

**AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION  
STRATEGICALLY FOCUSED RESEARCH NETWORK**

**CENTER DIRECTOR  
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

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## Organization of Center Application

The development of each Center and its subsequent applications will be the responsibility of the Center Director, who will coordinate the projects and the training program.

The Center's complete submission is composed of:

- proposed Center Director's application (which includes a summary of the Center's vision, synergy of proposed science, qualifications of key team members, resources/environment, history of collaboration, training program information, and budgets)
- research projects in these areas of science discovery, as mandated by each RFA: basic, clinical, population science disciplines. All will focus on the determined research area or disease.

The AHA should receive **1+n separate electronic applications from each Center**, where 1 corresponds to the Center Director application and n=the number of research projects proposed.

## General Instructions

This set of instructions should be used by the proposed Center Director. All applications must be submitted in English.

Before preparing the application, be sure to review the description of the award in the Request for Applications (RFA) available on our [website](#).

The electronic Center Director application is to be prepared for the first phase of peer review. Finalists will be notified regarding the second phase of review, which will include an in-person presentation to the peer review committee by the proposed Center Director and Project PIs.

Only **ONE CENTER APPLICATION PER INSTITUTION** will be accepted. It is the responsibility of the submitting institution to ensure that only one Center proposal is submitted from the institution, or to coordinate across several institutions to create a single Center application.

If strong rationale is provided, an opportunity exists to train a future Center Director within the terms of the grant period. If this option is selected, compelling justification must be provided within the narrative of the Center application.

## Use of AHA Forms and Electronic Submission

The AHA has implemented a Web-based tool, [Grants@Heart](#), to manage the entire application process. The system is available to all AHA research customers, including applicants, grants officers, fiscal officers, peer reviewers, awardees and more. The system is accessible 24/7 from any location with internet capabilities.

**PLEASE NOTE:** [Grants@Heart](#) will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity.

## Requirements

While the application is completed via [Grants@Heart](#), several forms must be prepared outside of the system and then uploaded via PDF document into the appropriate location within the application. Grants@Heart does not accept document uploads in Microsoft Word format.

For all text in documents which you create the following are AHA **requirements:**

- Only Portable Document Format (PDF) files will be accepted

- Files must be single spaced
- No more than 15 characters per inch (cpi) or an average of no more than 15 cpi (cpi includes symbols, punctuation and spaces)
- No less than ¾" margins allowed
- Sixty (60) lines per page are the maximum allowed. (The average number of lines per page using the font and point size below will be approximately 50-55 lines.)
- Arial Font Style, 12 point font size for Windows users; Helvetica Font style, 12 point font size for Macintosh users
- Figures, charts, tables, and figure legends may be smaller in size but must be clear and legible.

**It is essential that the text complies exactly with the Association's type specifications and page limits. Failure to comply will result in administrative withdrawal of the application.**

The AHA has the responsibility to make the final determination of conformance to format requirements and the authority to withdraw applications. This decision is final and not subject to appeal.

The complete Center Director application (text, document uploads, required CV's and citations, institutional signoff, etc.) must be submitted and completed via [Grants@Heart](mailto:Grants@Heart).

For questions regarding this process or for technical assistance, please contact:

**General Questions**

[SFRN@heart.org](mailto:SFRN@heart.org)

**Technical Assistance**

(214) 360-6107

[login@heart.org](mailto:login@heart.org)

**Institutional Additions**

[institutions@heart.org](mailto:institutions@heart.org)

## Application Deadline

The Center application and all its component parts must be submitted electronically via [Grants@Heart](mailto:Grants@Heart) by **5:00 p.m. Central Time on the deadline**. The current Network application deadline can be found [here](#).

The component parts of a complete Center application include:

- One (1) center director application
- Research projects applications, refer to the RFA for specific mandates

The submission site is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. *Applicants are strongly advised to complete their required electronic submission prior to the deadline date.* Applicants who encounter technical difficulties with the electronic submission must contact the AHA office at the numbers above prior to the deadline (5:00 p.m. Central Time) to resolve the situation. Otherwise, their applications will be rejected.

**LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

## Restrictions and Administrative Withdrawal Policies

No supplementary materials (additional preliminary data, new publications, etc.) will be accepted after the application deadline (with the exception of documentation requested by AHA staff).

Applicants should never contact reviewers regarding their applications since discussion of the scientific content of an application or an attempt to influence review outcome will constitute a conflict of interest in the review. Reviewers are directed to notify the AHA if an applicant contacts them. Applications will be presented for review as received

All applications and proposals for AHA funding must be self-contained within specific page limitations. Internet web site addresses (URLs) may not be used within the uploaded documents to provide information necessary to the review because reviewers are under no obligation to view the internet sites. Moreover, the reviewers are cautioned that they should not directly access an internet site as it could compromise their anonymity.

The only place a URL may be used is in the biographical sketch as described in the instructions for that form. *Provide a URL to a full list of your published work as found in a publicly available digital database such as SciENcv or My Bibliography, which are maintained by the US National Library of Medicine.*

Your application may be administratively withdrawn if you do not comply with format requirements (type size/characters per inch, lines per page, and page limitations) listed in the Requirements section above.

**No modifications may be made to the application after electronic submission.**

## **Timeline**

The timeline, from application submission to award activation, is provided on the [website](#).

## **Application Submission**

All components of Center Director's application are to be completed/uploaded via [Grants@Heart](#).

## **Accessing Grants@Heart**

An individual must be registered as a Principal Investigator with Grants@Heart to apply for research funding from the Association.

### **1. First-time Applicants**

First-time applicants must create a user ID and password by completing the user registration. On the Grants@Heart login page, click the link "First time applicant, please register here". Data fields marked with a red asterisk are required and must be completed. After you complete the registration, please wait for the authentication email to gain access to the system.

### **2. Returning Users/Applicants**

Returning users should use their existing user ID and password. If you have a role other than Principal Investigator, do not re-register. This will create another user account. You can add the Principal Investigator role to your existing user account. You only need one user account with Grants@Heart. If you have questions about how to add a role to your existing user account, please contact our office at 214-360-6107.

The user ID and password are case sensitive. You will use the same user login each time you access Grants@Heart. If you do not remember your login information, please click the "Did you forget your ID or Password?" link on the login page. After the fourth failed attempt to log in, the system will lock you out for one hour. If you encounter login issues or need instructions on how to register, please contact our office or email [SFRN@heart.org](mailto:SFRN@heart.org).

Note: AHA uses sign-on process for accessing Grants@Heart and the following websites:

- Professional Heart Daily

- Professional Education Center
- Instructor Network
- eBooks.heart.org
- eLearning.heart.org
- Simple Cooking With Heart
- extranet.heart.org
- NFL PLAY 60

If you are having problems signing in, please use “Forgot Password” to reset your account.

## Starting an Application

Once you have logged into Grants@Heart, on the left-hand navigation click on “Application Administration.” Then click “Create a New Application.” From the “Select a Funding Component” drop down list, select “Association Wide.” From the “Select Program” drop down list, click “AWRP \_\_\_{date}\_\_ CENTER Strategically Focused Research Network.”

Each Center Director, after they have started their CENTER application must identify their Project PIs on the Third-Party Personnel tab **BEFORE** those individuals will be able to start their PROJECT application. If you do not identify your Research Project PIs in a timely manner, they will have difficulty starting and completing their PROJECT applications before the deadline.

Each applicant is required to either be an American Heart Association Professional Member at any level or to pay the application submission fee. This fee helps to defray the administrative cost of processing applications, therefore making more funds available for research awards.

Check mark the box acknowledging your understanding of the AHA’s membership/application fee requirement. You will provide your membership number or credit card information later in the application process. Join or renew online prior to the application deadline to avoid delays in membership validation. If you register by phone, **it may take up to five business days** for your membership to be active in the system.

**PLEASE NOTE: Each Center Director and his/her Research Project PIs must provide their AHA membership number, become a member, or pay the application fee.** Until an applicant joins/renews AHA Professional Membership or pays the fee, she/he will not be able to submit the application to the Grants Officer. Questions about the membership/application fee requirement may be directed to [SFRN@heart.org](mailto:SFRN@heart.org).

Applicants may join or renew their membership via a link in the Grants@Heart application site. Applicants who opt to pay the application fee, instead of joining, will be required to enter credit card information prior to submitting their application to the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer then approves and submits that application to AHA on behalf of the applicant and institution.

Click the “Continue” button.

### 1. The Pre-Submission Questionnaire

The first step in the application process is completing the program questionnaire. The questionnaire asks a series of questions to help determine whether you are eligible to apply for the Strategically Focused Research Network. If you have not done so already, please review the Request for Applications for this program.

If eligibility is determined by the answers provided, you will be granted access to complete an application. If you miss any question, you will receive a message that you provided an unacceptable response (or responses) to the questionnaire. You will be given an opportunity to explain your response(s).

**PLEASE NOTE:** Our staff is monitoring the questionnaires. Someone will be in contact with you regarding the explanation you provided to the incorrect response. If the explanation is acceptable, you will be allowed to continue with the application process.

## 2. Dual Submissions

Applicants may see a screen asking if they are completing this application for a dual submission. Select "No" as Center and Project applications cannot be dual submissions and require separate/distinct documentation.

## Preparing Your Application

Many sections of the application may be prepared prior to beginning the submission process in [Grants@Heart](mailto:Grants@Heart). Adherence to specified page limit and format requirements is necessary.

Internet Web site addresses (URLs) may not be used to provide information necessary to the review because reviewers are under no obligation to view the internet sites. Moreover, the reviewers are cautioned that they should not directly access an internet site as it could compromise their anonymity.

The only place a URL may be used is in the biographical sketch as described in the instructions for that form. *Provide a URL to a full list of your published work as found in a publicly available digital database such as SciENcv or My Bibliography, which are maintained by the US National Library of Medicine.*

The AHA has the responsibility to make the final determination of conformance to format requirements and the authority to withdraw applications. This decision is final and not subject to appeal.

Required documents for this program can be found on our [website](#). Before submitting the application to the AHA, please double check each section of the application and ensure all required documents have been uploaded. You will not be able to modify or change the application or its content once it is submitted to AHA.

## APPLICATION SECTIONS

The sections of the application are listed in the left navigation on your screen. You may follow the standard flow of the application by clicking the Continue button at the bottom of each page. You may also select the section you want to work on by clicking on it in the left navigation.

There are question marks throughout the application sections to explain what information is required in each section.

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is important to save entries in each section or data may be lost.

## 1. Advanced Profile

In this section of the application, you will provide information about you, your academic career, professional time, citizenship, location of work for the research project and college degrees.

**a. Profile – Current Information**

The information displayed in the “Profile –Current Information” tab is from your original Grants@Heart system registration. To update or change this information at any time click on “Profile Manager” at the top of the screen.

**b. Other Required Profile Information**

Complete all fields in this section.

Country of Citizenship – Select the name of your country of citizenship from the drop down list. If the country is not on this list, type in the name of the country.

Be very specific as to the **immigration status** you have. If **not** a U.S. citizen but currently in the U.S. with a visa, select the appropriate status from the drop-down list. (U.S. citizens should leave blank.) All non-U.S. citizen applicants must have an acceptable visa status at time of application.

Applicants who have been lawfully admitted for permanent residence, i.e., are in possession of a Permanent Resident Card (formerly known as Alien Registration Card) or other legal verification of such status (such as I-551 stamp in passport), should choose Permanent Resident.

Applicants who have applied for permanent residency should choose Permanent Resident/Pending from the drop-down list. Only applicants who have filed form I-485 with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and who have received authorization to legally remain in the U.S. (having filed an Application for Employment form I-765) should choose Permanent Resident/Pending.

Awardees must meet AHA citizenship criteria throughout the duration of their awards.

Academic Title - enter your anticipated title at time of award activation.

Academic Position - Select anticipated academic position at time of award activation from drop-down list.

Career Stage - review the descriptions of career stage below and select most appropriate current career stage from drop-down list. These descriptions are requested for aggregate program evaluation purposes only.

**Career Stage**

<b>Gaining Credentials</b> Doctoral candidate PhD, MD, MD/PhD, DO/PhD, or DVM/PhD or equivalent students	Attaining graduate credentials.
<b>Directed Step</b> Postdoctoral fellow PhD, MD/PhD or DO/PhD, MD, DO, DVM or equivalent	Building a career in research.
<b>First Independent Step</b> Instructor or other first academic appointment	Establishing independent status. Acquiring preliminary results as a basis for developing grant
<b>Intermediate Level</b> Assistant professor or equivalent Entry not more than 8 years after PhD or subspecialty board eligibility (MD or DO)	Strengthening independent status. Acquiring new knowledge through research.



<b>Recognized Investigator</b> Associate professor or equivalent Professor or equivalent	Acquiring new knowledge through research. Establishing new research direction. Acquiring preliminary results as a basis for developing grant application.
<b>Research Group Leader</b> Professor or equivalent	Stimulating newly emerging areas of research. Strengthening research.

**c. Other Personal Information**

While none of the requested information in this tab is required, please help the AHA to gather demographics on our awardees and complete as many fields as are comfortable for you.

**d. Institution Information**

This tab collects information on the institution where work will be done. This also represents the institution that will be financially responsible for the activities supported by the award. If you would like to use your current institution (the one in your Profile Manager) as the institution where work will be done, check mark the box at the top of the tab.

**PLEASE NOTE:** You cannot type into the Institution text box. To search for an institution, you must click on the Search button which generates a pop-up box. Enter a minimal amount of information (such as Missouri or Calif) to return the most possible matches, rather than an exact name. Select the correct institution from the list and close the window.

Enter the name of your Department and Division at the institution where work will be done.

**e. Professional Time Usage Detail**

Information regarding the amount of time you spend in each of these categories is collected in this section. The total of all areas must equal 100%. If you do not spend time in one of the areas, enter a zero "0."

**f. Degree 1**

From the drop-down box select the first degree received beginning with a Bachelor's degree. Include the field of study, institution from which you received the degree and the date the degree was conferred. To add doctoral degrees, click on the "Add Another" button **after** you hit the "Save" button in the tab. List all upper degrees earned to date.

**2. Project Summary**

**a. Percent Effort**

List the percent effort that you will devote to the Center. There is a 20% minimum percent effort requirement for the Center Director.

**b. Project Title**

Enter the name of your Center based on your network's overarching theme. Do not to exceed 120 letters and spaces. Do not use abbreviations unless absolutely necessary.

**c. Project Summary**

Under the project summary section give a short description of your center. Be sure to state the specific aims of your center, followed by the list of the projects that will be submitted with the Center

application. Include the name and degree of each Principal Investigator of the research project, followed by the science type of their research project. These should be listed as: PI last name, Research Classification Type (Basic, Clinical, Population)

Refer to the RFA for the number of research projects required per Center. All projects must be related to the topic of the research network.

**PLEASE NOTE:** You should not enter special characters and formatting (such as super or subscripts, special characters, Greek symbols, italics, underlining, bolding, etc.) into this field. Only enter text characters in the Project Summary field.

### 3. Science Classification

As Center Director, please select the science type you most align with. This particular field is less important on the Center Application but more important on the Project Applications.

#### a. Research Classification Type

Select the Research Type that best fits the research being conducted in your lab. Indicate whether your research is translational in nature. These classifications are independent of each other and will not affect the peer review of your application.

The American Heart Association is frequently asked to categorize the research it is funding by a number of different categories. These requests can originate with our donors, the general public or our many volunteers.

#### b. Major Science Classification

Choose BOTH a Major Classification 1 and a Major Classification 2. These choices will ensure that the AHA recruits appropriate Peer Reviewers. Then select up to 6 sub-classifications to match your application to the appropriate scientific expert. To view the current science classifications, visit our [website](#).

### 4. Research Classification

Complete this section by indicating whether your research is closely or broadly CVD and Stroke –related. Locate your research type in either of the boxes and then select the corresponding radio button.

### 5. Institutional Personnel

Institutional personnel are those associated with the Applicant’s (Center Director’s) institution, such as a Grants Officer, Fiscal Officer and Immediate Supervisor. These personnel will not need to provide any supporting documentation for the application.

#### a. Current Supervisor

Complete all required fields with information regarding your current, immediate Supervisor.

#### b. Grants Officer

Grants Officers must be selected from the list of registered users. Contact your grants office to make sure you are selecting the correct person from the list. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO SELECT THE CORRECT GRANTS OFFICER AS THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION TO THE AHA.** Selecting the incorrect person may result in your application not getting submitted to AHA by the established deadline.

If the person you have been instructed to select is not on the list, please confirm that they are registered users with Grants@Heart.

**c. Fiscal Officer**

Fiscal Officers must be selected from the list of registered users. Contact your grants office to make sure you are selecting the correct person from the list. It is important to select the correct Fiscal Officer as they are responsible for the annual submission of financial reports to the AHA.

If the person you have been instructed to select is not on the list, please confirm that they are registered users with Grants@Heart.

**6. Third Party Personnel**

The applicant must identify the persons associated with his/her application and their role in the Center.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Each Center application can have **only one** (1) Center Director. Co-Directors will not be recognized on official documents or publications.

Some third-party roles (such as Department Head) are required by the program and will appear automatically in your online application. Other third-party roles are “optional” and may be added if needed (such as a collaborating investigator or consultant).

Some third parties are required to submit documentation of support. Details on the different types of supporting documentation required from third parties can be found throughout this instruction manual and on our [website](#).

All third parties should complete their supporting documentation and send it to the applicant by email. The applicant will be responsible for uploading all supporting documents into Grants@Heart.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The application cannot be submitted without the supporting documentation; therefore, it is important to notify third parties of the deadline for submitting the application.

**a. Department Head**

Complete all required fields with information regarding the current Department Head. If work will be done at a different institution from your current institution, please provide information regarding the chair of the department where work will be done.

If the Center Director is also the Department Head, please fill out this section with their information.

A letter from the Department Head assuring the department’s and the institution’s support of the Center along with confirmation that the Center Director will devote at least 20% effort towards the Center should be uploaded to this section. If the Center Director is also the Department Head, please include a letter from the Department Head’s supervisor with the requested information.

**b. Center Project PIs**

The system pre-populates Center Project PI information cards. Each Center is required to have the number of research projects mandated by the RFA. If the Center Director will be a Principal Investigator on one of the research projects, fill out one of the cards with their information.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Only click the check mark box on the individual's card you are completing if they work at your institution.

Working with one card at a time, complete all required fields with information on the Principal Investigators of the research projects that the Center will undertake.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Take special care in entering in the Project PI names into the system. If there are typos and you hit the save button, you will not be able to change any of the information on that card. In order to make ANY changes to their information, you must delete their card and then add a new Project PI card to your application and re-enter their information. If you must delete their card and add a new one, you should contact the Project PI and instruct them to use the invitation link in their most recent email. We cannot stress how important it is to complete the Project PIs cards carefully.

Once you have identified the Project PIs for the Center, Grants@Heart will automatically send these individuals an email inviting them to begin their PROJECT application. These invitation emails are specific to each particular Project PI and should NOT be shared among the Project PIs. Sharing will create an error in the system and their "link" to the CENTER application will be lost. The Project PIs must follow the instructions provided to them in their personalized invitation email in order to successfully have their project application linked with your Center Director application. A letter of support from each Center Project PI should be uploaded to this section. Each letter should include a brief overview of their qualifications and experience in research related to the topic of the Network; their commitment to collaborating with individuals at their respective Center and those located at the other Centers in the Network. There is a 2-page maximum for this letter.

If the Center Director will also be a Center Project PI, he/she should upload a one-page document that states "Applicant is also Center Director."

#### **c. Center Training Director**

Complete all required fields with information regarding the Center Training Director. This individual will be responsible for the recruitment of fellows along with coordination, implementation, oversight and other aspects of the Center Fellowship training program. If the Center Director is also the Center Training Director, please fill out this section with your information.

A biographical sketch and letter of support from the Center Training Director should be uploaded to this section. The letter should include a brief overview of their experience, along with their commitment to multidisciplinary training of postdoctoral fellows and the Center. There is a 5-page maximum for the biographical sketch and 2-page maximum for the letter of support.

If the Center Director will also be the Center Training Director, he/she should upload a one-page document that states "Center Director is also Center Training Director."

#### **d. Add More Third-Party Roles**

Use this area to add any other **key Center team members not previously listed**. The following is a list of potential key team members:

- **Collaborating Investigator(s)**

A collaborating investigator is an individual who contributes in a substantive way to the scientific development or execution of the project. Typically, these individuals have doctoral or other professional degrees and would devote a specific percent of effort to the project.

If a "Collaborating Investigator" is identified, their biographical sketch and a letter of support from him/her will need to be uploaded to this section by the Center Director. The letter should provide a

brief overview of their qualifications, experience and commitment relative to the research project. There is a 5-page maximum for the biographical sketch and 2-page maximum for the letter of support.

- **Consultant(s)**

A Consultant is an individual who contributes to the scientific development or execution of the project in a discrete way; typically, a consultant has a doctoral or other professional degree. He/she may provide discrete services which are performed in a limited window of time or occasionally contribute a specific method/technique/analysis or materials for the project.

If a "Consultant" is identified, their biographical sketch and a letter of support from him/her will need to be uploaded to this section by the Center Director. The letter should provide a brief overview of their qualifications, experience and commitment relative to the research project. There is a 5-page maximum for the biographical sketch and 2-page maximum for the letter of support.

- **Other Professional(s)**

The term Other Professional describes is an individual who may hold a doctoral, masters or baccalaureate degree or its equivalent and who is considered a professional. Examples of persons included in this category are analysts, biostatisticians, computer programmers, veterinarians, nurse coordinators, epidemiologists, etc.

If an "Other Professional" is identified, their biographical sketch and a letter of support from him/her will need to be uploaded to this section by the Center Director. The letter should provide a brief overview of their qualifications, experience and commitment relative to the work they will perform for the Center. There is a 5-page maximum for the biographical sketch and 2-page maximum for the letter of support.

## 7. Lay Research Form

Please complete the form in its entirety. The lay research form will be used by people who do not have scientific or medical backgrounds. Please be as clear as possible in your descriptions. Imagine you are describing this research to an elementary school student and use language and terminology accordingly within the Lay Research Summary form.

- a. **Research Categories**

Please select up to 5 research categories that relate to the Center's research.

- b. **Lay Research**

Enter information in all 3 boxes in relation to the Center as a whole. Please be clear and concise with the information you provide. A sample is provided as to how a correct lay research summary should be prepared.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Each box of the Lay Research section allows for **only 800** characters including spaces.

- c. **PI Permission**

This section deals with AHA's ability to raise donor dollars to help support our research efforts. AHA does not share intellectual property.

## 8. Budget

The entire Center Budget is tied to the Director's application. **The total amount requested, including 10% indirect costs (IDC), may not exceed the total award amount for the 4-year award period.**

Below is the estimated total budget allowed for each funded Center.

<p><b>Center Network Budget Details</b>  <i>The total dollar amount referenced in the RFA is the amount available for the entire Center. This includes all funds available for the Center Director as well as each project budget across all years. All budget details added together cannot exceed this amount.</i></p>	<p>Refer to the RFA for the total award amount</p>																																								
<p><b>Budget Allocation</b>  <i>The Center Director and all Project PIs entered from Third Party Personnel section are listed here. Allocate the total dollar amount for the Center budget and each project budget in the Total Funds boxes. This will be the total amount that you and each Project PI cannot exceed when completing the "Budget Details" section of your respective applications. The allocated amount for the Center and the project budgets cannot exceed the available dollar amount for the entire Center.</i></p>	<p>Center Director: \$ 580,800  Sum of Projects: Refer to the RFA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project budget do not have to be an equal division but may be divided up as the Center Director sees fit.</li> <li>• Note that travel to an annual Network meeting MUST be budgeted for as Center Directors, Training Directors, Project PIs and fellows are mandated to attend all of the annual and/or semi-annual Network meeting.</li> </ul>																																								
<p><b>Budget Details – Center Director</b>  <i>Enter the budget details for the Center only. Each of the Project PIs will enter their budget details on their own application. The total budget details entered cannot exceed the budget allocated for the Center in the Budget Allocation section.</i>  <i>*Other Center Expenses can be used Center Training Director Salary (if Training Director is not Center Director)</i></p>	<p>Example:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="703 1199 1425 1633"> <thead> <tr> <th>Salary/Fringe</th> <th>\$50,000</th> <th>\$50,000</th> <th>\$50,000</th> <th>\$50,000</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Center Fellows</td> <td>\$50,000 (salary for 1 Fellow)</td> <td>\$100,000 (salary for 2 Fellows)</td> <td>\$100,000 (salary for 2 Fellows)</td> <td>\$50,000 (salary for 1 Fellow)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Center Travel</td> <td>\$7,000</td> <td>\$7,000</td> <td>\$7,000</td> <td>\$7,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Center Expenses*</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indirect Costs</td> <td>\$10,700</td> <td>\$15,700</td> <td>\$15,700</td> <td>\$10,700</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Subtotal</td> <td>\$117,700</td> <td>\$172,700</td> <td>\$172,700</td> <td>\$117,700</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>\$580,800</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Salary/Fringe	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	Center Fellows	\$50,000 (salary for 1 Fellow)	\$100,000 (salary for 2 Fellows)	\$100,000 (salary for 2 Fellows)	\$50,000 (salary for 1 Fellow)	Center Travel	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000	Other Center Expenses*					Indirect Costs	\$10,700	\$15,700	\$15,700	\$10,700	Subtotal	\$117,700	\$172,700	\$172,700	\$117,700						Total	\$580,800			
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**PLEASE NOTE:** If the Center is funded, a detailed budget will be required at award activation time which will require institutional Grant’s Officer approval and should be in accordance with Association guidelines. This budget will be presented to the Oversight Advisory Committee for final approval.

## 9. Funds Available

Available funding information is required for all applications and is used to check for alternative or overlap issues between the proposed research and other current or pending projects.

If you do not have funds available to you, please select “no.” If you have funds available, please select “yes.” Go to our [website](#) to view our policies and standards on “Alternative” and “Overlapping” designations.

If you selected “yes,” list all research project support available to you (active, approved, or pending) for funding. List NIH project grants, NIH K awards, portions of NIH program projects, SCOR or Center grants, NIH contracts, Veterans Administration funds, NSF grants, NASA grants, contracts from industry, grants from other non-federal health agencies (including AHA components), any funds available to you through other Investigators, and departmental/institutional support.

Please do not mark departmental/institutional support as alternative to the AHA application.

For “**Total Award**”, enter award dollars, stipend/project dollars, and direct costs for all years of award excluding indirect costs. For the “**Total Amount Available to Applicant**”, enter all award dollars available to the applicant, stipend/project dollars, direct costs for all years of award excluding indirect costs. In some instances, this amount may be the same as the Total Award Amount. For “**Annual Amount Available to Applicant**,” enter all direct costs minus salary and fringe of principal investigator, excluding indirect costs. If annual amount is staggered, give an average of the annual amount.

Click Save. If you have further research support to list, you may “Add Another” by clicking on the buttons at the bottom of the page.

### **Alternative (pending or planned applications)**

An application must be identified as alternative if submitted to more than one granting agency for the same or closely related project and/or in which there are duplicate budgetary requests.

### **Overlapping (active or approved applications)**

An award must be identified as overlapping if it supports the same or closely related projects and/or in which there are duplicated budgetary requests. The applicant can accept the Association award only if he/she relinquishes the overlapping application.

After the grant application is reviewed by the Association, the alternative designation of the project or the budget cannot be changed in order to accommodate any partial alternative funding. The applicant is not allowed to adjust the scientific aims or budget of an AHA application to accommodate any overlap resulting from funding of an alternative application by another funding agency. One hundred percent (100%) duplication between applications is not a requirement for an application to be deemed alternative or overlapping. The applicant can accept only one award if more than one is to be approved for funding. After award activation, if a subsequent funding agency eliminates all overlap (scientific and budgetary), the awardee may keep the Association award, pending review and approval by the Research Committee.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research funds will not be awarded to supplement or duplicate any work which is being supported by other funding agencies.

## 10. Research Subjects/Assurances

While assurances are not required for Center Applications, the Center Director and his/her institution are

still responsible for compliance with all American Heart Association research award policies and guidelines for the duration of the award.

Click the "Save" button and then continue.

## **11. Science/Evaluation Information**

Information regarding the various document uploads for the Science/Evaluation Information section of the application can be found in the "Supporting Documents" portion of our [website](#).

To upload a document, click the "Browse" button, find the document on your computer and then click "open." Once you see the file name in the browse box, click the "Save" button in the section.

If at any time, prior to submission, you need to update the uploaded document, click on the "Browse" button in the section in question, find the updated version of the document on your computer and click "open." Once you see the updated file name in the "Browse" box, click the "Save" button and the new document will replace the old one.

### **a. Applicant/PI Biographical Sketch (5-page maximum)**

The information required in the biographical sketch is similar in format to the PHS SF424(R&R) Biographical Sketch used by the NIH. If you have a copy of a current biographical sketch that you submitted with an NIH application, you may use it for your AHA application. An uploaded NIH biosketch does not have to adhere to the font and margin requirements listed earlier in this document.

If you are using an NIH Biographical Sketch, please note the section for Variances from Ordinary Career Progression. If any of these circumstances apply to you, be sure to add this information to the biographical sketch provided to the AHA (within the five pages allowed).

If you don't have an NIH Biographical Sketch, create your biographical sketch using the outline on our [website](#).

In the biographical sketch, please do not confuse "Research Support" with "Funds Available". Though they sound similar, these parts of the application are very different. As part of the biographical sketch section of the application, "Research Support" highlights your accomplishments. This information is used by the reviewers in the assessment of each individual's qualifications. In contrast, Funds Available information is required for all grant applications and is used to check for alternative or overlap issues with the current proposed research.

Do not exceed five (5) pages for the entire AHA Biographical Sketch (including bibliography). A document that exceeds the page limit will be rejected by Grants@Heart.

### **b. Budget Justification (2-page maximum)**

A Budget Justification form is provided on our [website](#). Provide information on the three required sections:

- Personnel - list any personnel who will receive funds from the Center. Provide name, degree(s), percent of time to be devoted to Center and a description of their role in the Center. All personnel receiving salary or consultant fees from the Center should be listed, such as the Research Project



Principal Investigators, Consultants, Collaborating Investigators and Other Professionals.

- Computer/equipment – the AHA does not in general favor project support requests wherein the budget is devoted primarily to equipment purchase. However, such costs may be allowed if the equipment is essential to the conduct of the proposed research, well justified, and approved by the peer review committee and Research Committee. Any computer equipment cost equal to or greater than \$5,000 should be listed, with a brief justification. Total annual equipment costs (exclusive of computer equipment above) equal to or greater than \$10,000 should be listed, with a brief justification.
- Center Travel – travel to required Oversight Advisory Committee or Center Network meetings does not need to be included in the budget justification. Anticipated travel expenditures for the Center Director and Center Fellows outside of these required meetings should be justified here. The final approval for any excess travel funds will be provided by the Peer Review Committee and Oversight Advisory Committee if the application is funded. Travel for the research projects are to be addressed on the research project applications and not here.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If a Center is funded, a detailed budget will be required at award activation time which will require institutional Grants Officer approval and should be in accordance with Association Guidelines. This detailed budget will be presented to the Oversight Advisory Committee for final approval.

**c. Research Project Environment (2-page maximum)**

Describe relevant institutional resources and environment, including unique facilities and affiliated institutions or geographic relationships. The Center application should describe the scope of the clinical and laboratory facilities available, along with shared facilities that provide centralized services to multiple projects and analytical resources.

The AHA has a template form that outlines the information that should be included in this document. You may access the template by clicking on the question mark in this section of the application or from our [website](#).

You are allowed to use information from a current Resources form prepared for an NIH application. You may copy and paste the information from the NIH Resources form into the Research Project Environment form. If you need a more extensive description, you may add one additional page behind this form.

**d. Publications (reprints – no page limit)**

There is no page limit on publications (reprints). Upload **three** of the most pertinent publications that list you as an author. If none are considered pertinent to the work being proposed by the Center, submit three other publications that best represent your work. These publications may be Published or In Press (meaning that it was accepted for publication, but the publication has yet to be distributed).

**e. Literature Cited (no page limit)**

As the Center Director is not required to upload a Research Plan, please use the Literature Cited section to upload a list of all publications in the past 5-10 years relevant to/reflecting his/her involvement with the science being proposed in the Center research projects. Standard abbreviations are acceptable with two exceptions: full titles and full paging must be provided. Upload your completed document to the electronic system.

Each reference must list the:

- Authors in the same order as they appear on the paper (list all or up to 15)
- Title
- Name of the book or journal
- Volume number
- Page numbers
- Year of publication

**f. Center Science Vision and Synergy (no more than 8 pages)**

The center science vision and synergy consists of two documents uploaded as one into [Grants@Heart](#).

- **Summary of Proposed Center (no more than 3-pages)**

Provide a very brief summary of what this proposed Center has to offer. Describe any current programs and any history of successes in research related to the topic of the Network. Also describe events that led to the current application, and other projects not included in this application that would contribute to the intellectual environment. Please mention any unique strengths in faculty, student programs or the institution that would make a flagship Center feasible.

**NOTE:** For clinical and/or population projects enrolling human subjects, it will be important to design studies that incorporate both realistic recruitment goals and sufficient statistical power to ensure valid results.

- **Synergy among individual projects (no more than 5-pages)**

These pages should be used for a high-level summary only. The research projects should be described in greater detail in the Research Project applications.

A clear vision of scientific direction is expected. A Strategically Focused Research Center should be viewed as a group of interrelated research projects, each of which is not only individually scientifically meritorious, but also complementary to the other projects and contributes to an integrating theme. Describe the rationale for the total program. Explain the strategy of achieving the objectives of the overall program and how each individual project relates to the strategy. (The peer review group must be convinced that exciting and significant research directions are being realistically planned. Keep in mind that the proposal will be reviewed by experts who can judge, collectively, all areas represented in the proposal but who may not be familiar, individually, with each area of research. This description should be concise yet explicit enough to enable experts in related areas to understand the main goal of each project.)

Describe the synergies and interactions among projects and their investigators. What collaborations do you envision between investigators working on individual projects?

***PROJECTS THAT DO NOT DEMONSTRATE SYNERGY WILL NOT MOVE FORWARD TO PHASE 2.***

**Combine above documents into one PDF and upload to Grants@Heart.**

**g. Center Collaboration (no more than 5-pages)**

The center commitment to and history of collaboration consists of two documents uploaded as one into Grants@Heart. These sections can be broken down to any page length as long as when combined, they do not exceed 5 pages in total.

- **Commitment to Collaboration**

A clear commitment to collaboration with other disciplines and other Strategically Focused Research Centers within your Network is required. Describe how the interactions among the basic, clinical, population and/or translational team members will be organized and promoted. Describe how the Center will support interactions among the four Strategically Focused Research Centers within the Network and describe plans to develop productive collaboration among Center investigators.

- **History of Collaboration**

Describe the track record of collaboration in the institution and affiliated institutions, if applicable. Examples of collaborative successes will be helpful. Describe the track record of collaboration with other institutions. Also, list collaborative research projects undertaken that have resulted in joint research awards and/or joint publications in the past three-five years.

**Combine above documents into one PDF and upload to Grants@Heart.**

**h. Current Postdoctoral Training Program (no page limit)**

While there is no page limit for this section, please provide only the information requested below. Create a document listing the current training programs and training grants within the proposed Center institution or affiliated institutions (if appropriate) relevant to the research being proposed by the Center. Provide the following information for each program in a list:

- Name of Training Program or Training Grant Title
- Brief Description
- List Names of Current and Past Trainees (during past 5 years) and, for past trainees, give Current Location and Position Title
- Names and degrees of Key Faculty for Program

**i. Proposed Multidisciplinary Training Program (no more than 8-pages)**

A strong plan to develop a successful program is necessary. Didactic and experiential training in the topic of the current Research Network is encouraged. In addition, training in general laboratory research, translational research and clinical research concepts as well as collaborative research should be described.

Provide a description of the proposed multidisciplinary training program (basic, clinical, population and/or translational research exposure) for the Strategically Focused Research Fellows' two-year fellowship and include the following information:

- Detailed plan for a multidisciplinary training program
- Source for recruitment and how prospective fellows will be evaluated
- Proposed evaluation of fellows' ongoing progress
- Planned collaborative experiences with established investigators at other Center institutions
- Track record of the proposed mentors/directors in training

- Names and degrees of proposed key faculty for program (Biographical Sketches are requested below)

**j. Center Director Qualifications (no more than 2-pages)**

The Director's experience/expertise in basic, clinical and population research related to the topic of the current Strategically Focused Research Network should be described. Administrative experience in program direction should also be provided. In addition, the Director's history and/or abilities in training, building collaborative groups, and collaborating with various disciplines should be addressed. Since the Director's Biographical Sketch was previously uploaded in an earlier section, emphasize strengths not reflected there.

**k. Center Administrative Structure (no more than 2-pages)**

Describe proposed administrative structure, including coordination and integration of activities, lines of accountability regarding management and oversight for use of funds, and evaluation of program.

**12. Supporting Documentation**

This section shows all documentation prepared by Third Parties and uploaded by the Center Director. The documents will appear as hyperlinks.

Any missing items will be reflected with a yellow check mark. The Center Director can upload supporting documentation by navigating to the Third-Party Personnel section of the application and clicking the "Upload" button in each party's respective tab. If the supporting documentation has not been uploaded, you will see a message to that effect.

**13. Membership/Application Fee**

Applicants are required to be either an American Heart Association Professional Member at any level or pay a \$100 per application submission fee. Until an applicant pays the fee or joins/renews AHA Professional Membership, she/he will not be able to submit the application to the Grants Officer.

**a. Membership**

Applicants may renew or join membership via a link in the Grants@Heart application. Utilizing this link allows you to bypass the wait time and continue applying right away. Join or renew online to avoid delays in membership validation. If you register by phone, **it may take up to five business days** for your membership to be active in the system.

If you are an AHA Professional member at any level, enter your membership number. Your last name on your application must match the last name associated with the membership number. If you do not know your membership number, click the "question mark" in this section of the application for more detailed instructions.

To find out more about membership levels and benefits, please visit our [website](#).

To become an AHA Professional member, click the link in Grants@Heart to be directed to the membership page. Once you begin the membership process, **do not close the membership site. After you have entered your membership payment information, click "Continue"** to be brought back to your Grants@Heart application as a member. This process will allow your membership to be validated immediately.

**b. Application Fee**

If you are not an AHA Professional member and wish to pay the \$100 application fee instead of joining AHA, click 'No' to indicate that you are not a member. You must enter credit card information and pay the fee prior to submitting to your Grants Officer. Your payment should be processed immediately, and Grants@Heart will allow you to proceed with the submission of your application to your Grants Officer.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Membership dues and application fees are not refundable.

**14. Submit to Grants Officer**

Upon completion of all the application sections and prior to submitting the application to the Grants Officer, the applicant/investigator should check all sections and uploads for accuracy. If an incorrect document has been uploaded to any section of the application, simply repeat the upload process and select the correct document. Be sure to save all changes.

THE CENTER DIRECTOR APPLICATION CANNOT BE SUBMITTED TO THE GRANTS OFFICER UNTIL ALL RESEARCH PROJECT PIS HAVE SUBMITTED THEIR RESPECTIVE APPLICATIONS TO THEIR GRANTS OFFICERS. THE GRANTS OFFICER MUST APPROVE EACH RESEARCH PROJECT APPLICATION SEPARATELY. EACH APPLICATION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ITS OWN ENTITY. IT MAY BE BENEFICIAL FOR THE CENTER DIRECTOR AND HIS/HER INSTITUTION TO SET AN INTERNAL DEADLINE PRIOR TO AHA'S DEADLINE FOR ALL RESEARCH PROJECT APPLICATIONS TO SUBMIT TO THEIR GRANTS OFFICERS.

When you have confirmed that your application is ready for submission, select "Submit to Grants Officer" in the left navigation menu. If there are missing sections in the application, they will be highlighted with Yellow check marks in the left navigation. You must correct any section with a yellow check mark before you can submit. You will see confirmation on your screen that your application has been submitted to your Grants Officer.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Grants Officer is responsible for submitting the application to the AHA. It is very important that the correct grants officer is selected from the dropdown list in Grants@Heart. It is also important to work with the grants officer to establish the AHA submission deadline and to find out if the institution has set an internal deadline. Applications submitted late, even if it is just a few minutes late, will not be accepted. The system shuts down automatically at the designated time. **Start early and submit early!**

***APPLICATION SUBMISSION TO AHA BY GRANTS OFFICER***

Approving the application completes the submission process. **The Grants Officer is responsible for submitting the application to AHA.** Declining the application sends the application back to the applicant/investigator. If there are corrections or revisions needed, the investigator has the ability to make the changes and resubmit it to the grants officer if the AHA deadline has not passed. Once the application is submitted to AHA, no changes can be made.

For detailed information about the grants officers access to Grants@Heart, please visit our [website](#).

First-time Grants Officer/Fiscal Officer should register with [Grants@Heart](#) by clicking the link labeled, "Grants/Fiscal Officer" under the log in section for first time users.

The applicant and institution are responsible for compliance with all American Heart Association research award [policies and guidelines](#) for the duration of any awards they may receive.

If a U.S. institution, the institution assures that it is in compliance with current guidelines of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regarding recombinant DNA and Financial Conflict of Interest by the signature of the institutional official.

For questions regarding this process or for technical assistance, please contact:

**General Questions**  
[SFRN@heart.org](mailto:SFRN@heart.org)

**Technical Assistance**  
(214) 360-6107  
[login@heart.org](mailto:login@heart.org)

**Institutional Additions**  
[institutions@heart.org](mailto:institutions@heart.org)