The AHA-Allen Initiative
in Brain Health and Cognitive Impairment
Application Instructions

Applications for funding are due by **Friday, July 6, 2018 at 5 p.m. Central Time**. Applicants will be notified of second-phase proposal invitations by late August.

Applications must be submitted via [Grants@Heart](https://www.grantsheart.org) by the institution’s Grants Officer. Submit the application to your institution’s Grants Officer in enough time to allow them to review and submit it to the AHA by the stated deadline.

Before beginning the application, it is very important to review the [request for applications](https://www.grantsheart.org), noting especially the sections describing the problem to address, scope, and science focus, target/eligibility, application submission, peer review criteria, and review process. Application review will focus on adherence to the request for applications and these instructions.

**System Requirements**

Applications are submitted to the AHA through the online system [Grants@Heart](https://www.grantsheart.org). It is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week except for scheduled maintenance. It is accessible from any location with internet capabilities.

**Please note:** Grants@Heart will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity.

Only the following Web browser versions are supported:

- Google Chrome (for Android) 30-32 & above
- Google Android OS Browser 5.0 - 5.02 & above
- Mozilla Firefox 27-33 ESR 31.0-32.2 & above
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 11 (Windows 7) & above
- Microsoft Edge 13 (Windows 10) & above
- Microsoft IE (Mobile) 11 (Windows Phone 8.1)
- Opera Mobile 12.18 & above (but not 14-16)
- Apple Safari 7,9 (OS X 10.9) & above
- Apple Safari (Mobile) 5, 6 (IOS 5, 6) & above

**Accessing Grants@Heart**

An individual must be registered as a Principal Investigator with [Grants@Heart](https://www.grantsheart.org) to apply.

**First-time Applicants**

On the Grants@Heart login page, select “First time applicant, please register here”. Complete the registration, using your e-mail address as your user id. Data fields marked with a red asterisk are required and must be completed. After you complete the registration, you will have access to the system.

**Returning Users/Applicants**

Use your existing user ID and password to access Grants@Heart. If you have a role other than Principal Investigator, do not re-register, as this will create another account. Rather, add the Principal Investigator role to your existing account. If you have questions about how to add a role to your existing user account, please contact our office at 214-360-6107.
The user ID and password are case sensitive. You should use the same user login each time you access Grants@Heart. If you do not remember your login information, please click the “Did you forget your ID or Password?” link on the login page. After a fifth failed attempt, your account may be locked for up to two hours.

If you encounter login issues or need instructions on how to register, please contact our office or check out the help documents.

First-time Grants Officer/Fiscal Officer should register with the link labeled, “Grants/Fiscal Officer” under the log in section for first time users.

Preparing an Application

1. **Log on to Grants@Heart and navigate as follows:**
   Application Administration > Create New Application
   - In the “Select Program” drop down list, click “2018 AHA-Allen Initiative in Brain Health and Cognitive Impairment, phase I”

2. **Complete the Pre-Submission Questionnaire (7 questions)**
   These questions help determine your eligibility to apply for this award.
   - If your eligibility is confirmed with the answers you provide, you will be granted immediate access to complete an application.
   - If you miss a question, you will receive a message that you provided an unacceptable response (or responses) to the questionnaire. You will be asked to clarify response(s), which will be monitored by an AHA staff member. AHA will contact you regarding the explanation you provided for the incorrect response. If the explanation is acceptable, you will be permitted to continue the application.

3. **Advanced Profile**
   Provide information about yourself, your academic career, degrees, professional time, citizenship, and location of work of the research project and college degrees. Save each section as you complete it.

4. **Project Summary**
   - Enter the percent effort you will devote to this project
   - Enter a Project Title
   - Complete the Project Summary
     Write a concise description or abstract describing the work proposed.
     Note: This field will not accept any special characters or keystrokes (e.g., β, π, etc.).

5. **Science Classifications and Research Classification**
   These classifications are independent of each other and will not affect the peer review of your application.
   - Research Classification Type: Select the Research Type that best fits the research being conducted in your lab (basic, clinical, or population).
     - Indicate whether your research is translational in nature
   - Major Science Classification: Choose BOTH a Major Class 1 and a Major Class 2.
     - For each major classification, you may select up to six sub-classifications to identify the appropriate scientific expertise.
     - Current science classifications are listed on the AHA website.

6. **Institutional Personnel**
   Select the Grants Officer and Fiscal Officer from your Sponsoring Institution.

   The Grants Officer and Fiscal Officer must be selected from the list of registered users. Contact your institution’s grants office if you are unsure of which person to select from the list.
It is important to select the correct Grants Officer as he or she is responsible for the final submission of the proposal.

7. **Third Party Personnel**
Identify the people associated with the application and their roles in the project.

*Required Third Party Personnel:* The Department Head’s information is required and will appear automatically in the application.

*Optional Third-Party Personnel:* Other third-party roles are optional and may be added if needed. See definitions below.

   a. **Department Head**
   Provide the department head’s name and email address.

   b. **Collaborating Investigator**
   A collaborating investigator contributes in a substantive way to the scientific development or execution of the project. Typically, a Collaborating Investigator has a doctoral or other professional degree and would devote a specific percent of effort to the project.

   c. **Consultant**
   A consultant contributes to the scientific development or execution of the project in a discrete way; typically, a consultant has a doctoral or other professional degree. A consultant may provide discrete services that are performed in a limited window of time or occasionally contribute a specific method/technique/analysis or materials for the project.

   d. **Other Professional**
   Use this field to list individuals who do not fit the definitions of collaborating investigator or consultant, such as a co-principal investigator or a person in a specialty role. **Each person listed here must provide a biosketch for you to upload into your application.** Any co-principal investigators should be listed here. A co-principal investigator is equal in effort, oversight and responsibility for the project, such that the scientific objectives could not be achieved without the efforts of all co-principal investigators.

8. **Lay Summary (Summary for Non-scientists)**
Describe your work in a way that it will be understood by people who do not have scientific or medical backgrounds. Be clear and avoid technical and scientific terms when possible.

In the three fields below, briefly address the following topics:

   - What is the major problem being addressed by this study?
   - What specific questions are you asking and how will you attempt to answer them?
   - Overall, what is the potential impact of this work to the field of brain health and cognitive impairment?

All applications for research funding will be assessed for their potential impact on the field of brain health and cognitive impairment. This potential impact assessment will be based primarily on the Summary for Non-scientists. The summary will be reviewed for mission impact during the peer review process and may be assessed by a lay reviewer. **A lay reviewer is an individual who does not have formal training as a scientist, and who has a strong interest in advancing the field of brain health and cognitive impairment.** In the peer review process, lay reviewers specifically help evaluate the potential impact of research applications on the mission.

9. **Budget**
Please complete the three abbreviated budget fields for PI salary and fringe benefits, project support, and indirect costs. The figures entered here should reflect the total requested for all eight award years.

10. Research Subjects/Assurances
The applicant must answer the questions regarding experimentation in their proposed research project. Visit the AHA policies web page for more information.

   - **Adult Human Stem Cells**
     The American Heart Association funds human adult stem cell research. This research is governed by the standards described in “Ethical Aspects of Research with Human Subjects and Animals.” These standards shall be applied by the AHA in funding any research involving human adult stem cells. Applications involving human adult stem cells fall under the just-in-time Institutional Review Board (IRB)/Privacy Board assurance policy described above under human subjects.

   - **Cloning**
     The AHA funds cloning research including human DNA sequences, cell lines and animals subject to ethical principles and restrictions to prevent abuse.
     - **Acceptable Research**
       Acceptable research involves cloning to generate animal models (such as transgenic animals) which express human disease for research use:
       1. to develop specific treatments for persons suffering from diseases, and
       2. to produce tissue or organs for transplantation to replace or augment damaged or diseased tissues or organs in humans.
     - **Areas ineligible for AHA funding**
       Cloning of humans as asexual reproduction or cloning of humans intended as sources of tissue or organs to harvest are not acceptable. However, the Association will fund research using human cell lines and DNA sequences for purposes of producing tissue or organs for transplantation to replace or augment damaged or diseased tissues or organs in humans.

   - **Human Subjects**
     If the proposed research project involves human subjects, the population sampled shall be inclusive of the general population, of relevance to the scientific question posed, without restriction in regard to gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design.

     Each applicant is strongly encouraged to submit his/her project to the appropriate human subjects Institutional Review Board/Privacy Board at the time of application. Funded applicants will have a maximum time of three months following the original activation date to submit the IRB human subjects approval and approved patient consent form for their projects to the AHA. (For example, if the activation date is January 1, IRB approval and approved patient consent form must be received prior to March 31; if the activation date is July 1, IRB approval and approved patient consent form must be received prior to September 30.) If the IRB approval and approved patient consent form are not provided to the AHA within three months of the originally-posted activation date, the award must be relinquished.

     Any significant change in the scientific research plan or scope/aims of the project subsequent to AHA submission must be reported to the AHA when submitting the just-in-time IRB/Privacy Board approval.

   - **Human Embryonic Stem Cells or Fetal Stem Cells**
     If your answer is “Yes”, you are not eligible to apply. Research applications involving the creation of human embryos or the derivation or use of human stem cells from in
vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment embryos or fetal sources will not be accepted.

- **Human Fetal Tissue**
  The AHA does not fund scientific research that involves the use of human fetal tissue.

- **Animal subjects**
  If you answer “Yes” to the Animal Subjects section then AAALAC or PHS information must be provided. If your proposal involves animals and your institution does not have unqualified accreditation from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC) or does not hold a current Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance, you are not eligible to apply.

11. **Science/Evaluation Information**
   The following three documents are required to be uploaded into the application. Refer to the Format Requirements below for rules on page setup. Documents must be converted to PDFs prior to uploading into Grants@Heart.

   A. **Research Proposal** (5-page limit. 12-point Arial font, 1-inch margins on all four edges)
      Please address all of the following points:

      1. **Concept**: your creative idea or hypothesis related to early mechanistic contributors to cognitive impairment. Include:
         - How your plan advances neurodegeneration research into new frontiers and/or difficult problems not previously explored.

      2. **Plan**: your research plan to produce compelling new knowledge prioritized in this call for proposals. Include:
         - A timeline of key milestones you would target in the 8-year study duration.

      3. **Team**: who will be on your team and why you selected them. Include:
         - Your (team’s) capacity to develop new tools and methods that support creative experimental approaches to questions, encompassing concepts or techniques from other disciplines.
         - The lead applicant / institution’s capacity to receive and manage research awards of the scale and duration available.

   B. **Biosketch** of the principal investigator and any co-principal investigators (named as “other professional”). Biosketches are limited to 5 pages each.

      Applicants should use the NIH biographical sketch PHS SF424 (R&R). If you do not have an NIH-style biosketch, please refer to the biographical sketch instructions for creating one.

   C. A list of up to 20 relevant or important **publications** (1-page limit).

12. **Open Science Data Form**
   The AHA Open Science Policies require applicants for grant programs to include a data sharing plan. More information about our Open Science Policies can be found on our website. Any research data that is needed for independent verification of research results must be made freely and publicly available in an AHA-approved repository within 12 months of the end of the funding period (and any no-cost extension).

   Applicants seeking waivers should select the "Opt/Out Request" option to indicate the grounds on which they are lodging these requests.

   If Data Plan is selected: Please indicate ALL of the repositories where the data would be made available. If you intend to submit your data to a repository that is not on the pre-approved list, select "Other" and you will be prompted to provide additional information. It is fine to select
"Other" in addition to pre-approved repositories. Please note that it is not acceptable to simply post datasets on a personal website or as supplementary files on a journal publisher’s website or in PubMed Central. Such a solution does not adequately address the re-use, security, stability, metadata, and machine extraction criteria required by our policy.

The approximate date of when data will be shared should be no later than 12 months after the award ends.

13. Supporting Documentation
This section illustrates whether or not the biosketches of Other Third-party Personnel have been uploaded into the application. The biosketches are to be uploaded in the Third-Party Personnel section.

If the supporting documentation has not been uploaded, a message will appear in the Supporting Documents section. Uploaded third party documents are visible in this section as hyperlinks. You will be not able to submit your application if these documents are missing.

14. Submit to Grants Officer
The application must be submitted to your institution’s Grants Officer. Allow your Grants Officer enough time to review and submit it to the AHA by the stated deadline.

Format Requirements for All Uploaded Documents
You must comply exactly with the AHA’s format/type requirements and page limits. Failure to comply will result in the administrative withdrawal (disqualification) of the application.

- Only Portable Document Format (PDF) files will be accepted.
- Application letter must be single-spaced.
- No more than 15 characters per inch (cpi) or an average of no more than 15 cpi (cpi includes symbols, punctuation and spaces).
- No less than ¾" margins allowed.
- Sixty lines per page are the maximum allowed. The average number of lines per page using the font and point size below will be approximately 50-55 lines.
  - Windows users: Arial Font style, 12-point font size
  - Macintosh users: Helvetica Font style, 12-point font size
- Figures, charts, tables, graphics and legends may be smaller in size but must be clear and legible.

Note: The Grants@Heart electronic system will reject a document that exceeds the page limit. Users of other Word-processing programs must adjust settings appropriately and should measure text after saving and printing as a PDF. Type requirements should be checked using a standard measuring device (such as a ruler), rather than relying on the font selected for a particular word processing/printer combination. Type size specifications must be observed in the text of your research plan or the application will not be reviewed and will be withdrawn. Adherence to font and margin requirements is necessary. No applicant should have an advantage over other applicants by providing more content in his/her application by using smaller, denser type. The AHA has the responsibility to make the final determination of conformance to format requirements and the authority to withdraw applications. This decision is final and not subject to appeal.

Internet Web site addresses (URLs) may not be used to provide information necessary to the review. Reviewers are under no obligation to view the Internet sites. Moreover, reviewers are cautioned not to directly access an Internet site, as it could compromise their anonymity.

The only place a URL may be used is in the biographical sketch as described in the instructions for that form. Provide a URL to a full list of your published work as found in a publicly available digital database such as SciENcv or My Bibliography, which are maintained by the US National Library of Medicine.