

# AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA)

**Application Deadline: Tuesday, October 3, 2017**

**Awardees will be notified in February, for a start date of April 1, 2018**

*The application must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. Central Time in [Grants@Heart](mailto: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

### Statement of Purpose

To support **small-scale** research projects related to cardiovascular diseases and stroke at educational institutions that provide baccalaureate or advanced degrees but that have not been major recipients of NIH support.

The award supports any part of the full range of research and development from very basic to clinical.

The goals of the program are to:

1. Support meritorious research
2. Expose students to research
3. Strengthen the research environment of the institution.

### Science Focus

Research broadly related to cardiovascular function and disease and stroke, or to related clinical, translational, population, or basic science, bioengineering or biotechnology, and public health problems, including multidisciplinary efforts.

### 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, 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 science type and subject. The applicant will be required to select the desired review group ([AHA Science Classifications](#)).

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

## Eligibility

### Institutional Eligibility

- Only domestic accredited public or non-profit institutions of higher education are eligible. Federal government institutions are not eligible.
- The institution must grant baccalaureate or advanced degrees in the biomedical or behavioral sciences. For example, a four-year liberal arts college.
- To be eligible to apply for this AHA award, the applicant's institution may not have received more than \$6 million per year in NIH support in each of four of the last seven years.

### Institutions with Health Professional Schools or Colleges

For institutions composed of multiple academic components (i.e., schools or colleges), the criterion of financial eligibility is based on the amount of NIH research grant monies received, not by the institution (university) as a whole, but by the individual health professional school/college or by the sum of "Other Academic components" (as defined in this section) where the PD/PI has a primary appointment (e.g., School of Arts and Science, School of Medicine, College of Nursing, School of Pharmacy, etc.).

- Health professional school or college: Accredited public or non-profit private school/college that grants a terminal health professional degree (e.g., MD, DDS, DO, PharmD, BSN, DVM, DrPH, OD, DPT, DC, ND, DPM).
  - Accreditation must be provided by a body approved for such purpose by the Secretary of Education.
  - Health professional schools/colleges that meet the above requirements may include schools or colleges of medicine, dentistry, osteopathy, pharmacy, nursing, veterinary medicine, public health, optometry, allied health, chiropractic, naturopathy and podiatry.
- Other academic components: Once the health professional schools/colleges have been excluded, the financial eligibility of the Other Academic component is determined by the sum of all remaining schools, colleges, and free-standing institutes of the institution (university).

### Institutions Ineligible for Academic Research Enhancement Awards (AREA) and Ineligible for this AHA Award

The following is a list of institutions, and their relevant components (defined above), that are currently financially ineligible to apply for AREA funding, thereby making them also ineligible for this AHA award. NIH updates this list annually in April. An application from an institution that becomes ineligible after the application is submitted will remain under review and in consideration for funding.

[List of Ineligible Institutions](#) (03/25/2017)

### Principal Investigator Eligibility

- The PI must have a primary appointment at an AREA-eligible 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*, the Principal Investigator 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.

## Budget

**Award:** \$77,000 per year, including 10 percent indirect costs

Aside from the cap on indirect costs, there is no limit on budget categories. Funds may be used as the principal investigator deems necessary, in accordance with institutional and AHA policies.

Budget items may include:

- salary and fringe of the principal investigator, any collaborating investigators, and other participants with faculty appointments
- salaries of technical personnel essential to the conduct of the project
- supplies
- equipment
- travel
- volunteer subject costs
- publication costs

No minimum effort requirement. Special consultative services from individuals may be requested, provided the circumstances are fully described in the application. International travel is permitted without prior AHA approval.

**Duration:** Two years

**Total Award Amount:** \$154,000

## Restrictions

- The PI may not be the PI of an active NIH research grant at the time of award activation.
- The applicant may submit only one AHA application per program type per deadline.
- Awards may not supplement or duplicate currently funded work. Submitted applications must describe projects that are clearly distinct from ongoing research activities in the applicant's laboratory. The awardee may not hold a comparable award as a source of supplementation.

- The applicant may resubmit 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.
- An individual may hold more than one AHA award concurrently, but may only hold one career development/recognition award (Career Development Award, Established Investigator Award, Merit Award).
- 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. Fully address these in your proposal.

1. **Impact:** How does this project relate to and support the mission of the American Heart Association: **Building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke?**
2. **Significance:** Does this study address an important problem or barrier to progress that is 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? If funded, will the award have a substantial effect on the school/academic component in terms of strengthening the research environment and exposing students to research?
3. **Approach:** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics? Does the application provide evidence that the project can stimulate the interests of students so that they consider a career in the biomedical or behavioral sciences?

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? Does the investigative team bring complementary and integrated expertise to the project (if applicable)? Does the PI(s) have suitable experience in supervising students in research?
6. **Environment:** 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? Does the application demonstrate the likely availability of well-qualified students to participate in the research project? Does the application provide

sufficient evidence that students have in the past or are likely to pursue careers in the biomedical or behavioral sciences?