

Winter 2015 – Beginning Grant-in-Aid

Application Deadline:

- **SouthWest Affiliate - Jan. 15, 2015**
- **Western States Affiliate - Jan. 15, 2015**

Award Activation Date: July 1, 2015

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 promote the independent status of promising beginning scientists.

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:

- hold a M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M. or equivalent post-baccalaureate doctoral degree initiating an independent research career.

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

- hold a faculty/staff rank up to and including assistant professor (or equivalent), but may not have more than seven years of experience at the assistant professor level (or equivalent) for SouthWest and Western States Affiliates.

Percent Effort

While no minimum percent effort is specified, the PI must demonstrate that adequate time will be devoted to ensure successful completion of the proposed project.

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
- 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

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:

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 Administration employees.

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

Annual Budget - SouthWest Affiliate

Salary/Fringe: Up to \$35,000 per year for salary and fringe of the principal investigator. Collaborating investigator(s) and others with faculty appointments may not receive salary from these funds.

Indirect: 10 percent (\$6,364)

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

- Travel - \$3,000 per year
- Computer purchase - SouthWest affiliate has no limit for purchase of computer equipment/electronics.

Maximum Annual Award Amount: \$70,000

Award Duration: Two years

Total Award Amount: \$140,000

Annual Budget - Western States Affiliate

Salary/Fringe: Up to \$35,000 per year for salary and fringe of the principal investigator. Collaborating investigator(s) and others with faculty appointments may not receive salary from these funds.

Indirect: 10 percent (\$6,364)

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

- Travel - \$3,000 per year
- Computer purchase - Western States affiliate has no limit for purchase of computer equipment/electronics.

Maximum Annual Award Amount: \$70,000

Award Duration: Two years

Total Award Amount: \$140,000

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. **Future Independence of Investigator:** Is there demonstrated evidence that the award will promote independent status for the applicant? The award is not intended to provide enhanced funding for professional personnel working on the research program of an established scientist.
2. **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?
3. **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? The assessment of preliminary data should be put into perspective such that bold new ideas and risk-taking on the part of beginning investigators are encouraged rather than stymied. Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
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? 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)?
6. **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 as demonstrated in the department head letter?
7. **Impact:** How does this project relate to and support the mission of the American Heart Association to **building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke?**

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

- 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.

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

- 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. Minor variations from existing research projects are not sufficient to constitute an independent and distinct project.
- An individual may hold a Beginning Grant-in-Aid a maximum of two times.
- 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.
- At the time of award activation, the applicant may not have more than seven years of experience at the assistant professor level (or equivalent).

Additional Affiliate Specific Restrictions

- **SouthWest and Western States Affiliates:** The amount of research funding available to the principal investigator at time of award activation may not exceed \$150,000 annually. This includes direct funds, and does not include PI salary/fringe and intramural funding.