



RESEARCH

professional.heart.org/research



2020 Established Investigator Award

Letter of Intent Deadline (required): October 10, 2019

[View the LOI Instructions](#)

Application Deadline for **invited applicants only**: January 15, 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).

Award Activation: April 1, 2020

Program Description, and Eligibility

Statement of Purpose

To support investigators (typically at associate professor level) with unusual promise and established records of accomplishments; candidates have a demonstrated commitment to cardiovascular or cerebrovascular science disciplines that support the AHA's mission to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives, as indicated by prior publication history and scientific accomplishments. A candidate's career is expected to be in a rapid growth phase.

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, 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.



RESEARCH

professional.heart.org/research



Target Audience

At the time of application must hold:

- M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M., or equivalent doctoral degree
- Faculty/staff scientist position or equivalent.
NOTE: At the time of award activation, the awardee must be at the level of associate professor/staff scientist or equivalent.
- Current national-level funding as a principal investigator (or co-PI) on an R01 grant or its equivalent. R01-equivalent awards include DP2, R01, R23, R29, R37 and RF1 activity codes; (e.g., VA Merit Award; NSF Grant; or PI of a project on a NIH Program Project Grant from NIH). NIH "K" series awards are not considered equivalent to R01.

To encourage submissions from clinical investigators, epidemiologists and translational scientists, individuals with significant funding from national-level peer reviewed clinical and multicenter trials and/or other clinically-oriented grants will be considered (e.g., U01, UL1, and equivalent awards).

Citizenship

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

- U.S. citizen
- Permanent resident
- Pending permanent resident. Applicants must have applied for permanent residency and have filed form I-485 with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and have received authorization to legally remain in the United States (having filed an Application for Employment Form I-765).
- H-1B Visa - temporary worker in a specialty occupation
- J-1 Visa - 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 - NAFTA professional
- E3 - specialty occupation worker
- G-4 Visa - family member of employee of international organizations and NATO

Awardee must meet American Heart Association citizenship criteria throughout the duration of the award.



RESEARCH

professional.heart.org/research



Letter of Intent (LOI) - Required

Application for this award requires a letter of intent (LOI), limited to three pages. AHA will contact applicants with the highest-rated LOIs and invite them to submit a full application. The LOI should briefly address the following points.

Describe the investigator's competitiveness in terms of:

10. Demonstrated commitment to cardiovascular or cerebrovascular diseases, and scientific innovation.
11. Independence as assessed by publications, research funding, and impact of scientific work as a principal investigator.
12. How the award will enhance the investigator's rapid career growth phase.

In addition to the LOI:

- Upload a list of your 15 most impactful and/or foundational publications that are relevant to the proposed research focus or this program in a pdf document. When selecting, consider those which are foundational papers that support your research program; those that are most cited; and for more recent publications, those in the most high-impact journals or that you predict will elicit the most citations. (limited to 2 pages)
- Upload your NIH biosketch. (limited to 5 pages)

No reference letters are to be supplied with the initial LOI. Three references will be required from those selected to submit a full application.

Abbreviated Proposal (if selected to submit)

The Established Investigator Award (EIA) abbreviated proposal format is not the same as those used for other AHA grants or individual NIH research grants (R01). The 10 pages of the proposal in the EIA describe past research accomplishments, the potential of the EIA to provide new directions and innovations, and broadly discuss projected research studies. The application should not contain detailed protocols or focus heavily on the design or interpretation of individual experiments. The applicant should clarify how this proposal differs from other funded projects, or how these funds will be used to expand upon other projects.

Location of Work

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 other non-profit institutions 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 Administration employees.



RESEARCH

professional.heart.org/research



An investigator may be allowed to request approval to conduct work outside the United States temporarily.

Budget

Award: \$80,000 per year, including 10 percent indirect costs (Indirect costs are not to exceed \$7,273 per year)

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.

Award Duration: Five years; non-renewable

Total Award Amount: \$400,000

Restrictions

- 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, AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award, Merit Award).
- Strategically Focused Research Network personnel may hold individual AHA awards.
- Applications from current or past recipients of AHA advanced investigatorships (such as the Established Investigatorship or Established Investigator Grant) are not eligible. An awardee may hold the Established Investigator Award only once. This award is non-renewable.

Peer Review Criteria

Applicants should never contact reviewers regarding their applications. Discussing content of an application or attempting to influence review outcome will constitute a conflict of interest in the review. Reviewers must notify the AHA if an applicant contacts them.



RESEARCH

professional.heart.org/research



To judge the merit of the application, reviewers will comment on the following criteria. Fully address these in your proposal.

Generally, the candidate and the innovativeness of the proposal are being evaluated. The first two of the following criteria must be met to be competitive. The remaining factors enter into deliberations, but the relative weight given to each may differ from case to case.

1. **Innovative, novel research direction:** Described in the abbreviated application. Is the research direction described by the candidate likely to lead to significant contributions? Does the candidate pose an innovative research direction that challenges existing paradigms or critical barriers to progress in the field? Does the candidate propose to develop or employ novel concepts, approaches or technologies? Does this research direction address an important barrier to achieving a world of longer, healthier lives?
2. **Demonstrated commitment to cardiovascular or cerebrovascular diseases:** Has the research program of the candidate focused on basic or applied science related to cardiovascular or cerebrovascular disease? Does the applicant indicate a clear commitment to cardiovascular/cerebrovascular research in the proposed studies? Do the proposed studies illustrate this commitment?
3. **Investigator Independence:** Independence is assessed by publications and financial support as a principal investigator. Is the candidate established as an independent investigator?
4. **Investigator potential:** The investigator's potential for career growth should be assessed by several factors. These include the applicant's number, quality and independence of publications in peer-reviewed journals, previous professional accomplishments, and relevant experience. Do the reference letters and department head letter support the conclusion that the candidate's career is in a rapid growth phase? Is it likely that the investigator will have an impact on the field?
5. **Prior or current independent national-level awards;** does the candidate's track record regarding funding provide evidence for independence and potential for future success? Has the candidate held independent national awards, such as an NIH R01 and/or equivalent? (e.g., VA Merit Award, NSF Grant, or PI of a project on a Program Project Grant from NIH). NIH "K" series awards are not considered equivalent to R01. Note: To encourage submissions from clinical investigators, epidemiologists, and translational scientists, individuals with significant support from national-level peer reviewed clinical and multicenter trials and/or other clinically-oriented grants will be considered (e.g., U01, UL1, and equivalent awards).
6. **Award impact on career development:** Impact should be assessed based on the letters from the department head and references. Is it clear that the award will propel the career development of the candidate?
7. **Environment:** Does the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Does the proposal benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?
8. **Impact:** How effectively does the applicant describe for an audience without a science background how this proposal will impact the AHA's mission? Consider the AHA's Strategic Value Proposition that includes: addressing 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 CVD and stroke? Evaluation of this criterion should be influenced by the lay summary section of the application and any lay reviewers' impressions.



RESEARCH

professional.heart.org/research



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 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 \(pdf\)](#).