

# Western States Affiliate Grant-in-Aid Program Description

Award Activation: January 1, 2012

## Program Description, Eligibility and Peer Review Criteria

### **Objective**

To encourage and adequately fund the most innovative and meritorious research projects from independent investigators.

### **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 application, the applicant must:

- Hold a faculty/staff appointment of any rank (or equivalent), and must be conducting independent research. Not intended for individuals in research training or fellowship positions.
- Hold a M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M. or equivalent post-baccalaureate doctoral degree.
- Meet institutional requirements for grant submission.

### **Percent of Effort**

The Grant-in-Aid has no minimum requirement.

### **Citizenship**

At time of application, you 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
- 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

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 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.

### **Budget/Annual Award Amount**

**Salary/Fringe:** Up to \$35,000 (50 percent of the total award) for PI salary/fringe benefits. Principal Investigator salary, consistent with percent effort and dollar cap. Collaborating Investigators or others with faculty appointments may not receive salary from these funds.

**Indirect:** 10 percent

**Project Support:** Support toward salaries of professional and nonprofessional personnel with

or without doctoral degrees may be budgeted. Special consultative services from individuals may be requested, provided the costs and circumstances are fully described in the application. The purpose of this grant is not primarily to obtain new equipment. Any equipment request will be carefully scrutinized.

Project-related expenses such as salaries of essential technical personnel, supplies, volunteer subject costs, travel, computer equipment and publication costs, within the following limits:

- Travel - \$3,000 per year maximum
- Computer Equipment - \$10,000 per year maximum

**Total Annual Award Amount:** \$70,000 maximum per year (including 10 percent indirect)

**Award Duration:** Two years

Current affiliate Grant-in-Aid awardees may submit a new Western States Affiliate Grant-in-Aid application in the final year of the awardees' current AHA support if the request is for a new project with new specific aims.

### **Peer Review Criteria**

To judge the merit of the application, reviewers will comment on the following criteria. Please be sure that you fully address these in your proposal.

1. **Significance:** Does this study address an important problem 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?
2. **Approach:** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well reasoned and feasible (as determined by preliminary data) 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 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?
4. **Investigator:** Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal

investigator and other researchers? Does the investigative team bring complementary and integrated expertise to the project (if applicable)?

5. **Environment:** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? 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?

Applicants should never contact reviewers regarding their applications. Discussing scientific 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.

### **Restrictions**

- At the time of award activation, the amount of other research funding available to the principal investigator may not exceed \$250,000 annually. This includes direct funds, and does not include the PI salary/fringe and intramural funding.
- An investigator may not hold more than one AHA award concurrently. Exception(s): an investigator may hold two association 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.

An investigator may hold the Innovative Research Grant and one other national or affiliate award.

A Fellow-to-Faculty Transition Award recipient may apply for and receive a Grant-in-Aid during the faculty phase. The awardee may request only project support for these AHA grants, since the Fellow-to-Faculty Transition Award provides significant salary support.

- 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.
- Awards are not intended to supplement or duplicate currently funded work. Rather, it is expected that submitted applications will describe projects that are clearly distinct from ongoing research activities in the applicant's laboratory. Minor variations from existing research projects are not sufficient to constitute independent and distinct project.

- Continuous Grant-in-Aid support is limited to four years, after which an investigator may re-apply following a one-year break in funding.
- 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.