2020 AHA Research Funding Application Instructions

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AHA Mission

To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives

Preface

Thank you for your interest in applying for research funding from the American Heart Association (AHA). This guide is intended to assist you with the successful preparation and submission of your application. Click on the question marks (?) throughout the application sections for instructions, help text and links.

The AHA uses a Web-based tool, [Grants@Heart](#), to manage the entire application process. The system is available to all AHA research customers, including applicants, grants officers, fiscal officers, peer reviewers, awardees and more. The system is accessible 24/7.

AHA Policies Governing All Research Applications and Awards

Policies on the following topics govern all AHA research applications and awards. Visit the [policies web page](#) for full information.

- Open Science Policies for AHA-funded research
- Patent, Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Policy
- Standards on Falsification of Scientific Data, Plagiarism and Scientific Misconduct
- Privacy Statement: Policy on Collection and Use of Personal Information
- American Heart Association Policy on Support of Stem Cell Research
- Ethical Aspects of Research with Human Subjects and Animals
- Family, Medical or Military Leave for Awardees
- Investigator Financial Disclosure Policy/Objectivity in Research

Contact Us

AHA research staff is available Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 p.m. Central Time to assist with the application process and to answer questions. Contact us by emailing apply@heart.org or by calling 214- 360-6107, option 1. We will reply as quickly as possible.

Getting Started

Funding Opportunities

Program descriptions of funding opportunities are generally posted on the AHA website several months prior to the application deadline. The program descriptions contain important information that will help you determine which program is right for you. Review the posted program descriptions to ensure that you have the most up-to-date program requirements. View descriptions of the AHA research programs.

AHA advises beginning the application process early. The applicant is responsible for preparing the application and working with all parties associated with the application to ensure timely submission by the application deadline date.

Required AHA Professional Membership

Every applicant, including Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants, must be an American Heart Association Professional Member (memberships start under $100). Applicants may renew or join membership via the Grants@Heart application site. You may also join or renew by phone at 301-223-2307 or 800-787-8984. There is a 3-5 day waiting period to process membership. Do not wait until the application deadline to renew or join.

Beginning with award start dates on July 1, 2018, awardees must maintain AHA Professional Membership for the entire term of funding.

Supporting Documents

Forms and instructions are updated for each deadline. Review the currently required Supporting Documents for each program.

System Requirements

Applications are submitted to the AHA through the online system Grants@Heart. It is accessible from any location with Internet capabilities, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except for scheduled maintenance.

Beginning on June 1, 2018, users must have one of the following Web browser versions:

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

Note: Grants@Heart will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity. Save your work often; you will be required to save each section before you will be able to move to another.

Accessing Grants@Heart

An individual must be registered as a Principal Investigator in Grants@Heart to apply for research funding.

First-time Applicants

First-time applicants must register from the Grants@Heart login page. Select "First time applicant, please register here". Data fields marked with red asterisks are required to complete registration. Your e-mail address will be your user ID. After completing registration, you will have access to create an application.

Returning Users/Applicants

Returning users should use their existing user ID (e-mail address) and password. If information in your profile has changed (i.e. institution, academic position, etc.), you MUST update your profile before completing the questionnaire for a new application. The fields related to the profile will auto-fill and cannot be changed.

If you already have a role in Grants@Heart other than Principal Investigator (i.e. Peer Reviewer), do not re-register. 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 account, contact our office at apply@heart.org or 214-360-6107, option 2.

The user ID and password are case sensitive. If you do not remember your login information, click "Did you forget your ID or Password?" After the fifth failed attempt, your account may be locked for up to two hours.

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

Login Issues

If you are having trouble logging into Grants@Heart, please review the following troubleshooting tips. If you are unable to resolve your login issues, please contact us at 214-360-6107 option 2 or login@heart.org.

Message: Your username/password is incorrect.
- Usernames/passwords are case sensitive.
- Your username is your email address.
- If you cannot remember your username and/or password, click on "Did you forget your ID or password?" on the Grants@Heart display page.

If you have created a security question, answer the question correctly to be granted access to the site. If you have not created a security question, the login information will be sent to your e-mail address. You must have access to the e-mail address you identified in your Grants@Heart profile. If you no longer have access to the e-mail address, contact the AHA at login@heart.org for assistance.

NOTE: After the fifth failed attempt to log into Grants@Heart, the system will lock you out for up to two hours.

Message: Your session has expired.
The system will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity. You will see a message that your session has expired. You must login again. If your session expires, you may lose any unsaved data. Save your data often.

Perform the following steps to refresh your browser for PC users:
- Close all instances of Internet Explorer. Open a new Internet Explorer browser. Type the Web address directly into the URL field -- http://research.americanheart.org.

- If you still receive the message, "Your session has expired," then go to Tools, Internet Options, and under Temporary Internet Files, click on Delete Cookies. In the Delete Files dialog box, click to select the Delete all offline content check box, then click OK.

- Restart your computer.

Perform the following steps to refresh your browser for Mac users:
- Close all instances of Safari. Open a new Safari browser. Type the Web address directly into the URL field -- http://research.americanheart.org.

- If you still receive the message, "Your session has expired," then click on the Safari tab, then Empty Cache. When the dialog box appears and asks if you're sure you want to empty the cache, click Empty.

- Restart your computer.

Application Preparation

Some required documents may be prepared prior to creating the application in Grants@Heart. <u>Adherence is mandatory to the page limits and format requirements outlined in the "Formatting and Page Requirements" section of this guide</u>. No applicant should have an advantage over other applicants by providing more content in his/her application by using smaller, denser type.

Internet Web site addresses (URLs) may not be used to provide information necessary to the review because reviewers are under no obligation to view the Internet sites. Moreover, AHA 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.

The AHA has the responsibility to make final determination of conformance to format requirements and the authority to withdraw applications. <u>This decision is final and not subject to appeal.</u>

Required documents for each program can be found on the supporting documents page. Content cannot be modified or changed once an application is submitted to AHA. Only the required documents for submission will be accepted. Additional or supplemental documents will not be accepted.

Creating an Application

To start a new application, select Application Administration and then Create New Application from the menu on the left side of the screen.

1. Questionnaire

The first step of the application process is to create a new application and complete the eligibility questionnaire. The questionnaire helps to determine whether you are applying to the correct program based on your professional and academic career stage. Review the program description of the program to which you are applying.

If you answer the questionnaire correctly, you will be granted access to complete the application. If you miss a question, you will receive an email message with instructions for explaining the response(s). Please give a full explanation and assurance, rather than simply saying that you answered incorrectly.

PLEASE NOTE: Our staff is monitoring the questionnaires. Someone will contact you regarding the explanation you provided to the incorrect response. If the explanation is acceptable, you will be allowed to continue with the application process.

After beginning an application, when you return to the system to continue working on your proposal, you will select Manage Existing Application from the left navigation and click the Update button next to your proposal.

2. Copy Application

Certain items from a previous application can be copied to your new application. The previous application must be in Pending or Unfunded status. When you begin the application process and successfully complete the questionnaire, you will be asked if you would like to copy a previous application. Select "Yes". You may be asked if you would

like to mark the application as a resubmission. Select the application in the list that you would like to copy and click Copy.

The items copied over are:
- Advanced Profile
- Project Summary
- Science & Evaluation Information uploads
- Research Classification
- Science Classification

You should review the information that is copied over and modify anything that has changed. You should pay attention to the Science Classification section as there may be changes in the choices since the last application cycle.

What it does not copy:
- Institutional Personnel
- Third Party Personnel
- Co-authors
- Budget
- Funds Available
- Research Subjects
- Third Party Supporting Documents

You must enter new data and upload the document for each of the referenced sections.

3. Multiple Submissions

A PI may submit only one application per program type in a fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Exception: An applicant may submit more than one Innovative Project Award application, each with clearly distinct aims.

Regarding applications from different program types in the same fiscal year:

- An individual may hold more than one AHA award concurrently but may only hold one career development/recognition award (AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award, Career Development Award, Established Investigator Award, or Merit Award).

- Strategically Focused Research Network personnel may also hold individual AHA awards. However, an AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship applicant who is designated as an SFRN fellow during the review cycle must withdraw his/her individual application. SFRN fellows are not eligible to apply for an individual fellowship.

If you have a pending application in Grants@Heart, after you successfully complete the questionnaire, you will be asked if you want to mark the application as a multiple submission. Answer "Yes" to copy your pending application into this new application form.

4. Resubmission of a Previous Application

Some AHA programs permit resubmission of the same or similar application (similar aims) up to three times (the original plus two resubmissions). *The same or similar application submitted for the fourth time will be withdrawn.*

If major changes are made to the application or if this is an entirely different/new project, it should not be checked as a resubmission.

It is not acceptable to resubmit an application originally submitted by another investigator. Such applications may be withdrawn or disapproved.

To have the benefit of critiques from the previous submission, a resubmitted application will be assigned to at least one of the primary reviewers that it was assigned to in the previous round, whenever possible. Reviewers for resubmitted applications will be provided with the critiques and scores from the previous round for reference.

Programs eligible for resubmission:
- AHA Predoctoral Fellowship   - AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship
- Career Development Award   - Collaborative Sciences Award
- Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship Program
- AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA)

How to create a resubmission in Grants@Heart:
- Log onto Grants@Heart.
- Under Application Administration, click Create a New Application.
- Answer the Pre-Submission Questionnaire.
- Answer Yes to the question, "Do you want to copy a previous application?"
- Select the application you wish to copy from the options listed.

This process will create a place to upload Resubmission Modifications in the Science/Evaluation information section.   See Science/Evaluation Information > Resubmission Modifications within this manual for instructions.

5. Administrative Assistant Access

Grants@Heart does not have an administrator or assistant role. Only the applicant can to enter data into the fields and upload specific documents into the application. There is no "sharing" mechanism.

6. Formatting and Page Requirements

All uploaded documents must follow the AHA's format and type requirements below:
- Document 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" page margins on all four sides.
- Maximum of 60 lines per page. (The average number of lines per page using the font and point size below will be 50-55 lines.)
- Arial Font style, 12-point font size for Windows users; Helvetica Font style, 12-point font size for Macintosh users.
- Only Portable Document Format (pdf) files are accepted by the Grants@Heart system.

It is not necessary to number your pages or to put your name on every page.

The Application Sections

The sections of the application and the required document uploads vary by program. Required documents for each program are listed on the Supporting Documents page. To follow the standard flow of the application. click "Continue" at the bottom of each page. You may also select the section you wish to work on by clicking on it in the menu on the left side of the screen.

Question marks throughout the application contain instructions for each section. You must save each section as you complete it.

If you upload an incorrect document prior to submitting the application to your grants officer, repeat the upload task and select the correct document. The new document will replace old one upon saving.

1. ## Advanced Profile

   In this section, you will provide information about you, your academic career, professional time, citizenship, location of work for the research project and college degrees. The information in the section labeled Profile – Personal is pre-populated based on the information you entered when you registered. To update or change this, click "Profile Manager" at the top of the screen at any time prior to application submission.

   To locate your institution in the drop-down, type part of the name or type your state. If your institution is in a foreign country, type in the name of the country.

   An institution's street address, phone number, and zip code cannot be changed.

   To change your institution in the Advanced Profile, go to Profile Manager and uncheck the box to use your current institution as the institution where work will be done. Select a different institution and save.

   Collaborative Sciences Award Letter of Intent:
   All co-PIs will access Grants@Heart to complete an advanced profile.

2. ## Project Summary

   Enter the title of your project, not to exceed 120 letters and spaces. Do not use abbreviations unless absolutely necessary.

   The project summary should be a brief synopsis of the proposed project and must be completed in the space provided. You cannot enter special characters or formatting (such as super- or subscripts, Greek symbols, italics, underlining, bolding, etc.) into this form field. Include the following: 1) a statement of specific aims, 2) the methods or techniques to be used, including the model to be used (animal, tissue culture, etc.), and 3) the end points or objectives to be achieved.

   If your application is a resubmission, use the same project title that was used in the previous application.

   NOTE: Instructions for the project summary may vary depending on the type of program.

   AHA reserves the right to an initial streamlining, whereby submissions may be streamlined with no reviewer comments and no peer review score.

3. Science Classification

Choose the classifications that most closely match your science. This information is used as part of the peer review committee selection. Choose BOTH a Major Classification 1 and 2. Your first choice should most closely match your proposal.

Sub-classifications are REQUIRED and help with peer review committee selection. Click here to view AHA's current Science Categories.

If you checked "Yes" to translational and typed in the explanation box, but it doesn't save, shorten the explanation and save again. The explanation should be very brief.

4. Research Classification

The American Heart Association is frequently asked to categorize the research it is funding by several different categories. Requests can originate from donors, the public or our many volunteers. Please complete each of the classifications as they relate to your research project. The classifications are independent of each other and the classification of your research will not affect the peer review of your application.

5. Open Data

The AHA requires grant applicants to include a data sharing plan as part of the application process. Any research data that is needed for independent verification of research results must be made freely and publicly available within 12 months of the end of the funding period (and any no-cost extension). Specified early-career awards are exempt from this policy. The programs that are currently exempt are the Institutional Undergraduate Student Award, AHA Predoctoral Fellowship, and AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship. Program descriptions for other award types will state if the application is exempt from the Open Data Policy. For all other programs, if a data sharing plan is not included as part of the application, the applicant must provide an "opt-out" request that includes rationale for why a data plan is unnecessary or inappropriate. "Opt-out" requests will be evaluated according to established guidelines.

6. Institutional Personnel

Institutional personnel are associated with the Applicant's (Principal Investigator's) institution, and include the Department Head, Immediate Supervisor, Grants Officer and Fiscal Officer. These personnel will not need to provide supporting documentation for the application.

The institution you select for Where Work Will be Done controls the list of choices of Grants Officer and Fiscal Officer. Contact your grants office to be sure you select the correct Grants Officer from the list – this is important because the Grants Officer is responsible for final submission of the application to the AHA. Selecting the incorrect person may result in your application not getting submitted to AHA by the established deadline.

If the person you have been instructed to select is not on the list, confirm the following:
- o The institution name in Where Work Will Be Done must exactly match the institution name associated with your Grants Officer.
- o Confirm that the Grants Officer has registered as an institutional officer (and not as an applicant) in Grants@Heart.

If you chose the wrong Grants Officer and submitted your application:
- If the Grants Officer listed in the application can see the application, he/she should reject it. The application will be returned to you. Change the Grants Officer to the correct person.
- If the Grants Officer is not available to reject the application, contact AHA staff at 214-360-6107 option 1.

7. Third Party Personnel

The applicant must identify the people associated with the application and their roles in the project.

Required Third Party Personnel: Some third-party roles are required by a program. These sections will appear automatically in the application. You must upload the required documents for these roles to be able to submit the application.

Optional Third-Party Personnel: Other third-party roles are optional and may be added if needed (such as a collaborating investigator or consultant). The role must be added in the Third-Party Personnel section to upload supporting documentation. If a role is not included in the drop-down list, it cannot be added to the application.

All third parties -- EXCEPT referents -- should complete their supporting documentation and send it to the applicant by email. The applicant must upload all supporting documents except referent letters, which are considered confidential. The application cannot be submitted without the supporting documentation, so you should notify third parties of your deadline for submitting the application.

NOTE: Referents sometimes have an extended deadline that is after the application submission deadline. Referent deadlines are in the Program Descriptions .and on the Referent Information page.

a. *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. The collaborating investigator must provide supporting documentation for the research application. View details for collaborating investigators.

b. *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.

For Fellowship Awards, the services of a consultant are not routine and should only be listed where the consultant is essential to the proposed research training experience. View details for consultants.

c. *Department Head*

Provide the department head's name and email address. If the application is funded, these fields will enable the department head to provide a required electronic signature on the AHA Award Agreement.

The Department Head provides information about the applicant's academic appointment, career stage, support from the institution, etc. for applications to the following programs:
- Career Development Award
- Established Investigator Award
- AHA Strategically Focused Research Network
- A-TRAC Pilot Projects Grant Programs

View the Department Head Letter information Web page.

d. *Mentor for the Career Development Award*
The role of a mentoring team member is to work with the applicant to develop the application and to make all necessary arrangements for conducting the proposed research work with the institution. Each member of the mentoring team must provide supporting documentation required by the American Heart Association for the research application.

The Department Head may serve as a member of the mentoring team.
A consultant or collaborator may not also be named as a member of the mentoring team.

View the [Mentoring Team for the Career Development Award Information Page](#).

e. *Sponsor*
A sponsor is a senior investigator under whom the research project of an AHA Predoctoral or Postdoctoral Fellowship will be performed. A sponsor is the administrative link with the institution. The sponsor offers supervisory or collaborative assistance necessary for the progress of the research program. A sponsor must be familiar with an applicant's area of research. View the Sponsor Information Page.

f. *Co-Sponsor*
A joint sponsor of an AHA Predoctoral or Postdoctoral Fellowship applicant has the same responsibilities described above for the sponsor. Since the co-sponsor is an optional third party, the applicant must add co-sponsor section to the Third-Party section. The sponsor should work with the co-sponsor to obtain content for the required documents. View the Sponsor Information Page.

g. *Referent*
A referent is an individual familiar with the applicant's scientific interests and abilities. Letters should be composed by the Referent and should not originate from the applicant. Any appearance of substantially similar language in reference letters will be factored into the score for the Sponsor and Environment, which will impact the overall score.

A collaborator, consultant or sponsor contributing to an application that requires reference letters may not serve as a referent.

Please visit the [Referent Information Page](#) for information about the referent upload process and to download a template of the Reference Report form.

h. *Co-Principal Investigator*
The Collaborative Sciences Award is the ONLY program that allows a Co-Principal Investigator. The applicant who initiates a Collaborative Sciences Award application must list himself/herself as a Co-PI in the Third-Party Personnel section to upload required documents.

The American Heart Association recognizes only one Principal Investigator for all other programs. An investigator contributing to your project may be listed as a Collaborating Investigator.

i. *Other*
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA) applicants: Use this option to add the Provost or institutional official who will submit to you a one-page letter attesting to your institution's eligibility.

8. Lay Summary / Summary for Non-scientists

Applications for research funding will be assessed for their potential impact on the AHA Mission, and on the applicant's ability to effectively describe the proposal and its potential outcomes to non-scientists. This potential impact assessment will be based primarily on the Summary for Non-scientists.

This assessment will be factored into the Impact peer review criterion, which will account for 5-10% of the overall priority score.

The summary will be reviewed by the study section 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 strong interest in advancing the prevention and/or management of cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular disease. Lay reviewers specifically help evaluate how well the applicant explains the potential impact of the proposal.

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. It might help to imagine that you are explaining your work to a new acquaintance who does not work in the science field.

Resources – Many online tools are available to assess the readability of documents. It is recommended that the lay summary be written for an eighth-grade equivalent rating. The readability resources below are offered for applicants' reference; AHA does not endorse any of these resources.

Microsoft Word:
https://support.office.com/en-us/article/test-your-document-s-readability-85b4969e-e80a-4777-8dd3-f7fc3c8b3fd2

Readability Formulas- Automatic Readability Checker:
http://www.readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php

Web FX - Readability Test Tool:
https://www.webfx.com/tools/read-able/

9. Budget

Applicants are encouraged to request the maximum annual amount and the maximum number of years for each award. All budgets for funded projects will require approval from the applicant's institution and the AHA.

The abbreviated budget in the online form is a requirement of the American Heart Association. If the applicant's institution requires detailed budget information, then the applicant should submit details to the institution's grants office. However, the Association will accept only the abbreviated budget format for application submission.

- o *Fellowship Applications*
  The application budget is fixed. The applicant is unable to modify or change it.
  AHA fellowships mirror the NIH stipend scale and health insurance allowance. The stipend amount will be determined by your years of postdoctoral experience. If the health insurance allowance is not used, it must be refunded to the AHA.
  AHA allows $1,500 for project support and at least $1,500 for travel per year. Additional travel funds may be taken from the project support without prior AHA approval.
  AHA does not allow indirect costs to be taken by the institution on training grants that primarily provide stipend support. For programs in which indirect costs are permitted, an indirect costs field will be present on the application's budget form.

- o *Grant Applications*
  The application budget may be edited. The applicant is required to enter only the proposed amount for PI salary and fringe, project support, and indirect costs. Please review the program description to determine limits for expense categories. If the project is funded, the investigator will be asked to submit a detailed budget prior to award activation.

10. Alternative and Overlapping Funding

Stipend Award Programs (AHA Predoctoral Fellowship, AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship):

American Heart Association research funds will not be awarded to duplicate any work that is being supported by other funding agencies. Because the trainee receives only a stipend from the award, additional research support for the proposed project MUST come from the sponsor's laboratory. A fellow is permitted to have project support from another funding source, if there is no overlapping budget item with the AHA Fellowship. AHA accepts that in this instance, some overlapping science may exist.

Grant Programs (Career Development Award, Collaborative Sciences Award, Established Investigator Award, Innovative Project Award, Merit Award, Transformational Project Award):

American Heart Association research funds will not be awarded to supplement or duplicate any work that is being supported by other funding agencies. They are intended to represent support for a well- defined, well-described research project.

Exception: The AHA will permit a Career Development Awardee to concurrently hold an NIH K award (except a K99) or to be in the R00 stage of a K99/R00 award, if there is no budgetary overlap.

Alternative (pending or planned applications)
An application must be identified as alternative if submitted to more than one granting agency for the same or closely related project and/or in which there are duplicated budgetary requests. The applicant must indicate if an American Heart Association grant application is an alternative.

After the grant application is reviewed by the American Heart Association, the alternative designation of the project or the budget cannot be changed to accommodate any partial alternative funding. The applicant is not permitted to adjust the scientific aims or budget of an American Heart Association application to accommodate any overlap resulting from funding of an alternative application by another funding agency. The applicant may accept only one award if more than one is to be approved for funding. After award activation, if a subsequent funding agency eliminates all overlap (scientific and budgetary), the awardee may keep the AHA award, pending review and approval by the Research Committee.

Overlap (active or approved applications)
An award must be identified as overlapping if it supports the same or a closely related project and/or in which there are duplicated budgetary requests. The applicant must indicate if the association grant application has scientific or budgetary overlap with an active or approved award. The applicant may accept the AHA grant only if he/she relinquishes the overlapping award. Use of association funds to supplement budgets for a project that is already receiving a substantial amount of extramural support is contrary to established association standards. Arbitrary compartmentalization of a large well-supported project into a discrete segment to compete for association funds will be critically examined.

Alternative/Overlap designation by AHA Research Committee
Whether the applicant has declared an application as alternative or overlapping, the Research Committee may deem an application "alternative" (a pending award) or "overlapping" (with an active award) if there is any duplication of scientific aims or budget. One-hundred percent duplication between applications is not a requirement for an application to be deemed "overlapping."

List all research project support available to you (active, approved, or pending) for funding. List NIH project grants, NIH K awards, portions of NIH program projects, SCOR or Center grants, NIH contracts, Veterans Administration funds, NSF grants, NASA grants, contracts from industry, grants from other non-federal health agencies (including AHA components), any funds available to you through other Investigators, and departmental/institutional support.

<u>Do not mark departmental/institutional support as alternative to the AHA application.</u>

The alternative designation of the project or the budget may not be changed to accommodate partial alternative funding from another source. The applicant is not permitted to adjust the scientific aims or budget of an AHA application to accommodate overlap resulting from funding of an alternative application by another funding agency. One hundred percent (100%) duplication between applications is not a requirement for an application to be deemed alternative or overlapping. The applicant may accept only one award if more than one is to be approved for funding. After award activation, if a subsequent funding agency eliminates all overlap (scientific and budgetary), the awardee may keep the Association award, pending review and approval by the Research Committee.

11. Science/Evaluation Information

The documents required in the Science/Evaluation Information section vary by program. The sections required for the application will be visible in Grants@Heart automatically. A list of the required documents with instructions, format and page requirements for all programs can be found on our website on the Supporting Documents page. Applicants must comply with stated page limits for the program. A document that exceeds a program's page limit will be rejected by Grants@Heart.

Possible Science/Evaluation Sections:

A. Applicant/Principal Investigator Biographical Sketch

(5-page limit) *Use of the NIH biographical sketch is required for AHA programs* Convert the biographical sketch to Portable Document Format (PDF) prior to uploading it to Grants@Heart.

> <u>AHA Predoctoral Fellowship and AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants</u>: The AHA requires a statement on career goals in "Section A. Personal Statement." Career goals should reflect the applicant's true plans and are not required by AHA to be traditional academic or clinical research work.

> <u>Collaborative Sciences Award</u>: Each co-principal investigator should provide a biosketch. Each Co-PI must upload their own biosketch (5-page maximum per biosketch).

_____

Biographical Sketch

Submit NIH OMB No. 0925-0001 and 0925-0002 (Rev. 09/17 Approved Through 03/31/2020).

If you do not have an NIH biographical sketch, you may create one using the format and illustration below.

Begin with entry into college and include postdoctoral training. Enter as many rows as needed. Figures, tables (other than those included in the provided format pages), or graphics are not allowed in the biosketch. Do not embed or attach files (e.g. video, graphics, sound, data). The biosketch may not exceed five pages per person. This five-page limit includes the Education and Training table at the top of the first page.

Name: Fill in your name as it appears in professional correspondence and publications.

eRA Commons User Name: Complete this field if you are registered in the NIH's eRA Commons. The "eRA Commons User Name" field is optional for AHA proposals.

Position Title: Fill in your academic position or professional title.

Education: Create a four-column table, as in the example below. Begin with the baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing. Include postdoctoral, residency, and clinical fellowship training, as applicable, listing each separately.

For each entry provide:
- the name and location of the institution
- the degree received (if applicable)
- the month and year of end date (or expected end date).
  For fellowship applicants only, also include the month and year of start date.
- the field of study (for residency entries, the field of study should reflect the area of residency training)

Following the education block, complete Sections A-D of the biographical sketch.

A. Personal Statement

Briefly describe why you are well-suited for your role(s) in this project. Relevant factors may include aspects of your training; your previous experimental work on this specific topic or related topics; your technical expertise; your collaborators or scientific environment; and/or your past performance in this or related fields.

In this section, applicants for AHA Predoctoral Fellowships and AHA Postdoctoral Fellowships should state their career goals. Career goals should reflect the applicant's true plans and are not required by AHA to be traditional academic or clinical research work.

You may cite up to four publications or research products that highlight your experience and qualifications for this project. Research products can include, but are not limited to, audio or video products; conference proceedings such as meeting abstracts, posters, or other presentations; patents; data and research materials; databases; educational aids or curricula; instruments or equipment; models; protocols; and software or netware.

You may cite interim research products. **Note:** Interim research products have specific citation requirements. See the NIH's related Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

- If you wish to explain factors that affected your past productivity, such as family care responsibilities, illness, disability, or military service, you may address them in this "A. Personal Statement" section.
- Indicate whether you have published or created research products under another name.

- You may mention specific contributions to science that are not included in Section C. Do not present or expand on materials that should be described in other sections of this Biosketch or application.
- Figures, tables, or graphics are not allowed.

B. Positions and Honors

List in chronological order the positions you've held that are relevant to this application, concluding with your present position. High school students and undergraduates may include any previous positions. For individuals who are not currently located at the applicant organization, include the expected position at the applicant organization and the expected start date.

List any relevant academic and professional achievements and honors. In particular:
- Students, post doctorates, and junior faculty should include scholarships, traineeships, fellowships, and development awards, as applicable.
- Clinicians should include information on any clinical licensures and specialty board certifications that they have achieved.

C. Contributions to Science

All senior/key persons should complete the "Contributions to Science," except high school students, undergraduates, and post-baccalaureates.

Briefly describe up to five of your most significant contributions to science. The description of each contribution should be no longer than one half page, including citations.

While all applicants may describe up to five contributions, graduate students and post doctorates may wish to consider highlighting two or three they consider most significant.

For each contribution, indicate the following:
- the historical background that frames the scientific problem;
- the central finding(s);
- the influence of the finding(s) on the progress of science or the application of those finding(s) to health or technology; and
- your specific role in the described work.

For each contribution, you may cite up to four publications or research products that are relevant to the contribution. If you are not the author of the product, indicate what your role or contribution was. Note that while you may mention manuscripts that have not yet been accepted for publication as part of your contribution, you may cite only published papers to support each contribution. Research products can include audio or video products (see the NIH Grants Policy Statement, Section 2.3.7.7: Post-Submission Grant Application Materials); conference proceedings such as meeting abstracts, posters, or other presentations; patents; data and research materials; databases; educational aids or curricula; instruments or equipment; models; protocols; and software or netware.

You may cite interim research products. Note: Interim research products have specific citation requirements. See the NIH's related Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

You may provide a URL to a full list of your published work. This URL must be to a Federal Government website (a .gov suffix). NIH recommends using My Bibliography. Providing a URL to a list of published work is not required.

Descriptions of contributions may include a mention of research products under development, such as manuscripts that have not yet been accepted for publication. These contributions do not have to be

related to the project proposed in this application.

D. Additional Information: Research Support and/or Scholastic Performance

Note the following instructions for specific subsets of applicants/candidates:

- High school students are *not* required to complete Section D.

- Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants can skip the "Research Support" section and must complete **only** the "Scholastic Performance" section. However, when these applicants also have Research Support, they may complete both sections

- All other AHA award applicants should complete the "Research Support" section but skip the "Scholastic Performance" section.

Research Support

These instructions apply to all applicants who are completing the "Research Support" section.

List ongoing and completed research projects from the past three years that you want to draw attention to. Briefly indicate the overall goals of the projects and your responsibilities. Do not include the number of person months or direct costs.

Do not confuse "Research Support" with "Funds Available."

- **Research Support:** As part of the Biosketch section of the application, "Research Support" highlights your accomplishments, and those of your colleagues, as scientists. This information will be used by the reviewers to assess each person's qualifications for a specific role in the proposed project, and to evaluate the overall qualifications of the research team.

- **Funds Available:** The AHA application contains a separate section to report alternative(pending or planned) and overlapping (approved or active) funding.

Scholastic Performance

Predoctoral applicants/candidates (including undergraduates and post-baccalaureates):
List by institution and year **all** undergraduate and graduate courses, with grades. In addition, explain any grading system used if it differs from a 1-100 scale; an A, B, C, D, F system; or a 0-4.0 scale. Also indicate the levels required for a passing grade.

Postdoctoral applicants: List by institution and year **all** graduate scientific and/or professional courses with grades. In addition, explain any grading system used if it differs from a 1-100 scale; an A, B, C, D, F system; or a 0-4.0 scale. Also indicate the levels required for a passing grade.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors.
Follow this format for each person. **DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES.**

NAME:

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login):

POSITION TITLE:

EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE *(if applicable)*	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY

A.   Personal Statement

B.   Positions and Honors

C.   Contributions to Science

D.   Additional Information: Research Support and/or Scholastic Performance

YEAR	COURSE TITLE	GRADE

B. Career Development Plan

(3 pages maximum) - Applicants for the Career Development Award ONLY are required to submit a comprehensive career development plan that includes:

- Primary career intention – AHA does not require this to be a traditional academic research or health profession track. For example, an applicant might wish to pursue a career in industry, technology, teaching, or public health, etc.
- Long-term professional goals (such as positions desired or other specific professional goals, such as 'write a book').
- Explicit short-term goals that contribute to long-term interests and the most important anticipated challenges that must be mitigated/overcome to reach these goals.
- Timeline and 2-3 metrics that will define success in reaching each goal.
- Describe training or experiences you will develop to contribute to and ensure that long term goals are achieved.
- Describe which aspects of your current work/job will be delegated to others to accomplish the early career training and tasks necessary to achieve your goals.
- Identify additional skills, knowledge or experience you will need to acquire that may directly or indirectly help you in your current job or future positions, and how you plan to ensure that this occurs.
- Specifically delineate when and how progress assessments/checkpoints will occur, particularly with each member of your mentoring team (e.g., memos, phone calls, meetings) and what developmental activities will be completed or discussed at these times.
- Provide letters of support from each mentoring team member that indicate he/she understands his/her role and commitment to you as the early career investigator.

Resources -- AHA does not endorse particular resources. These resources are offered for applicants' reference.

How and Why to Write a Career Development Plan | Robert Half
https://www.roberthalf.com/blog/how-and-why-to-write-a-career-development-plan

Guide to Writing a Career Development Plan
https://performancemanager.successfactors.com/doc/po/develop.../carguide.html

C. Research Plan/Proposal

The Research Plan must be created as a Word document that is converted to a Portable Document Format (PDF) file. Only PDF files will be accepted by the Grants@Heart system.

The length of the Research Plan varies by program. Specific limits are listed in the next section of this document. Research plans that exceed the page limit cannot be uploaded.

Before beginning the Research Plan, review the program description noting especially the qualifications and any restrictions for the program to which you are applying. The Research Plan should address all of the peer review criteria, which are included in the program description.

Note: Submission of an application to the AHA with identical or significantly similar content as another investigator is prohibited. Although your project may study the same or a similar issue/problem as another investigator, your research proposal should be your own original/creative writing. You should cite all information taken from another researcher or publication. Failure to do so may result in your proposal being flagged for Ethical Disapproval due to plagiarism. Also, the submission of applications with identical or significantly similar content from a sponsor to a project support program and his/her fellow to fellowship program is prohibited. Both applications will receive a recommendation for "disapproval". Applications submitted by a sponsor and his/her fellow may both be funded if there is no duplication of aims.

Type the research plan specifically following the outline given below for the program to which you are applying, in the same sequence. All items should be addressed. Indicate N/A or None if not applicable to this application.

Proposed Research Plan – 5-page limit

Type the research plan specifically following the outline given below, in the same sequence. All items should be addressed. Indicate N/A or None if not applicable to this application. The entire proposed research plan must not exceed the five-page limit.

Important: *If you are applying for only one year of support, state this in the research plan.*

1. Specific Aims
Provide a clear, concise summary of the aims of the work proposed and its relationship to your long-term goals. Note the significance and innovation of your research; then list two to three concrete objectives.

2. Research Strategy
Describe your research rationale and the experiments you will conduct to accomplish each aim. Structure as follows:

Significance: Sketch the background leading to this application. Summarize important results outlined by others in the same field, critically evaluating existing knowledge. Identify gaps that this project is intended to fill.

State concisely the importance and relevance of the research to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular function or disease, or to related fundamental problems. Also, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make a clear link between the project and the mission of the AHA. The significance section will be assessed in terms of potential impact on the AHA mission; this will be factored into the overall priority score as noted in the peer review criteria.

Preliminary Studies: Describe concisely previous work related to the proposed research by the applicant that will help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project. Include pilot studies showing the work is feasible. (If none, so state.)

Approach: Description of proposed tests, methods or procedures should be explicit, sufficiently detailed, and well defined to allow adequate evaluation of the approach to the problem. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies.

Clearly describe overall design of the study, with careful consideration to statistical aspects of the approach, the adequacy of controls, and number of observations, as well as how results will be analyzed. Include details of any collaborative arrangements that have been made.

Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents. Describe any special ethical circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

- Animal subject use documents are to be uploaded into the Research Assurances section of the application.
- Human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are submitted for funded projects prior to award activation.

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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design as part of the proposed research plan. There is not a separate upload for this explanation; it must be included within the allowable page limit for your proposal.

Proposed Research Plan: 10-page limit

1. Specific Aims
   Provide a clear, concise summary of the aims of the work proposed and its relationship to your long-term goals. State the hypothesis to be tested.

2. Background and Significance
   Sketch the background leading to this application. Summarize important results outlined by others in the same field, critically evaluating existing knowledge. Identify gaps that this project is intended to fill.

   State concisely the importance and relevance of the research to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular function or disease, or to related fundamental problems. Also, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make a clear link between the project and the mission of the AHA. The significance section will be assessed in terms of potential impact on the AHA mission; this will be factored into the overall priority score as noted in the peer review criteria.

3. Preliminary Studies
   Describe concisely previous work by the applicant related to the proposed research that will help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project. Include pilot studies showing the work is feasible. (If none, so state.)

4. Research Design and Methods
   Description of proposed tests, methods or procedures should be explicit, sufficiently detailed, and well-defined to allow adequate evaluation of the approach to the problem. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies.

   Clearly describe overall design of the study, with careful consideration to statistical aspects of the approach, the adequacy of controls, and number of observations, as well as how results will be analyzed. Include details of any collaborative arrangements that have been made.

   Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

   Describe how the project will stimulate the interest or involvement of students.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents. Describe any special ethical circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

- Animal subject use documents are to be uploaded into the Research Assurances section of the application.

- Human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are submitted for funded projects prior to award activation.

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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design as part of the proposed research plan. There is not a separate upload for this explanation; it must be included within the allowable page limit for your proposal.

10-page limit -- Address the following topics, and how the members of your Mentoring Team will assist with each aspect.

1. Specific Aims
   Provide a clear, concise summary of the aims of the work proposed and its relationship to your long-term goals. State the hypothesis to be tested.

2. Background and Significance
   Sketch the background leading to this application. Summarize important results outlined by others in the same field, critically evaluating existing knowledge. Identify gaps that this project is intended to fill.

   State concisely the importance and relevance of the research to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular function or disease, or to related fundamental problems. Also, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make a clear link between the project and the mission of the AHA. The significance section will be assessed in terms of potential impact on the AHA mission; this will be factored into the overall priority score as noted in the peer review criteria.

3. Preliminary Studies
   Describe concisely previous work related to the proposed research by the applicant that will help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project. Include pilot studies showing the work is feasible. (If none, so state.)

4. Research Design and Methods
   Description of proposed tests, methods or procedures should be explicit, sufficiently detailed, and well defined to allow adequate evaluation of the approach to the problem. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies.

   Clearly describe overall design of the study, with careful consideration to statistical aspects of the approach, the adequacy of controls, and number of observations, as well as how results will be analyzed. Include details of any collaborative arrangements that have been made.

   Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents. Describe any special ethical circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

- Animal subject use documents are to be uploaded into the Research Assurances section of the application.

- Human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are submitted for funded projects prior to award activation.

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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design as part of the proposed research plan. There is not a separate upload for this explanation; it must be included within the allowable page limit for your proposal.

Collaborative Sciences Award

Proposed Research Plan, 12-page limit.

After submitting a Letter of Intent, if you are invited to submit a full application:

The proposal must expand on the Letter of Intent, detailing the collaborative relationship, such that the scientific objectives cannot be achieved without the efforts of at least two co-principal investigators and their respective disciplines and expertise. The combination and integration of studies may be inclusive of basic, clinical, population, behavioral, and/or translational research.

1. Specific Aims

Provide a clear, concise summary of the aims of the work proposed and its relationship to your long-term goals. State the hypothesis to be tested.

2. Background and Significance

Sketch the background leading to this application. Summarize important results outlined by others in the same field, critically evaluating existing knowledge. Identify gaps that this project is intended to fill.

State concisely the importance and relevance of the research to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular function or disease, or to related fundamental problems. Also, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make a clear link between the project and the mission of the AHA. The significance section will be assessed in terms of potential impact on the AHA mission; this will be factored into the overall priority score as noted in the peer review criteria.

3. Preliminary Studies

Describe concisely previous work related to the proposed research by the applicant that will help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project. Include pilot studies showing the work is feasible. (If none, so state.)

4. Research Design and Methods

Description of proposed tests, methods or procedures should be explicit, sufficiently detailed, and well defined to allow adequate evaluation of the approach to the problem. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies.

Clearly describe overall design of the study, with careful consideration to statistical aspects of the approach, the adequacy of controls, and number of observations, as well as how results will be analyzed. Include details of any collaborative arrangements that have been made.

Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents. Describe any special ethical circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

- Animal subject use documents are to be uploaded into the Research Assurances section of the application.

- Human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are submitted for funded projects prior to award activation.

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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design as part of the proposed research plan. There is not a separate upload for this explanation; it must be included within the allowable page limit for your proposal.

Proposed Research Plan, 10-page limit.

1. The Established Investigator Award (EIA) abbreviated proposal format is not the same as those used for other AHA grants or individual NIH research grants (R01). The 10 pages of the proposal in the EIA describe past research accomplishments, the potential of the EIA to provide new directions and innovations, and broadly discuss projected research studies. The application should not contain detailed protocols or focus heavily on the design or interpretation of individual experiments. The applicant should clarify how this proposal differs from other funded projects, or how these funds will be used to expand upon other projects.
Describe past research accomplishments, the potential of the EIA to provide new directions and innovations, and broadly discuss projected research studies.

   The application should not contain detailed protocols or focus heavily on the design or interpretation of individual experiments.

2. Clarify how this proposal differs from other funded projects, or how these funds will be used to expand upon other projects.

Innovative Project Award

Proposed Research Plan, 5-page limit.

After submitting a Letter of Intent/Pre-proposal, if you are invited to submit a full application:

The proposal must expand on the Letter of Intent and will be judged heavily on innovation and impact on the AHA mission.

1. Specific Aims

Provide a clear, concise summary of the aims of the work proposed and its relationship to your long-term goals. State the hypothesis to be tested.

2. Background and Significance

The Innovative Project Award (IPA) promotes unexplored ideas; therefore, preliminary data is not required and not accepted as part of the proposal. However, a solid rationale for the work must be provided. If you provide preliminary data, the application will be disqualified.

You may cite previous projects to demonstrate that you possess a competency or technique that equips you to take on this new direction. Proposals may cite existing, unanalyzed data. Sketch the background leading to this application. Summarize important results outlined by others in the same field, critically evaluating existing knowledge. Identify gaps that this project is intended to fill.

State concisely the importance and relevance of the research to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular function or disease, or to related fundamental problems. Also, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make a clear link between the project and the mission of the AHA. The significance section will be assessed in terms of potential impact on the AHA mission; this will be factored into the overall priority score as noted in the peer review criteria.

3. Research Design and Methods

Description of proposed tests, methods or procedures should be explicit, sufficiently detailed, and well defined to allow adequate evaluation of the approach to the problem. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies.

Clearly describe overall design of the study, with careful consideration to statistical aspects of the approach, the adequacy of controls, and number of observations, as well as how results will be analyzed. Include details of any collaborative arrangements that have been made.

Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents. Describe any special ethical circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

- Animal subject use documents are to be uploaded into the Research Assurances section of the application.

- Human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are submitted for funded projects prior to award activation.

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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design as part of the proposed research plan. There is not a separate upload for this explanation; it must be included within the allowable page limit for your proposal.

Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship Program
This program requires an Implementation Plan, as outlined below, 15-page limit.

1. Provide a history of the institution's student training program. Include a description of institutional support that is available to sponsors and students.

2. List the training opportunities available to students, including potential sponsors. Provide brief details about each sponsor's background, nature of work, training plan for a student, and research project environment. **The Program Director (applicant) should synthesize information about all proposed sponsors into this one document, rather than requiring a separate set of information from each sponsor.**

3. Outline how potential student awardees will be identified and recruited. The student recruitment plan must be open to students at any school, who will be assigned a sponsor at the awarded institution for the 10-week experience. The institution is strongly encouraged to recruit students from racial and ethnic groups that are underrepresented in science (Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander).

   Provide the procedure that sponsor/student teams will follow to compete for AHA funds granted to the institution.

4. Detail the enrichment activities that will be available to the student trainees.

5. Submit a plan for obtaining annual feedback from current and former trainees to assess the quality and effectiveness of the fellowship experience.

Merit Award

After submitting a Letter of Intent, if you are invited to submit a full application, refer to this web page for detailed application instructions:
http://professional.heart.org/professional/ResearchPrograms/UCM_479715_Merit-A ward-Invited-Applicant- Instructions.jsp

Upload the following documents into the Science/Evaluation section

1. Major Research Achievements (1 pg. limit)
    A summary of the applicant's major research achievements. This should be written so that a non-scientist reviewer can readily understand the summary.

2. Ongoing and Planned Research Progress and Future Vision (8 pg. limit)
    A summary of the applicant's ongoing and planned research program and a statement of why the AHA should support the applicant's research (references and up to one page of figures are counted toward the 8-page limit).

    This section should build upon the letter of intent by focusing on how the proposed research would
    • transform and advance the future of cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular science;
    • move into emerging and/or difficult areas of inquiry, being consistently at its forefront;
    • develop new tools and methods to support creative experimental approaches to questions; encompassing concepts or techniques from other disciplines;
    • forge links between disparate disciplines;
    • allow for collaboration with other distinguished scientists across disciplines;
    • generate original and innovative contributions;
    • assist the AHA in becoming a catalyst to achieving maximum impact in equitable health and wellbeing.

3. Summary of past efforts in support of AHA programs and initiatives and plan for future service as an ambassador in support of the AHA mission (1 pg. limit)

4. 15 Most Impactful Publications (optional replacement)
    You may leave the list of your 15 most impactful publications that you submitted for your Letter of Intent. If you wish to replace this document, please email a pdf of your revised list with your application ID number to apply@heart.org.

Supporting Documentation Section
Two references are required for those selected to submit a full application. Create two separate uploads. Each letter is limited to four pages.

1. Specific Aims
    Provide a clear, concise summary of the aims of the work proposed and its relationship to your long-term goals. State the hypothesis to be tested.

2. Background and Significance
    Sketch the background leading to this application. Summarize important results outlined by others in the same field, critically evaluating existing knowledge. Identify gaps that this project is intended to fill.

    State concisely the importance and relevance of the research to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular function or disease, or to related fundamental problems. Also, it is incumbent upon the applicant to make a clear link between the project and the mission of the AHA. The significance section will be assessed in terms of potential impact on the AHA mission; this will be factored into the overall priority score as noted in the peer review criteria.

3. Preliminary Studies
    Describe concisely previous work related to the proposed research by the applicant that will help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project. Include pilot studies showing the work is feasible. (If none, so state.)

4. Research Design and Methods
    Description of proposed tests, methods or procedures should be explicit, sufficiently detailed, and well defined to allow adequate evaluation of the approach to the problem. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies.

    Clearly describe overall design of the study, with careful consideration to statistical aspects of the approach, the adequacy of controls, and number of observations, as well as how results will be analyzed. Include details of any collaborative arrangements that have been made.

    Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents. Describe any special ethical circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

- Animal subject use documents are to be uploaded into the Research Assurances section of the application.
- Human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are submitted for funded projects prior to award activation.

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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design as part of the proposed research plan. There is not a separate upload for this explanation; it must be included within the allowable page limit for your proposal.

AHA Center for Precision Cardiovascular Medicine

Refer to the [Institute web page](#) for instructions.

Strategically Focused Research Network

Refer to [the SFRN web page](#) for instructions.

_____

D. Literature Cited
Four- page limit

List all literature citations for your Research Plan. Citation references should be limited to relevant and current literature; be concise and select only those references cited in the Research Plan. This section is intended ONLY for your citations, and no other materials.

MLA (Modern Language Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) style is acceptable. Standard abbreviations are acceptable with two exceptions: full titles and full paging must be provided.

Each reference must list:
- Authors in the same order as they appear on the paper (list all or up to 15)
- Title
- Name of the book or journal
- Volume number
- Page numbers
- Year of publication

Upload your completed document to the electronic system.

Note: In the Personal Statement section of your Biosketch, you may cite up to four publications or research products that highlight your experience and qualifications for this project.

E. Research Project Environment
Two-page limit, unless noted below

Use the AHA template on the next page. Address each topic listed. The form is similar to the NIH SF424 (R&R) Facilities & Other Resources. You may copy and paste information from a current Facilities & Other Resources document onto this form. Upon completion, convert the form to Portable Document Format (pdf).

Collaborative Sciences Award – All co-PIs are to upload a Research Project Environment to the application (two-page limit each).

Merit Award – One additional page may be used if a more extensive description is required, for a maximum of three pages.

All Fellowship Programs - Sponsor's Research Environment has no page limit.

AHA RESEARCH PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

Applicant's Name _____

FACILITIES:
(Specify the facilities to be used for the conduct of the proposed research. Indicate the performance sites and describe capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity, and extent of availability to the project.)

LABORATORY:

CLINICAL:

ANIMAL:

COMPUTER:

OFFICE:

OTHER:
(Identify support services and specify the extent to which they will be available to the project.)

MAJOR EQUIPMENT:
(List the most important items already available to this project, noting the location and pertinent capabilities of each.)

F. Budget Justification Form
Two-page limit

The Budget Justification form requires minimal narrative explanation of expenses proposed for the project. Follow the AHA template form, which outlines the information to include in this document. Access the template: Budget Justification Template

If the application is funded, the Budget Justification will be reviewed prior to award activation to confirm that budget items comply with AHA Guidelines and allowable expenditures.

Below is a list of Allowable and Non-allowable budget items. These are defined in the AHA Award Guide.

Expense Types	Allowed
Alterations and Renovations	No
Books, Subscriptions	No
Collaborating Investigator Salary/Fringes	Yes
Computers	Yes
Consultative Services	May be requested, AHA approval required
Data Network chargebacks	No
Equipment	Yes
Expenses in Obtaining a Visa	No
Indirect Costs	Yes, up to 10% of total annual expenses reported
Malpractice Insurance	No
Other Personnel Salary/Fringes	Yes
Overhead	Grant Program: Yes, up to 10% of total annual expenses Fellowships: No, AHA does not pay overhead on awards that are mostly salary support.
Parking Fees	No
Patient Care, Hospitalization, Diagnostic Laboratory	No
Patient Transportation	Yes
Payment of Human Subjects	Yes
Personnel Recruitment	No
PI Salary/Fringes	Yes
Postage—Overnight Mail related to Project	Yes
Publication Costs and Reprints	Yes
Receptions and Meals	No
Service Contracts	Yes
Subcontracts	Yes, with prior AHA approval
Supplies	Yes
Telephone—Long Distance related to Project	Yes
Travel—Domestic or Foreign	Yes
Tuition Costs	No
Uniforms, Wearing Apparel	No

If the applicant's institution requires detailed budget information, the applicant should submit

details to his/her institutional Grants Office at application submission.

G. Resubmission Modifications
2-page limit

Some AHA programs permit resubmission of the same or similar application (similar aims) as one submitted in a previous cycle, up to three times (the original plus two resubmissions). In 2018-19, the resubmission option is available for the Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship Program, AHA Predoctoral Fellowship, AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship, Career Development Award, Collaborative Sciences Award, and AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA).

If your application is a resubmission of an application unfunded in a previous AHA review, you must create a document to explain the changes.

Create a document named RESUBMISSION MODIFICATIONS.

Address the following:

1. Specify significant changes made in response to major comments/criticisms from the scientific critiques.

2. Explain how the application has been strengthened or modified (additions, deletions, revisions).

It is essential that this document complies exactly with the association's Formatting and Page Requirements. See "Creating an Application" section above.

Definition of a Resubmission

A resubmission is the same or similar application (similar aims) as one submitted previously. The project aims should be the same, unless they have been modified in response to critiques or because of changes in approach that the investigator has decided to make since the original submission. If major changes are made to the application or if this is a different/new project, it is not considered a resubmission.

An applicant who is unsuccessful in competition may submit the same or similar application three times (the original plus two resubmissions). *The same or similar application submitted for the fourth time will be withdrawn.*

It is not acceptable to resubmit a proposal previously submitted by another investigator.

To have the benefit of critiques from a previous review, when possible a resubmitted application will be assigned to at least one of the previous primary reviewers. Reviewers of resubmitted applications will be provided with the critiques and scores from the previous round for reference.

12. Upload Supporting Documents from Third Parties

See the [Supporting Documents page](#) for required uploads for each AHA program.

Third parties (except referents) will send their documents to you electronically (via e-mail). The applicant is to upload the documents into the application. Covert all supporting documents to Portable Document Format (PDF) prior to uploading to Grants@Heart. Also, check that the converted documents are legible.

Supporting documents from third party personnel (except referents) are to be uploaded in the Third-Party Personnel section. Click the Upload button in each section to upload the supporting documentation for each third party. Click Save after each upload.

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 for all parties except Referents. Uploaded referent documents will show only a document name. The applicant may use the link provided to send email reminders to referents who have not uploaded their supporting documentation.

You will be not able to submit your application if reference documents are missing. Reference letters are the only documents that can be missing when you submit your application to the Grants Officer. If your application is a resubmission, the reference letters will not copy over from the previous submission. When you enter the name of your referent in the application, that person will receive an auto-generated email giving instructions for submitting the reference letter.

NOTE: Reference Reports for Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship applications cannot be uploaded until the application has be submitted to the American Heart Association.

13. Research Subjects/Assurances

The applicant must answer the questions regarding experimentation in their proposed research project. Visit our website for more information about AHA policies.

Ethical aspects of the proposed research are to be addressed in the subject use approval documents that are to be uploaded into the proposal (animal subjects use is uploaded as part of the application; human subject approval and consent forms are just-in-time documents that are due prior to award activation). Describe any special circumstance or issue of note in the proposed research plan.

A. 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.

B. 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:
  o to develop specific treatments for persons suffering from diseases, and
  o 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.

C. 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 regarding gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Proposals that intentionally restrict the population sampled must include a compelling scientific rationale for such research design and should be explained in the Proposed Research Plan.

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; there are no exceptions.

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

D. 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.

E. Human Fetal Tissue

The AHA does not fund scientific research that involves the use of human fetal tissue.

14. 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.

If you answer "Yes" to Vertebrate Animals, you must create a document titled, VERTEBRATE ANIMAL SUBJECTS. See Formatting and Page Requirements in section 6 of these instructions for page set-up guidelines.

Address the following five points. When research involving vertebrate animals will take place at
collaborating site(s) or other performance site(s), provide this information before discussing the five points.

1. Provide a description of the proposed use of the animals in the work outlined in the Research Design and Methods section. Identify the species, strains, ages, sex, and numbers of animals to be used in the proposed work.

2. Justify the use of animals, the choice of species, and the numbers to be used. If animals are in short supply, costly, or to be used in large numbers, provide an additional rationale for their selection and numbers.

3. Provide information on the veterinary care of the animals involved.

4. Describe the procedures for ensuring that discomfort, distress, pain, and injury will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically sound research. Describe the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs and/or comfortable restraining devices, where appropriate, to minimize discomfort, distress, pain, and injury.

5. Describe any method of euthanasia to be used and the reasons for its selection. State whether this method is consistent with the recommendations of the Panel on Euthanasia of the American Veterinary Medical Association. If not, present a justification for not following the recommendations.

Convert your Word document to Portable Document Format (pdf) and upload to Grants@Heart. The system will only accept a .pdf file. A-TRAC Pilot Program applicants do not need to upload the file in Grants@Heart.

The AHA has adopted just-in-time IACUC assurances for animal subjects. Each applicant is strongly encouraged to submit his/her project to the appropriate animal care and use committee at the time of application; it is not a requirement that IACUC approval be deferred. Funded applicants will have a maximum time of three months following the original activation date to submit the IACUC approval for their projects to the AHA. (For example, if the activation date is July 1, IACUC approval must be received prior to September 30.) If the IACUC approval is not provided to the AHA within three months of the originally-posted activation date, the award must be relinquished. There are no exceptions.

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

AHA Professional Membership

Each applicant must be an American Heart Association Professional Member (memberships start under $100). This applies to Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Applicants *This requirement was developed by the AHA Research Committee, AHA's professional councils' leadership committees, and the Council Operations Committee. It was considered and approved by the Science Advisory Coordinating Committee (SACC) and the Board of Directors.*

Until an applicant joins or renews AHA Professional Membership, she/he will not be able to submit the application to the Grants Officer.

If you are already an AHA Professional member, enter your membership number. The last name on your application must match the last name associated with the membership number. If you do not know your membership number, click the "question mark" in this section for more detailed instructions.

The fastest way to renew or join is to use the link in the Grants@Heart application site. You may join or renew by phone at 301-223-2307 or 800-787-8984, however there is a 3-5 day waiting period to process membership by phone. Current AHA awardees are permitted to use award funds to renew annual AHA Professional Membership.

Membership dues are not refundable. Questions about the membership requirement may be directed to apply@heart.org or call 214-360-6107 option 1.

Visit the AHA/ASA Professional Membership page to find out more about membership levels and benefits.

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Membership Frequently Asked Questions

- *As a fellowship applicant, may I use my sponsor's membership number?*

   Predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowship applicants must have their own memberships. They are not covered under their sponsors' memberships. AHA wants to more actively engage these training-level investigators to become involved with AHA professional councils and to explore the many opportunities available through the association. Applicants to the Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship program are exempt from the Membership requirement, due to the short duration and limited dollars for these awards.

- *How do I find my membership number and learn if my membership is still active?*

   There are several ways to validate your membership:
   1. Log into the Membership site by clicking the 'SIGN IN' button at the top right of the screen. Enter your username and password. Once logged in, your name and membership ID will appear on the screen.
   2. Your membership number can be found on the journal mailing label above your name, a membership renewal notice, in your original welcome packet and on your membership card.
   3. If you have a few days prior to the research application deadline, you can send a request via e- mail to ahacustomerservice@lww.com.
      Please include your full name and address for confirmation. Response from this web site may take up to three days.
   4. Call AHA Customer Service during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Central Time) at 301-223-2307 or 800-787-8984.

5. From your Grants@Heart research application, go to the Membership section. Click "yes" to the question, "Are you an AHA Professional Member?" You will see a link for those who forgot their membership number. You must enter the email address that is associated with your AHA Professional Membership account, and your member number will be emailed to you.
6. Contact the AHA's applicant assistance team at apply@heart.org.
7. In the meantime, you may complete the entire application, but you will not be able to submit it to your Grants Officer until you enter your membership information or join via the link in Grants@Heart.

- *My name has changed. Grants@Heart does not recognize my member number, because my new last name has been pre-populated. What should I do?*

  Please update your membership profile by following these steps:
  1. Visit Professional Heart Daily and choose 'sign-in' at the top of the screen. Enter your username and password.
  2. Once logged in, select your name in the header. The membership badge will display.
  3. Scroll down and select 'Profile Update' link. The Profile Update page allows you to update your account information (i.e. name, email, password, etc.). The change is made to the database immediately.
  4. If you still cannot proceed, through your application, you may need to log off and back onto Grants@Heart.

- *I need to become an AHA Professional Member so that I may apply, but I am too close to the submission deadline to wait 3 days to receive membership confirmation after registering.*

  Use the link contained in the Grants@Heart application to be instantly recognized as a member. Follow these steps:
  1. Log onto Grants@Heart and open/begin your application.
  2. Go to the Membership/Application Fee screen and click the link to join from within the application. By using this link, you will be taken to the membership site.
  3. Complete the joining process.
  4. Click the "Return to Grants@Heart" button at the bottom right to be routed back to your application in Grants@Heart. Grants@Heart will recognize that you have gone through the process. You will be able to submit your application to your grants officer.

- *If my grants officer declines my application to allow me to make revisions, will my membership or payment information be saved?*

  If your grants officer declines your application, all your membership information will be saved. If your membership has expired between the time you began your application and the time you submitted it to your grants officer, your membership information will not be saved.

- *If my grants officer misses the deadline, will I still be charged for membership?*

  When you enter your information to pay the membership fee and click "Submit Payment," your credit card is charged immediately.

  If the applicant decided not to submit and instructed his/her grants officers not to send the application to AHA, then the membership dues can be refunded.

If a grants officer will not allow the application to be submitted to AHA, then membership dues will not be refunded.

- *I just joined (or renewed) my professional membership using the link from the Membership/Application Fee page in my Grants@Heart application. I had to log back onto Grants@Heart, and it appears that my membership sign-up did not work.*
    1. If the applicant closed the membership page, instead of clicking the "Return to Grants@Heart" button, go to the Membership/Application Fee page of your research application. Under 'Are you an AHA Professional Member?', click Yes.
    2. Select 'Forgot your member number".
    3. Use the option to search by member's user name, and click 'verify membership'.
    4. "Processing (Your membership has been validated. Please continue.)" should now appear in the membership number field.
    5. This confirms that the membership process was completed, and you may submit the proposal to your grants officer.

- *When I enter my membership number, I receive an error message that states, "We could not verify membership with given details."*

    There may be several reasons for this error message:
    1. If you copied and pasted your membership ID, please check that there is not an extra space at the end of the membership number or user ID you entered.
    2. Verify that your membership has not expired by logging onto your Professional Membership account at Professional Heart Daily to check the status of your membership. It must be in
    "Active" status.
    3. Confirm that your last name is the same in your Grants@Heart application as it is on your Professional Membership account.

        If you are unable to resolve the error message, please call our staff at 214-630-6107 option 1

- *Will my grants officer be able to see my credit card or membership information?*

    No, the data fields will become blank after your payment has been received by AHA. You must log into your AHA Professional Membership account to see personal information.

15. Submit to Grants Officer

Upon completion of all the application sections, the applicant/investigator should check all sections and uploads for accuracy. If the incorrect document has been uploaded, simply repeat the upload process and select the correct document. Be sure to save all changes.

When you have confirmed that your application is ready for submission, select "Submit to Grants Officer" in the left menu. If there are missing sections in the application, they will be highlighted with Yellow check marks in the left navigation. You must correct the section with the Yellow check marks before you can submit. You will see confirmation on your screen that your application has been submitted to your Grants Officer.

PLEASE NOTE: The Grants Officer is responsible for submitting the application to the AHA. It is very important that the correct grants officer is selected from the dropdown list in Grants@Heart. It is also important to work with the grants officer to establish the AHA submission deadline and to find out if the institution has set an internal deadline.

Applications submitted late, even if it is just a few minutes late, will not be accepted. The system shuts down automatically at the designated time. Start early and submit early!

Routing the Application Within the Institution

Some institutions require that applicants route their applications to several people for review and/or approval. Grants@Heart does not include a mechanism for "sharing" your application, so there is not a way to route your application electronically.

How to Print an Application

The AHA requires only an online submission through Grants@Heart. A printed copy will NOT be accepted as a form of application submission. The investigator can print the application by clicking Download Application on left navigation bar – the proposed research plan with print; only some of the other sections will print. A printed copy should not be used to check page format requirements

Signatures

Signatures are not required for AHA online applications. When you submit your application, it is routed to your institutional Grants Officer for review, approval and submission to the AHA. All documents needed for submission are required online. DO NOT send a paper copy of your application. Application submission must be done online through Grants@Heart.

Application Submission to AHA

The Grants Officer is responsible for submitting the application to AHA. Approving the application completes the submission process. Declining the application sends the application back to the applicant/investigator.

If revisions are needed prior to the deadline, the grants officer may reject the application to enable the investigator to make the changes and resubmit it to the grants officer. Once the application is submitted to AHA, no changes can be made.

Visit detailed information about grants officer access.

After the application deadline, no supplementary material (additional preliminary data, new publications, etc.) will be accepted unless requested by AHA staff. However, if a publication listed as pending is accepted after the application is submitted, you may notify AHA via apply@heart.org and attach the acceptance letter (but not the publication). You must first obtain consent from your grants officer before contacting AHA.

Submitted applications will be reviewed based upon the peer review and eligibility criteria for the research application program the applicant selected. The program cannot be changed once an application is submitted.

Withdrawing an Application

Applications may be withdrawn at the request of the applicant. The request must be submitted to the AHA in writing. You may send your request to apply@heart.org. You will receive an email confirmation when your application is withdrawn.

Applications may also be administratively withdrawn by AHA if the applicant:
- is determined to be ineligible for the program to which they have applied;
- submits the same or similar application for the fourth time;
- does not comply with format requirements (type size/characters per inch, lines per page, and page limitations);
- is determined to have submitted an application that is duplicated by another applicant.

Peer Review

When an application is submitted to the American Heart Association, it is assigned to a peer review committee based on the science type of the proposal and the <u>first major science classification choice</u>. Two scientists from the peer review committee provide an independent, in-depth review. A third reviewer is also assigned as a reader of the proposal, to assist with differences of opinions and to balance the discussion. Readers are not required to post critiques, but sometimes comment on the overall impression of the proposal. These scientists are assigned an application based upon their broad knowledge of the science and methods contained in the application. Each peer reviewer is assigned a limited number of applications to review in detail. All peer reviewers may access all applications in their committee, if not in conflict, and may review on their own initiative applications not specifically assigned to them.

Applications for research funding will be assessed for their potential impact on the AHA Mission, and on the applicant's ability to effectively describe to non-scientists the proposal and its potential outcomes. This potential impact assessment will be based primarily on the Summary for Non-scientists.

The Summary for Non-scientists will be reviewed by the study section 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 strong interest in advancing the prevention and/or management of cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular disease. Lay reviewers specifically help evaluate how well the applicant explains the potential impact of the proposal. This assessment will be factored into the overall priority score, as noted in the peer review criteria.

The committee meets and discusses the scientific merit of each proposal and then each committee member privately assigns a score from 1.0 to 5.0 to each. A score of 1.0 is best. After an application is scored, the reviewer's individual scores are averaged to give the application an overall priority score. When all applications in a program have been scored, they are percentile ranked. The calculations are done across all applications received for a specific program.

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 and will result in the removal of your application from funding consideration and institutional notification of ethical concerns. Reviewers are directed to notify the AHA if an applicant contacts them.

Funding Notification

Each program description includes a timeline of the application deadline, anticipated funding notification date, and award start date. Applicants and Grant Officers receive an email from Grants@Heart when funding status is ready to be viewed.

When peer review is complete, the AHA Research Committee will meet to make funding decisions. An email notice will be sent from Grants@Heart to applicants, sponsors (where applicable) and grants officers advising them to log in to view the application's funding status. Check your email address in Grants@Heart to confirm it is correct. Even if you do not receive an email from the system, you can log in and check the status of your application.

If you do not see the outcomes screen immediately upon accessing Grants@Heart, go to Application Administration > View All Applications > Outcomes (next to the application in question). The outcomes of prior applications are always available.

Next Deadlines

The American Heart Association has rolling deadlines throughout the year. If your application is unsuccessful, you are encouraged to reapply the next time the program is offered and if you continue to meet the application requirements. New deadline dates are generally posted with several months' notice. Current information will be posted to the AHA Application Information page.