

# Postdoctoral Fellowship

## Application Deadlines

- **Founders Affiliate - July 22, 2015**
- **Great Rivers Affiliate - July 22, 2015**
- **Greater Southeast Affiliate - July 23, 2015**
- **Midwest Affiliate - July 23, 2015**
- **SouthWest Affiliate - July 24, 2015**
- **Western States Affiliate - July 24, 2015**

## Award Activation: Jan. 1, 2016

*Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. CDT on the deadline date. The system will shut down at 5:00 p.m. CDT. Early submission is encouraged. Your institutional Grants Officer (GO) has the final responsibility of submitting your completed application to the American Heart Association. It is important that you check with your GO for his/her internal deadline.*

## Program Description, Eligibility and Peer Review Criteria

### Success Rates

### Objective

To help trainees initiate careers in cardiovascular and stroke research while obtaining significant research results under the supervision of a sponsor or mentor; supports individuals before they are ready for some stage of independent research.

### Science Focus

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

### Disciplines

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

### Target Audience

At the *time of award activation*, the applicant must:

- have a post-baccalaureate doctoral degree, including M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M., Pharm.D., or equivalent.
- have no more than five years postdoctoral research training or experience. Time spent in clinical training is excluded.

## Sponsor

It is important for the new fellow to receive wise counsel and direction from an established investigator interested in the conduct and progress of the research project during the research training period. Each fellow must have a sponsor.

A fellow must have substantial involvement in preparing the application, understanding that the sponsor will play a significant part in guiding the applicant.

## 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).
- E-3 - specialty occupation worker
- F1 - student visa
- 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 - NAFTA Professional
- G-4 Visa - family member of employee of international organizations and NATO

**Exception:** Postdoctoral fellowship applicants outside the United States at the time of application must provide visa documentation prior to award activation.

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

## Location of Work

The award may be completed at any accredited institution in the following affiliates:

**Founders** - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont

**Great Rivers** - Delaware, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania or West Virginia

**Greater Southeast** - Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, U.S. Virgin Islands

**Midwest** - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wisconsin

**SouthWest** - Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Wyoming

**Western States** - Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington

American Heart Association research awards are limited to non-profit institutions, including medical, osteopathic and dental schools, veterinary schools, schools of public health, pharmacy schools, nursing schools, universities and colleges, public and voluntary hospitals and 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 employees.

Funding is prohibited for awards at non-U.S. institutions.

## Budget - Founders Affiliate

**Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Commensurate with years of postdoctoral research and clinical experience at time of award activation; stipend totals represent combined salaries and fringe benefits. Institution may supplement stipend.

0-1 year = \$42,000  
1-2 years = \$43,700  
2-3 years = \$45,400  
3-4 years = \$47,200  
4-5 years = \$49,100  
5-6 years = \$51,100  
6-7 years = \$53,100  
7 or more = \$55,300

**Fringe Benefit:** \$1,000 for health insurance

**Indirect:** The Founders Affiliate postdoctoral fellowship award does not allow indirect costs.

**Project Support:** \$3,000 for travel (must be taken from the stipend); funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowance). International travel must have prior AHA approval.

**Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$43,000 - \$56,300

**Award Duration:** Two years

The Founders Affiliate restricts AHA postdoctoral research support to a maximum of two years.

To apply for only one year of funding, be certain you select the FDA Summer 2015 ONE YEAR Postdoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

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## Budget - Great Rivers Affiliate

**Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Commensurate with years of postdoctoral research and clinical experience at time of award activation; stipend totals represent combined salaries and fringe benefits. Institution may supplement stipend.

0-1 year = \$40,000  
1-2 years = \$41,000  
2-3 years = \$42,000  
3-4 years = \$43,000  
4-5 years = \$44,000  
5-6 years = \$45,000  
6 or more = \$46,000

**Fringe Benefit:** \$1,000 for health insurance; additional health insurance may be budgeted from the project support category.

**Indirect:** The Great Rivers Affiliate postdoctoral fellowship award does not allow indirect costs.

**Project Support:** \$3,000. This annual allowance is provided to help defray the fellow's training-related expenses such as travel, publications, supplies, and fringe benefits. Funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowance.

- Travel - \$3,000 per year

**Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$44,000 - \$50,000

**Award Duration:** One or two years

An individual may submit an application to compete for a third year of funding, if eligible. Fellows who wish to compete for a third year of fellowship support and meet the eligibility criteria must submit a new fellowship application according to the program guidelines. New applications are allowed in the final year only. This is a new, competitive application, not an application for renewal.

To apply for a one-year award, be certain you select the GRA Summer 2015 ONE YEAR Postdoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

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## Budget - Greater Southeast Affiliate

**Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Commensurate with years of postdoctoral research and clinical experience at time of award activation; stipend totals represent combined salaries and fringe benefits. Institution may supplement stipend.

0-1 year = \$39,264  
1-2 years = \$41,364  
2-3 years = \$44,340  
3-4 years = \$46,092  
4-5 years = \$47,820  
5-6 years = \$49,884  
6 - 7 years = \$51,582  
7 or more = \$54,180

**Fringe Benefit:** \$1,000 for health insurance; additional health insurance may be budgeted from the project support category.

**Indirect:** The Greater Southeast postdoctoral fellowship award does not allow indirect costs.

**Project Support:** \$3,000. This annual allowance is provided to help defray the fellow's training-related expenses such as travel, publications, supplies and fringe benefits. Funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowance.

**Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$43,264 - \$58,180

**Award Duration:** One or two years

An individual may submit an application to compete for a third year of funding, if eligible. Fellows who wish to compete for a third year of fellowship support and meet the eligibility criteria must submit a new fellowship application according to the program guidelines. New applications are allowed in the final year only. This is a new, competitive application, not an application for renewal.

To apply for a one-year award, be certain you select the GSA Summer 2015 ONE YEAR Postdoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

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## Budget - Midwest Affiliate

**Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Commensurate with years of postdoctoral research and clinical experience at time of award activation; stipend totals represent combined salaries and fringe benefits. Institution may supplement stipend.

0-1 year = \$42,000  
1-2 years = \$43,680  
2-3 years = \$45,432  
3-4 years = \$47,244  
4-5 years = \$49,128  
5-6 years = \$51,096  
6-7 years = \$53,148  
7 or more = \$55,272

**Fringe Benefit:** \$1,000 for health insurance. Additional health insurance may be budgeted from the stipend and/or project support categories.

**Indirect:** The Midwest Affiliate postdoctoral fellowship award does not allow indirect costs.

**Project Support:** \$4,000. This annual allowance is provided to help defray the fellow's training-related expenses such as travel, publications, supplies and fringe benefits. Funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowance.

**Award Duration:** Two years

**Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$47,000 - 60,272

An individual may submit an application to compete for a third year of funding, if eligible. Fellows who wish to compete for a third year of fellowship support and meet the eligibility criteria must submit a new fellowship application according to the program guidelines. New applications are allowed in the final year only. This is a new, competitive application, not an application for renewal.

To apply for a one-year award, be certain you select the MWA Summer 2015 ONE YEAR Postdoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

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## Budget - SouthWest Affiliate

**Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Commensurate with years of postdoctoral research and clinical experience at time of award activation; stipend totals represent combined salaries and fringe benefits. Institution may supplement stipend.

0-1 year = \$42,000  
1-2 years = \$43,680  
2-3 years = \$45,432  
3-4 years = \$47,244  
4-5 years = \$49,128  
5-6 years = \$51,096  
6-7 years = \$53,148  
7 or more = \$55,272

**Fringe Benefit:** \$1,000 for health insurance

**Indirect:** The SouthWest Affiliate award does not allow indirect costs.

**Project Support:** \$4,000. This annual allowance is provided to help defray the fellow's training-related expenses such as travel to scientific meetings, publications, supplies and equipment. Funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowance.

**Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$47,000 - \$60,272

**Award Duration:** Two years

An individual may submit an application to compete for a third year of funding, if eligible. Fellows who wish to compete for a third year of fellowship support and meet the eligibility criteria must submit a new fellowship application according to the program guidelines. New applications are allowed in the final year only. This is a new, competitive application, not an application for renewal.

To apply for a one-year award, be certain you select the SWA Summer 2015 ONE YEAR Postdoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

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## Budget - Western States Affiliate

**Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Commensurate with years of postdoctoral research and clinical experience at time of award activation; stipend totals represent combined salaries and fringe benefits. Institution may supplement stipend.

0-1 year = \$36,000

1 years = \$38,000  
2 years = \$40,000  
3 years = \$42,000  
4 years = \$44,000  
5 or more years = \$46,000

**Fringe Benefit:** \$1,000 for health insurance

**Indirect:** The Western States Affiliate postdoctoral fellowship award does not allow indirect costs.

**Project Support:** \$3,000. This annual allowance is provided to help defray the fellow's training-related expenses such as travel to scientific meetings, publications, supplies and equipment. Funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowance.

**Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$40,000 - \$50,000

**Award Duration:** Two years

An individual may submit an application to compete for a third year of funding, if eligible. Fellows who wish to compete for a third year of fellowship support and meet the eligibility criteria must submit a new fellowship application according to the program guidelines. New applications are allowed in the final year only. This is a new, competitive application, not an application for renewal.

To apply for a one-year award, be certain you select the WSA Summer 2015 ONE YEAR Postdoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

## 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 following criteria. Please be sure to address these in your proposal. Each criterion will account for one-third of the overall score.

### Criterion 1 - Evaluation of the Investigator

1. Does the trainee have potential for a research career?
2. Are the trainee's career plans specified in the application?
3. Is this supported by the trainee's academic record and the assessment provided by the three letters of reference?
4. Does the trainee have prior research experience and/or publications?



5. Is there a clear rationale supporting the need for the proposed training?
6. What is the sponsor's assessment of the applicant?

## Criterion 2 - Sponsor/Training Plan and Environment

### Sponsor/Training Plan

1. Is the mentor an independent investigator?
2. Does the mentor have the experience to direct the proposed research training, as evidenced by a track record regarding productivity, funding and prior trainees?
3. Does the mentor have adequate current funding to support the fellow's project?
4. Does the mentor provide a comprehensive training plan which incorporates career and developmental goals detailed in the applicant's Individual Development Plan (IDP)? Will the mentor's training plan facilitate the applicant's progress towards his/her research career goals?

### Environment

1. Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success for the training experience?
2. Is there evidence of institutional commitment?

## Criterion 3 - Evaluation of the Proposal

1. **Significance:** Does this study address an important problem broadly related to cardiovascular disease or stroke? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods and technologies that drive this field?
2. **Approach:** A new fellow may not have had adequate time to generate preliminary data. Applicants can present preliminary data generated by the sponsor. The assessment of preliminary data, whether generated by the sponsor or the applicant, should be put into perspective so that bold new ideas and risk taking by beginning investigators are encouraged rather than stymied.

Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned, feasible (as determined by preliminary data or the expertise available in the mentor's and/or collaborator's laboratories) and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

3. **Innovation:** Is the project original?
4. **Impact:** How does this project address the mission of the AHA, and how likely will this support enhance PI career development in the area of cardiovascular diseases and stroke?

## Restrictions

- This award is not for individuals of faculty/staff rank.  
Exceptions:
  - M.D. or M.D./Ph.D. applicants with clinical responsibilities who hold a title of instructor or similar due to their patient care responsibilities. Awardees will be expected to devote their time to research or activities directly related to their development into independent researchers.
  - R.N./Ph.D. applicants with faculty appointments. Awardees will be expected to devote their time to research or activities directly related to their development into independent researchers.
  - All other Postdoctoral Fellowship eligibility criteria apply.
- Postdoctoral fellowship awardees must resign an award if promoted to a staff or faculty position, other than the exceptions listed above.
- At the time of award activation, the fellow cannot be pursuing a doctoral degree. Applicants in this situation should be referred to the AHA predoctoral fellowship.
- Awardee may not hold another AHA award concurrently.
- The fellow cannot hold a comparable award as a source of supplementation.
- An applicant may submit only one affiliate application per deadline. If eligible, an applicant may simultaneously submit an application to an affiliate and to the national award program. The proposed research plan may need to be adjusted based upon different length of award and dollars available. The deadline dates may be different for each submission. If both are funded, the applicant must choose one award.
- An applicant who is unsuccessful in a competition may resubmit the same or similar application three times (the original plus two [resubmissions](#)). The same or similar application submitted for the fourth time will be administratively withdrawn.

## Additional Affiliate Specific Restrictions

- **Founders Affiliate:** Allows a maximum of two years of AHA postdoctoral fellowship support per individual.  
**Great Rivers, Greater Southeast, Midwest, SouthWest & Western States Affiliates:** Allow a maximum of three years of AHA postdoctoral fellowship support per individual.
- **Founders, Great Rivers and Midwest Affiliates:** Sponsor may have no more than two AHA-funded fellows (predoctoral or postdoctoral) at any time. For Great Rivers, this limit does not apply to the undergraduate student research program.  
**SouthWest Affiliate:** Sponsor may have no more than three AHA-funded fellows (no more than two in one category) at any time.

**Western States Affiliate:** Sponsor may have no more than three AHA-funded fellows (maximum of two postdoctoral fellows) at any time.

**Greater Southeast Affiliate:** Sponsor may have no more than four AHA-funded fellows (two postdoctoral and two predoctoral) at any time.

- **Founders, Great Rivers, Greater Southeast, Midwest, and SouthWest Affiliates:** At the time of award activation, the applicant may not have more than five years postdoctoral research training or experience. Time spent in clinical training is excluded.

**Western States Affiliate:** At the time of award activation, the applicant may not have more than six years postdoctoral research training or experience. Time spent in clinical training is excluded.