

Predoctoral Fellowship

Application Deadlines:

- **Founders 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 students initiate careers in cardiovascular and stroke research by providing research assistance and training.

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, behavioral, epidemiological, and community and clinical investigations that bear on cardiovascular and stroke problems.

Target Audience

At the *time of application*, the applicant must:

- be a post baccalaureate, predoctoral M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M. (or equivalent) student who seeks research training with a sponsor/mentor prior to embarking on a research career.

- be a full-time student working towards his/her degree.

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

- have completed initial coursework and be at the stage of their doctoral program where they can devote full-time effort to research or activities related to their development into independent researchers.

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.

Citizenship

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

- U.S. citizen
- Permanent resident
- Pending permanent resident. Applicant 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 U.S. (having filed an Application for Employment form I-765)
- E-3 Visa - specialty occupation worker
- H1-B Visa - temporary worker in a specialty occupation
- F-1 - Student 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

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

Applicants are not required to reside in the United States for any period before applying for American Heart Association funding.

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 or Vermont

Greater Southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, Tennessee or 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 or Wyoming

Western States: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah or 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.

Annual Budget - Founders Affiliate

Trainee Stipend/Salary: \$22,000; institution may supplement stipend

Fringe Benefit: \$1,000 for health insurance

Additional fringe benefit support may be taken from the stipend.

Indirect: The award does not allow indirect costs.

Project Support: The award does not allow project support, dependent allowance or tuition.

Maximum Annual Award Amount: \$23,000

Award Duration: One or two years

Total Award Amount: \$46,000

The Founders Affiliate restricts total amount of AHA predoctoral research support to a maximum of two years.

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

Annual Budget - Greater Southeast Affiliate

Trainee Stipend/Salary: \$22,000; institution may supplement stipend

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

Additional fringe benefit support may be taken from the project support category.

Indirect: The 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 dependent allowance or tuition.

Maximum Annual Award Amount: \$26,000

Award Duration: One or two years

Total Award Amount: \$52,000

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 Predoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

Annual Budget - Midwest Affiliate

Trainee Stipend/Salary: \$23,000; institution may supplement stipend

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

Indirect: The award does not allow indirect costs.

Project Support: \$2,000; funds may not be used to pay tuition or dependent allowances.

Maximum Annual Award Amount: \$26,000

Award Duration: One or two years

Total Award Amount: \$52,000 (for a two-year award)

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 Predoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

Annual Budget - SouthWest Affiliate

Trainee Stipend/Salary: \$24,000; institution may supplement stipend

Fringe Benefit: \$1,000 for health insurance

Indirect: The award does not allow indirect costs.

Project Support: \$1,000. This 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: \$26,000

Award Duration: One or two years

Total Award Amount: \$52,000

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 Predoctoral Fellowship electronic application in Grants@Heart.

Annual Budget - Western States Affiliate

Trainee Stipend/Salary: \$22,000; institution may supplement stipend

Fringe Benefit: \$1,000 for health insurance

Indirect: The award does not allow indirect costs.

Project Support: \$2,000. This 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: \$25,000

Award Duration: One or two years

Total Award Amount: \$50,000

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 Predoctoral 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 the 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

Does the trainee have potential for a research career?

1. Are the trainee's career plans specified in the application?

2. Is this supported by the trainee's academic record and the assessment provided by the three letters of reference?
3. Does the trainee have prior research experience and/or publications?
4. Is there a clear rationale supporting the need for the proposed training?
5. 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

- An investigator may not hold more than one AHA award concurrently.

Exception(s):

a) An investigator may hold two AHA grants (affiliate and national) concurrently if all three apply:

1. There will be no more than six months remaining on the initial award.
2. The projects have no overlap in specific aims.
3. There is no budgetary overlap between the two projects.

- This award is not for individuals of faculty/staff rank.
- Awardees must devote full-time effort to research or activities related to their development into independent researchers.
- 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.
- The fellow cannot hold a comparable award as a source of supplementation.
- 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 and Midwest Affiliates:** Sponsor may have no more than two AHA-funded fellows (predoctoral and postdoctoral) at any time.
Greater Southeast Affiliate: Sponsor may have no more than four AHA-funded fellows (two postdoctoral and two predoctoral) at any time.
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.

- **Founders Affiliate:** Allows a maximum of two years of AHA predoctoral fellowship support per individual.
Greater Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, SouthWest and Western States Affiliates: Allows a maximum of three years of AHA predoctoral fellowship support per individual.