalent). Applications may be submitted for review in the final year of a postdoctoral research fellowship or in the initial years of the first faculty/staff appointment.
- No more than four years may have elapsed since the first faculty/staff appointment (after receipt of doctoral degree) at the assistant professor level or equivalent (including, but not limited to, research assistant professor, research scientist, staff scientist, etc.).
- A sponsor is not required, although it is important that applicant's Department Head provides assurance that the applicant has the institution's support.
- While no minimum percent effort is required, the applicant must demonstrate that adequate time will be devoted to ensure successful completion of the project.

Citizenship

At the *time of application*, must have one of the following designations:

- United States citizen
- Permanent resident
- Pending permanent resident (any resident who has an approved I-765 form and has submitted an I-485 application with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services).

- E-3 - specialty occupation worker
- H-1B Visa - temporary worker in a specialty occupation. Note: You must have an H-1B or equivalent by the award activation date. If the H-1B or equivalent is not received by the award activation date, the award must be relinquished.
- J-1 Visa - exchange visitor. Note: You must have an H-1B or equivalent by the award activation date. If the H-1B or equivalent is not received by the award activation date, the award must be relinquished.
- O-1 Visa - temporary worker with extraordinary abilities in the sciences.
- TN Visa – North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) professional.
- G-4 Visa - family member of employee of international organizations.

The awardee must maintain one of the designations listed above throughout duration of the award.

Location of Work

The award must be conducted at any accredited institution within the United States. American Heart Association research awards are limited to non-profit institutions, including medical, osteopathic and dental schools, veterinary schools, schools of public health, pharmacy schools, nursing schools, universities and colleges, public and voluntary hospitals and other institutions that can demonstrate the ability to conduct the proposed research. Applications proposed by federal institutions or employees will not be accepted, except for applications to the AHA's Institute for Precision Cardiovascular Medicine, and applications from Veterans Administration employees.

Budget

Funding is prohibited for projects conducted at institutions outside the United States.

Award: \$77,000 per year, including 10% institutional indirect costs.

Salary/Fringe Benefits: Up to 50% of annual project support may be used for salary and fringe benefits of the principal investigator, collaborating investigator(s), and other participants with faculty appointments, consistent with percent effort.

Project Support: Project-related expenses, such as salaries of technical personnel essential to the conduct of the project, supplies, equipment, travel, volunteer subject costs, and publication costs.

- Travel is limited to \$3,000 per year.
- International travel is permitted without prior AHA approval.
- No limit on supplies, equipment, computer/electronics, volunteer subject costs, publication costs, etc.

Award Duration: Three years. Non-renewable.

Total Award Amount: \$231,000

Restrictions

- The applicant may submit only one Scientist Development Grant application per deadline.
- **The applicant may not apply for a Scientist Development Grant and a Grant-in-Aid in the same cycle.**
- The applicant may not be a current or prior recipient of an AHA Scientist Development Grant (affiliate or association-wide).
- The awardee may not hold a comparable award as a source of supplementation.
- At award activation, the awardee may not have current or past extramural funding from a single source greater than \$95,000 per year (excluding indirect costs).
- The awardee may not be a current recipient of any training award, such as the National Institutes of Health mentored K-series award or the AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship.

- The applicant may submit the same or similar application three times (the original plus two resubmissions). The same or similar application submitted the fourth time will be administratively withdrawn.
- Submission of a Scientist Development Grant application that contains content that is identical or significantly similar to that of any other application is prohibited. Both applications will be recommended for disapproval. However, both applications may be funded if aims are not duplicated.
- The awardee may not hold more than one AHA award at the same time.

Exception(s):

a) An investigator may hold two AHA grants concurrently if all three apply:

1. There will be no more than six months remaining on the initial award.
2. The projects have no overlap in specific aims.
3. There is no budgetary overlap between the two projects.

b) An investigator may hold the Innovative Research Grant and one other AHA award.

c) A Fellow-to-Faculty Transition Award recipient may hold a Grant-in-Aid, Innovative Research Grant, or Collaborative Sciences Award during the faculty phase. Only project support is allowed from the second AHA award during the faculty stage of the Fellow-to-Faculty Transition Award.

d) Strategically Focused Research Network personnel may hold individual AHA awards.

Peer Review Criteria

An applicant is prohibited from contacting AHA peer reviewers. This is a form of scientific misconduct and will result in removal of the application from funding consideration and institutional notification of misconduct.

To judge the merit of the application, reviewers will comment on the following criteria. The applicant should fully address these in the proposal.

1. **Future Independence of Investigator:** Is there demonstrated evidence that the award will promote independent status for the applicant by the end of the three- or four-year award? The award is not intended to provide enhanced funding for professional personnel working on the research program of an established scientist.
2. **Significance:** Does this study address an important problem broadly related to cardiovascular disease or stroke? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or clinical practice be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods and technologies that drive this field?
3. **Approach:** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned and feasible (as determined by preliminary data) and appropriate to the aims of the project? The assessment of preliminary data should be put into perspective so that bold new ideas and risk-taking by the beginning investigators are encouraged rather than stymied. Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics? **For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.**
4. **Innovation:** Is the project original and innovative? For example: Does the project challenge existing paradigms and address an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the

field? Does the project develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or technologies for this area?

5. **Investigator:** Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers? Does the investigative team bring complementary and integrated expertise to the project (if applicable)?
6. **Environment:** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed studies benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support as demonstrated in the department head letter?
7. **Impact:** How does this project relate to and support the mission of the American Heart Association to **building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke**

Interim Reporting

Awardee is required to submit an assessment of progress, including research findings, abstracts, publications, and names of trainees supported (if applicable).