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2020 Transformational Project Award

Application Deadline: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Award Activation: July 1, 2020

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 and Eligibility

Statement of Purpose

- To support highly innovative, high-impact projects that build on work in progress that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements that will accelerate the field of cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular research.
- Research deemed innovative may be built around an emerging paradigm, approaching an existing problem from a new perspective, or exhibit other uniquely creative qualities.
- Successful applications are likely to be those building on strong preliminary data supportive of the hypothesis.
- This program aims to provide funding that should lead to successful competition for additional funding beyond the award period. The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for clearly and explicitly articulating the project's innovation and the potential impact on cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular research.

Science Focus

The AHA funds basic, clinical, behavioral, translational and population research, bioengineering/biotechnology and public health problems broadly related to fulfilling our mission to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.

Disciplines

AHA awards are open to the array of academic and health professionals. This includes but is not limited to all academic disciplines (biology, chemistry, mathematics, technology, physics, engineering, etc.) and all health-related professions (physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists physical and occupational therapists, statisticians, nutritionists, etc.).

Clinical, translational, population, and basic scientists are encouraged to apply. AHA maintains dedicated Peer Review Committees by award type and subject. The extent to which the focus of the project is related to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular diseases is an important factor that will be considered. The applicant is not required to be a part of cardiovascular/cerebrovascular-oriented laboratory, clinic or department.



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AHA strongly encourages applications by women, underrepresented minorities in the sciences, and those who have experienced varied and non-traditional career trajectories.

Target Audience

At the time of award activation:

- The candidate must hold a post-baccalaureate Ph.D. degree or equivalent, or a doctoral-level clinical degree, such as M.D., D.O., D.V.M., Pharm.D., or Ph.D. in nursing, public health, or other clinical health science.
- This program places no limit on eligibility based on career stage, academic rank or discipline. It requires only evidence of a faculty/staff position, above the rank of trainee/postdoctoral fellow, at a qualified institution.
- While no minimum percent effort is specified, the principal investigator must demonstrate that adequate time will be devoted to ensuring successful completion of the proposed 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 Visa - specialty occupation worker.
- H1-B Visa - temporary worker in a specialty occupation.
- J-1 Visa - exchange visitor.
- 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 the duration of the award.

Eligible Sponsoring Institution

American Heart Association research awards are limited to U.S.-based 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 others that can demonstrate the ability to conduct the proposed research.

Applications will not be accepted for work with funding to be administered through any federal institution or work to be performed by a federal employee, except for Veterans Administrations



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employees.

Budget

Annual Award Amount: \$100,000, including 10 percent indirect costs

The award may be used for salary and fringe benefits of the principal investigator, collaborating investigator(s), and other participants with faculty appointments, and for project-related expenses, such as salaries of technical personnel essential to the conduct of the project, supplies, equipment, computers/electronics, travel (including international travel), volunteer subject costs, and publication costs, etc. The proposed budget must be justified in the application.

Award Duration: Three years.

Total Award Amount: \$300,000

Restrictions

- AHA does not permit resubmission of a previous Transformational Project Award application.
- Resubmission of an application to the former AHA Innovative Research Grant program will not be accepted.
- An applicant may submit a maximum of one Transformational Project Award per deadline.
- In addition, applicants to this program may submit to the Innovative Project Award program, and may submit **one** investigator-based application (Career Development Award, Established Investigator Award, or AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award) per fiscal year.
- The Transformational Project Award **may be held concurrently** with another Association award; however, the projects must have clearly distinct aims, with no scientific or budgetary overlap.
- Transformational Project Awards are not renewable. An awardee may submit an application for a new Transformational Project Award, provided the projects are separate in nature and concept.
- Awards are not intended to supplement or duplicate currently funded work.
- The project submitted may have no scientific or budgetary overlap with other funded work.
- Postdoctoral fellows and others in research training positions at the time of application must obtain a faculty appointment by the award activation date.

Peer Review Criteria

Contacting AHA peer reviewers concerning your application is deemed a form of scientific misconduct and will result in the removal of your application from funding consideration and institutional notification of ethical concerns.

To judge the merit of the application, reviewers will comment on the following criteria. Please be sure that you fully address these in your proposal.



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1. **Preliminary Data:** Does the proposal build on strong preliminary results that already show a high probability of revealing new avenues of investigation?
2. **Innovation:** Is this a highly innovative, high impact proposal, based on work in progress, that could ultimately lead to critical breakthroughs or major advancements that will accelerate the field? For example: Does the proposal challenge existing paradigms and present an innovative hypothesis or address a critical barrier to progress in the field? Does the proposal develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area?
3. **Impact:** Does the proposal have high probability to have a sustained and powerful influence on the field(s)? How does this proposal relate to and support the mission of the American Heart Association to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives? How effectively does the applicant describe for an audience without a science background how this proposal will impact the AHA's mission? Consider how the proposal addresses overall health and wellbeing, anchored in cardiovascular and brain health; focusing on breakthrough science and technology; changes in systems and policy; and engaging with individuals to transform communities. Does the science accelerate the discovery, interpretation and application of scientific knowledge to enhance and treat cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular diseases? Evaluation of this criterion should heavily rely on the lay summary section of the application and any lay reviewers' impressions.
4. **Significance:** Does this proposal address an important problem directly related to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular diseases? If the aims of the application are achieved, will knowledge or clinical practice be significantly impacted? Will there be an effect on the concepts, methods, and technologies that drive this field?
5. **Approach:** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned and appropriate to the aims of the proposal? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
6. **Investigator:** Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work even if a new area of investigation? Does the investigative team bring complementary, appropriately qualified, and integrated expertise to the proposal (if applicable)?
7. **Environment:** Does the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Does the proposal demonstrate that resources will be available to complete the project? Does the proposal benefit from specific features of the environment, or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements?

Access the AHA Precision Medicine Platform for your Application

The AHA Precision Medicine Platform is creating a community of cloud-based tools and resources for all cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease researchers. [Learn more about the platform \(video\)](#). AHA awardees can have complimentary access to the Precision Medicine Platform to perform data analyses during the length of their AHA awards. [Explore the capabilities of the platform \(video\)](#).

The Precision Medicine Platform adheres to [HIPAA \(pdf\)](#) policy and is [FedRAMP \(pdf\)](#) compliant. Only the applicant and collaborators, co-investigators, or lab members are permitted access. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that all individuals with access to the workspace have the appropriate data access approvals.

To qualify for a complimentary Precision Medicine Platform workspace during the award, applicants must use a secure complimentary trial workspace on the Precision Medicine Platform to link preliminary data analyses and provide a description of the tools to be used in the workspace to



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analyze and visualize data. The workspace will only be available until the deadline for this AHA application. Data in the trial workspace will not be saved after the application deadline.

Register to obtain a 30-day trial workspace to use during the application period. Once registered, go to the Search page, click Request Workspace, complete the form, and Submit. Note: While the request form mentions billing, but there is no charge for use of the Precision Medicine Platform during the trial period. [View detailed instructions and helpful information \(pdf\)](#).