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2024 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 proposal.

The AHA uses a Web-based tool, ProposalCentral, to manage the entire 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. Click on the question marks (?) throughout the proposal sections in ProposalCentral for instructions, help text and links.

AHA Policies and Standards Governing Research Awards

Below is a list of notable topics of science and personal conduct that apply to AHA research grant applicants and awardees. This is not a complete list of all AHA policies, nor are all of these formal policies. Comprehensive policies are contained in AHA Award Agreement and Board documents. Visit the policies web page for information on these subjects:

- Open Science Policies for AHA-funded research
  - If you had a prior AHA Research award, your eligibility to receive additional funding may depend on demonstrated compliance with AHA open science policies. Refer to AHA's compliance instructions to ensure that previous awards are in good standing.
- Patent, Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer
- Falsification of Scientific Data, Plagiarism, Use of Someone Else's Work or Idea, and Scientific Misconduct
- Collection Use and Security of Personal Information
- Ethical Aspects of Research with Human Subjects and Animals
- Harassment and Discrimination

Assistance

AHA research programs and proposal deadlines:
https://professional.heart.org/en/research-programs/application-information

Contact Altum/Proposal Central 800 875 2562 (toll-free U.S. & Canada) or +1 703 964 5840 (direct dial international) or pcsupport@altum.com with technical questions/issues such as:

- I cannot access my ProposalCentral account.
- I cannot find the proposal/pre-proposal/letter of intent that I just started.
- I keep getting an error message when I try to access a page in my proposal.
- I keep getting an error message when I upload a PDF file.
- The link to provide my reference letter does not work.
- I need to update my institution and contact information, but I am not sure how to do that.
- The institution that I put in my profile is not a confirmed institution. What do I do?
- It seems that I have more than 1 login for ProposalCentral. Can I merge them?
- I validated my application but the submit button is still not available.

Please note, Altum/Proposal Central offices will be closed on the following holidays. Inquires made on these days will be answered as quickly as possible after office reopening.

In 2024:
January 1 – New Year's Day
January 15 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 19 – Presidents' Day
May 27 – Memorial Day
June 19 – Juneteenth
July 4 – Independence Day
September 2 – Labor Day
October 14 – Columbus Day
November 28 & 29 - Thanksgiving
December 23-27 - Christmas Holiday

Contact the American Heart Association apply@heart.org or (214) 360-6107 (option 1) with program questions/issues such as:

- Do I meet the eligibility requirements for the program to which I wish to apply?
- How much detail do I need to input for the Research Plan in my proposal?
- May I submit more than one proposal?
- Can I add figures and/or legends to the proposal?
- It says to upload my biosketch. Can that be in NIH format?
- I need help with AHA Professional Membership.
- May I pay a collaborator (or other personnel) from this grant?
- I would like to request an extension to the deadline.
- I need to replace a document in a proposal I submitted.
- I want to apply for a grant but cannot find the opportunity listed in ProposalCentral.

Please note, American Heart Association offices will be closed on the following holidays. Inquires made on these days will be answered as quickly as possible after office reopening.

In 2024:
January 1 - New Year's Day
January 15 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
May 27 – Memorial Day
July 4 - Independence Day
September 2 - Labor Day
November 28 & 29 - Thanksgiving
December 23-27 - Christmas Holiday

AHA Funding Opportunities

Program descriptions of funding opportunities are generally posted on the AHA website several months prior to the proposal 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 proposal process early. The applicant is responsible for preparing the proposal and working with all parties associated with the proposal to ensure timely submission by the proposal deadline date.

Required AHA Professional Membership

Each applicant must be an AHA Professional Member. Join or renew when preparing a proposal in ProposalCentral, online, or by phone at 301-223-2307 or 800-787-8984. Membership processing may take 3-5 days; *do not wait until the proposal deadline to renew or join.* Current AHA awardees are permitted to use award funds to renew annual AHA Professional Membership dues.

Each applicant must be an American Heart Association Professional Member (membership levels are based on career stage). This applies to Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Applicants. *This requirement was developed by the AHA Research Committee, AHA's Council 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 as an AHA Professional Member, she/he will not be able to submit the proposal to the AHA.

If you are already an AHA Professional Member, enter your membership number. The last name on your proposal must match the last name associated with the membership number. If you do not know your membership number, visit Professional Heart Daily and click 'Log In' at the top right corner of the screen, then select 'find my account'.

Visit the AHA Professional Members page to find out more about membership levels and benefits. Member dues are not refundable. Questions about the AHA Professional Membership requirement may be directed to apply@heart.org or call 214-360-6107 option 1.

AHA Member Frequently Asked Questions

- *As a fellowship applicant, may I use my mentor's Member number?*

Predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowship applicants must have their own memberships. They are not covered under their mentors' accounts. 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 Member requirement, due to the short duration and limited dollars for these awards.

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

  There are several ways to validate your status:

  1. Log into the AHA Member 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 Member ID will appear on the screen.
  2. Your Member number can be found on the journal mailing label above your name, a renewal notice, in your original welcome packet and on your AHA Membership card.
  3. If you have a few days prior to the research proposal deadline, you can send a request via e-mail to AHAMembership@mciusa-support.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. Contact the AHA's applicant assistance team at apply@heart.org.

In the meantime, you may complete the entire proposal, but you will not be able to submit it until

you enter your account information or join via the link in the proposal.

- *My member number is not recognized because my name has changed and my new last name has been pre-populated. What should I do?*

  Please update your 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 Member 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.

- *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 confirmation after registering.*

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

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

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

- *If my grants officer misses the deadline, will the AHA still charge me?*

  When you enter your information to pay the 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 proposal to AHA, then the dues can be refunded.

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

- *I just joined AHA (or renewed) as a Professional Member using the link from the Application Fee page in my proposal. I had to log back in, and it appears that my sign-up did not work.*

  1. If the applicant closed the signup page, instead of clicking the button to return to the proposal, go to the Application Fee page of your research proposal. Under 'Are you an AHA Professional Member?,' click Yes.
  2. Select 'Forgot your member number."
  3. Use the option to search by member's username and click 'verify.'
  4. "Processing (Your membership has been validated. Please continue.)" should now appear in the Member number field.
  5. This confirms that the signup process was completed, and you may submit the

proposal to your grants officer.

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

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

How to Access ProposalCentral

Please follow the instructions on the AHA Proposal Central login page.
Bookmark this page. Use this to log into ProposalCentral, so that your AHA information remains connected to your research activity.

Applicant Profile

In this section, you will provide information about you, your academic career, citizenship, location of work for the research project and college degrees. The information on this screen is pre-populated based on the information you entered when you registered. Update or change your information by selecting "Professional Profile" any time prior to proposal submission.

This will direct you to the Professional Profile where you can update information. Make sure to click the Save button within the Professional Profile to retain any changes. When you have finished, click Return to LOI/Proposal.

To change the institution:
1. Click the Change Institution button.

2. Enter a partial name search for your organization and click the Display Results button.

3. If you:
a. See your institution listed, select it by clicking the radio select in the left column and click the Select button at the bottom.

b. Do NOT see your institution listed, see the "How to Register your Institution with proposalCENTRAL" instructions for information on how to create a new Institution Profile. (Click here for those instructions.)

4. After selecting the appropriate Institution Profile (3a above), you will be returned to your proposal. Click the Save button with the proposal to retain your changes.

Update Information Showing

Only institutional personnel with access to the institution's profile can update it. If you see an Edit Institution Profile, you can edit the Institution Profile by clicking that button. Make sure to click the Save button within the Institution Profile to retain any changes. Once you are done, click the Return to LOI/Proposal button.

If you do not see Edit Institution Profile: Listed below the institution's information will be the name, e-mail address, and phone number of the person at your institution who created the profile and should have access to update it. Contact that person to make the necessary changes. If that person is no longer at your institution, contact Customer Support: 800-875-2562 (Toll-free U.S. & Canada), +1-703-964-5840 (Direct Dial International), or mailto:pcsupport@altum.com to ask about other individuals at your institution who can update the institution profile.

Get an ORCiD iD

You are not required to have an ORCiD number to log into proposalCentral, however, it is now required to submit applications to the AHA. ORCID is a service that allows researchers to easily keep track of their publications, institutional associations, and other support. Once you create your ProposalCentral account you have the option to link it to your ORCID account. Information from your ORCID profile can be reused within ProposalCentral streamlining the proposal and reporting process.

To create an ORCiD iD, go to https://proposalcentral.com. On the Application Login screen, click "iD LOGIN using ORCID." This redirects you to orcid.org.

1. Click on the blue Register Now link at the top of the page. Under Visibility settings, select Everyone to allow information to be visible in ProposalCentral.
2. Click Register. A pop-up may appear if your name is like other users. If no listing on the pop-up is you, click "None of these are me."
3. Click the blue Authorize button to allow linking to a ProposalCentral account.
4. On the next page, " if you do not have a ProposalCentral account select "Click here to create ProposalCentral account and link to ORCiD. If you have a ProposalCentral account, select "Click here to go back to ProposalCentral."
5. Once you successfully sign into ORCID, you are re-directed back to the ProposalCentral registration page. Your ORCID iD, First Name, Last Name, and Email will auto-populate from ORCID. Complete the remaining details and continue the registration process as described in the previous "Create an Account" above.
6. To link an ORCID account:
    a. Go to the green "Professional Profile" tab and click "Create or Connect your ORCID iD."
    b. You will be directed to the ORCID login screen. If you already have an account, login with your ORCID iD and password. If you do not have an ORCID account and wish to establish one, then click "Register Now."
    c. When you connect your ORCID iD with your ProposalCentral profile, you can easily transfer information from your ORCID record to ProposalCentral and take some of the pain out of online form-filling. Instead of re-keying the same information every time you submit a grant application, ProposalCentral can retrieve relevant data, where available, directly from your ORCID record. All you will need to do is verify that it is correct!

Application Preparation

Page Setup/Formatting

Most required documents may be prepared prior to creating the application in ProposalCentral. Adherence is mandatory to the page limits and format requirements below. No applicant should have an advantage over other applicants by providing more content in his/her application by using smaller, denser type.

Applications may be administratively withdrawn by AHA if the proposal does not comply with format requirements (type size/characters per inch, lines per page, and page limitations).

- 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 50 lines per page.
- 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.

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

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. This decision is final and not subject to appeal.

Required documents for each program can be found on the Required Application 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.

How to Create an Application in ProposalCentral

Tutorial on How to Create an Application using ProposalCentral (PDF)

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 proposal, each with clearly distinct aims.

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

- An individual may hold more than one AHA award concurrently but may only hold one award that is dependent on career stage (Career Development Award, or 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.

Refer to the following tables, for specific scenarios.

Multiple AHA Applications Allowed
Please review Program Descriptions for eligibility criteria and restrictions.

If you do not have current AHA funding, you may apply for:

Collaborative Sciences Award	
and	
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director	
and	
Transformational Project Award	
and	
Multiple Innovative Project Awards	
and	
Strategically Focused Research Network Funding	
and	
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award	
and, if you meet the award criteria:	
Career Development Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Scientist Development Grant or AHA Career Development Award*	You may accept only ONE award from this group
or	
Established Investigator Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Established Investigatorship or AHA Established Investigator Grant*	
and	
Merit Award	

If you have one of the following strategic awards:

Collaborative Sciences Award	Institutional Undergrad Program Director	Transformational Project Award	AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award	Innovative Project Award	Strategically Focused Research Network Funding	
You may also apply for						
Collaborative Sciences Award						
and						
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director						
and						
Transformational Project Award						
and						
Multiple Innovative Project Awards						
and						
Strategically Focused Research Network Funding						
and						
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award						
and, if you meet the award criteria*:*						
Career Development Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Scientist Development Grant or AHA Career Development Award*						You may accept only ONE ward from this group
or						
Established Investigator Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Established Investigatorship or AHA Established Investigator Grant*						
and						
Merit Award						

If you have one of the following training grants:

AHA Predoctoral Fellowship	AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship	Strategically Focused Research Network Fellowship
and you will have a faculty/staff appointment by the time of award *activation, you may apply for:*		
Collaborative Sciences Award		
and		
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director		
and		
Strategically Focused Research Network		
and		
Transformational Project Award		
and		
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award		
and		
Innovative Project Award		
In addition, if you meet the award criteria*, you may also apply for:*		
Career Development Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Scientist Development Grant or AHA Career Development Award*		

If you have a Career Development Award, you may also apply for:

Collaborative Sciences Award	
and	
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director	
and	
Strategically Focused Research Network funding	
and	
Transformational Project Award	
and	
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award	
and	
Innovative Project Award	
If your Career Development Award is in its final year, you may also apply for	
Established Investigator Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Established Investigatorship or AHA Established Investigator Grant*	You may accept only ONE award from this group
and	
Merit Award	

If you have an AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA), you may apply for:

Collaborative Sciences Award	
and	
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director	
and	
Transformational Project Award	
and	
Multiple Innovative Project Awards	
and	
Strategically Focused Research Network Funding	
and	
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award	
And, if your AIREA award is in its final year, you may also apply for	
Career Development Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Scientist Development Grant or AHA Career Development Award*	You may accept only ONE award from this group
or	
Established Investigator Award *if you have never held an* *AHA Established Investigatorship or AHA Established Investigator Grant*	
and	
Merit Award	

If you have an Established Investigator Award, you may apply for:

Collaborative Sciences Award
and
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director
and
Transformational Project Award
and
Multiple Innovative Project Awards
and
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award
and
Strategically Focused Research Network Funding
If your EIA is in its final year, you may also apply for
Merit Award

If you have a Merit Award, you may apply for:

Collaborative Sciences Award	
and	
Institutional Undergraduate Program Director	
and	
Transformational Project Award	
and	
Multiple Innovative Project Awards	
and	
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award	
and	
Strategically Focused Research Network Funding	
If your Merit Award is in its final year, you may also apply for	
Merit Award	You may accept only ONE award from this group
and	
Established Investigator Award	

The Application Sections in ProposalCentral

The sections of the application and the required document uploads vary by program. Required documents for each program are listed on the Required Application Documents page. To follow the standard flow of the proposal, 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 Project Title

Title: You must first create a title of up to 120 characters.

Start and End Dates: The award start and end dates are set, according to the award type.

Resubmission of a Proposal
Indicate if this is a resubmission. If a resubmission, indicate if the previous application was created in ProposalCentral or in another system, which you would choose for a proposal created in Grants@Heart. See Document Uploads, item G for Resubmission Modification instructions.

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
- Established Investigator Award
- Transformational Project Award
- Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship Program
- AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA)

2 Download Templates & Instructions

Links in this tab go to this Instructions document and to lists of documents required of applicants and third-party personnel for each award type.

3 Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal

Access Permissions: This screen allows you to give other users access to your proposal.

You can give one of three levels of permissions:

- View (View only. Cannot change any details.)
- Edit (Can view and change information in the grant application. Cannot Submit or view this Access Permission screen)
- Administrator (Can view, edit, and submit the application. Can give access rights to others.)

To Give Another Person Access to Your Grant Application:

1. Be sure each person is a registered user in the ProposalCentral system. If they are not registered, direct them to register the same way that you did. They do not need to completely fill out a Professional Profile - only the required fields of first and last name.
2. At the bottom of the screen, locate the "Proposal Access User Selector" section.
   Enter the User ID or e-mail address of the person you wish to give access to in the "User ID/E-Mail" field.
   Click "Find User". The person you added will be added to the list at the top the page of users who have access to your application. The default access permission is "View."
3. Finally, select the permissions level for the person you have just added - View, Edit, or Administrator - then click the "Save" button.

Note: This process only gives access to your application. Access to your Professional Profile must be done separately from within the Professional Profile.

Auto Notify: To enable your co-investigators, department, or grants administrators to receive system notifications, add them with at least "View" access below and check the box "Auto Notify".

4 Accept Program Requirements

Each AHA award program has different eligibility criteria. The Applicant must acknowledge that they have read and understand each requirement to submit this proposal. The AHA will review and confirm your responses for compliance with program requirements. If it is determined that the Applicant does not meet the program requirements, the proposal may be withdrawn from consideration.

If you do not agree to all the eligibility statements, please do not proceed with completion of the proposal. Contact the AHA if you have questions about the requirements at apply@heart.org or (214) 360-6107 (option 1)

5 Applicant/PI

The person who creates the application (pre-proposal/letter of intent or proposal) is the default Applicant/Principal Investigator (PI). Contact information from this person's Professional Profile (My Profile), including primary institution affiliation, is pre-loaded to this section of the application.

To change the Applicant/PI and the institution affiliation, choose from the list of available names. For privacy reasons, the list contains only the following: the name and institution of the person who created the application (either the Applicant/PI or another individual at the institution) and the

names of individuals who included you in the Access Permissions section of their Professional Profile (such as other PIs or administrators at the institution).

If, after changing the Applicant/PI, you need to update the contact information that appears below it, you can click "Edit Profile" to go directly to your Professional Profile or exit this screen and select the Professional Profile tab from the proposalCENTRAL management window. Changes will be automatically uploaded to the Applicant/PI screen. Contact information and institution affiliation from the selected Applicant/PI's Professional Profile is preloaded to the Applicant/PI contact information section below. Required fields are marked with a red asterisk *.

Note: if the required fields are incomplete or incorrect, changes must be made in the Applicant/PI's Professional Profile (My Profile). You can go directly to the selected Applicant/PI's Professional Profile by clicking the button "Edit Profile." Alternatively, you may exit the Applicant/PI section and use the Professional Profile tab in your proposalCENTRAL management window (usually located in a different proposalCENTRAL browser window than the application).

Professional Time Usage: Enter the percent of time for each category during the project period. Confirm that the distribution is consistent with effort commitments to the AHA project. For example, if the percent effort of the PI on the AHA project is 25%, then the percent effort under the applicable area (i.e., research) must be equal to or greater than 25%.

6 PI Demographics

Gender, race, ethnicity, and residency/citizenship information listed here is copied from the applicant's Professional Profile. Please click Edit Profile to make changes. This information will not be used as part of the review process.

7 Institution and Personnel

In this section, select or add institutional personnel and give them access to your proposal.

Institution: The institution associated with the applicant's profile will be displayed.
Select the "Change Institution" button to update.

Select the Grants Officer, Fiscal Officer and Technology Transfer Officer from the drop-down lists. Enter and confirm their email addresses.

These personnel will not need to provide supporting documentation for the application, however, the Grants Officer will need to electronically sign the proposal prior to submission. Selecting the correct institutional contacts is very important: If your project is offered funding, an incorrect contact may cause a delay in award activation form submissions.

If the appropriate person is not listed in the drop-down menu, add their e-mail address twice and click the Add button.

If the person you selected/entered:

> Already has an account in ProposalCentral, the contact information from their Professional Profile will display. You can update the text that is displayed in your application and click the Save button. Information you change here will NOT change the person's professional profile.

> Does not have an account in ProposalCentral, you will need to supply the contact information for the user. When you click the Save button, an account will automatically be

created for the person with the contact information you supplied. Close the window link.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT: 800-875-2562 (Toll-free U.S. & Canada) +1-703-964-5840 (Direct Dial International) pcsupport@altum.com

Give Access to your Proposal: Regardless of which method you used to add the institution official, a new window will show with the person you selected/entered. If you want the person to have access to the application, you must provide it in the "Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal" section.

8 Third Party Personnel

In this section, add required or optional contributors to your proposal.

Required personnel will be listed on this screen. You may add optional personnel from this screen, as well.

Identify the people associated with the application and their roles in the project. All third parties -- EXCEPT referents -- should complete their supporting documentation and send it to the applicant by email.

After third party personnel have emailed their required PDF documents to the applicant, the applicant must upload the documents required from third-party personnel ON THIS SCREEN, not on the "Upload Attachments" screen.

Referent letters, which are considered confidential, will be uploaded by your referees. You will be able to see if the documents have been uploaded, but you will not have access to read reference documents.

The application cannot be submitted without the supporting documentation, including reference letters. Therefore, you should notify third parties of your deadline for submitting the proposal.

Third Party Definitions

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.

For the following programs, the Department Head is to provide a letter addressing the applicant's academic appointment, career stage, support from the institution, etc.:

- Career Development Award
- Established Investigator Award
- AHA Strategically Focused Research Network
- A-TRAC Pilot Projects Grant Programs

View the Department Head Letter web page for specific information requested for each program.

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. Mentor (Sponsor)

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

f. Co-Mentor

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

g. Referee/Referent

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

A collaborator, consultant, department head or mentor contributing to an application that requires reference letters may not serve as a referee. Please visit the Reference Information Page for information about the referee upload process and to download a template of the Reference Report form (DOC).

h. Co-Principal Investigator

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

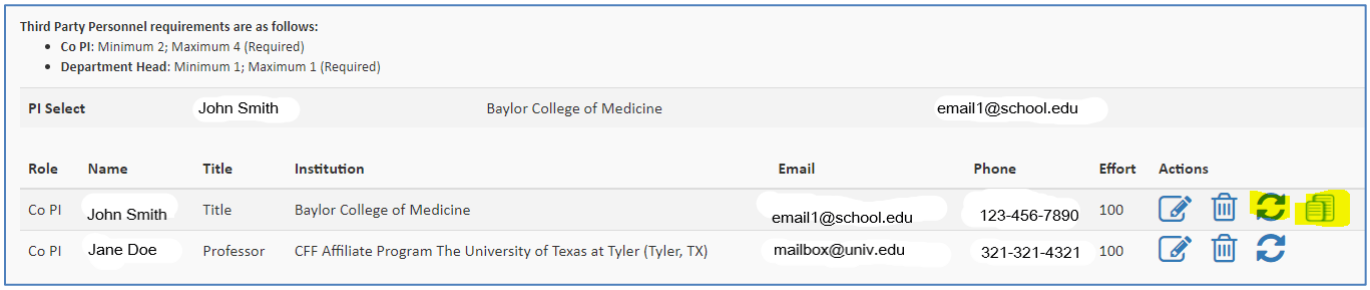
The American Heart Association recognizes only one Principal Investigator for all other programs. An investigator contributing to your project may be listed as a Collaborating Investigator.

Useful Tool for Collaborative Sciences Applicants:
In the Third-Party section, next to each person listed are a Refresh icon and a Pages icon (highlighted in yellow in the screenshot below).

Refresh icon: A user may click this for themselves or their Co-PI(s) after adding or updating demographic information (including ORCID) to the proposal or to their profile. Clicking the Refresh icon will update the proposal so that it may be submitted.

Pages icon: Any user can click this icon to see missing demographic information that is needed to submit the proposal. Each user will only see their own icon to protect their privacy.

After updating information, a user must click the Refresh icon to update the proposal.



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.

9 Letters of Reference

This section will appear for programs that require reference letters. The minimum and maximum number of referees will be indicated.

A mentor, co-mentor, department head, collaborating investigator or consultant contributing to the proposal may not serve as a referee. A referee is an individual familiar with the applicant's scientific interests and abilities. Letters should be composed by the referee 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.

Visit the Reference Information page for information about the referee upload process and to download a template of the Reference Report form.

Each referee will receive an automated email request to submit a reference report on your behalf. If possible, select one referee who is not from your current department or organization.

Enter the first referee's email address twice, and then click the blue plus button [+].
A pop-up screen will appear, where you will enter the referee's first name and last name.

Click 'Send Email' and the referee will receive a request to complete the reference letter.
The email message will contain instructions on the information the referee is to provide and a link for the referee to upload their document directly into your proposal. Close the pop-up window.

Referees must upload their reports into ProposalCentral before a proposal can be submitted.

Visit this screen to view the status of your requests to referees, including the dates emails were sent, and if a referee responded. To send a reminder email, click the email envelope icon under "Actions." To remove a referee and replace them with another, highlight the name and click the trash can icon under "Actions."

10 Project & Non-Scientist Summaries, Classifications

a. Summary for Non-scientists (lay summary)
(2500-character limit)

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 diseases and brain health. 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.

Address the following points:

1. What is the major problem being addressed by this study?

2. What specific questions are you asking and how will you attempt to answer them? Please do not list your specific aims - this is a brief overview targeted for a lay audience.

3. What is the potential overall impact of this work on the mission of the AHA? For example: What major therapeutic advance(s) might it lead to, such as new drug(s), a surgical technique/procedure, a diagnostic tool/test, a previously undetected risk factor, etc.

Below the text box, your summary's grade level will be automatically calculated. The AHA recommends that the lay summary be written on a 10th grade level. If your summary is written above the 12th grade comprehension level, your application cannot be submitted. The parts of your summary that would benefit from editing will be highlighted in yellow and red. For assistance with editing your summary, you may use https://readable.com/text/ or a similar online tool.

b. Project Summary

(2500-character limit)

Write a concise description or abstract describing the proposed work. The project summary is a brief synopsis of the proposal and NOT the detailed Research Plan, which may contain proprietary information.

Note: This field will not accept special characters or keystrokes (such as superscript or subscripts, special characters, Greek symbols, quotation marks, italics, underlining, bolding, etc.) into this form field.

Please indicate your permission to share overview information about this proposal:
Periodically, donors (individuals and other organizations) wish to co-sponsor awards with AHA. To support these efforts, AHA must obtain applicants' (and fellowship proposal mentors') permission to share information that may include applicant's name, institution, project title, project summary, and summary for non-scientists.

c. Science Classifications
Choose the classifications that most closely match your science, and then click the + button. 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. Click here to view AHA's current AHA Science Keywords.

Resources – Online tools exist to help match abstracts to MeSH codes, such as https://meshb.nlm.nih.gov/MeSHonDemand. Please note: AHA does not endorse resources. Resources are offered for applicants' reference.

d. Research Classification
Select the term from the dropdown that best describes the work proposed: Basic, Clinical, or Population.

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.

11 Budget Period Detail

Enter the projected costs for Personnel and Non-Personnel (equipment, supplies, travel, printing/publications, other). If the proposal is funded, the budget will be reviewed prior to award activation to confirm compliance with AHA Guidelines and allowable expenditures.

Most AHA awards include 10% overhead. AHA does not pay indirect costs on Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships or the Institutional Award for Undergraduate Student Training. Consult the program description for details.

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

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
Malpractice Insurance	No
Meeting Registration	Yes
Other Personnel Salary/Fringes	Yes
Overhead/Indirect Costs	Grant Programs: Up to 10% of total annual expenses, unless otherwise noted. Fellowships/Training Programs: 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 (managed post-award)
Supplies	Yes
Telephone - Service related to Project	Yes
Travel—Domestic, Foreign	Yes
Tuition Costs	No
Uniforms, Wearing Apparel	No

12 Budget Summary

This is a read-only display of the budget items entered in the Budget Period Detail section.

13 Alternative and Overlapping Funding

List all research project support available to you (active, approved, or pending) for funding. List NIH project grants, NIHK 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. For each entry, an overlap with this application and some description of the overlap could be requested. If so, please save that data to complete the support entry for submission.

To add an existing entry, click the '+' link and all entries previously saved in your Professional Profile will show. Please select the applicable support and save.

To add new Other Support entries, click the 'Create New Other Support' button. By default, this entry will be added to your profile, unless the option 'Add to Profile' is not selected.

AHA Policies on Alternative and Overlapping Funding:

Stipend Award Programs (AHA Predoctoral Fellowship, AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship, Institutional Award for Undergraduate Student Training, Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Science):

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 project support for the proposed project MUST come from the mentor'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. The awardee may not hold a comparable award (such as another fellowship) as a source of supplementation.

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.

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

Unless stated in the AHA program description, 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.

14 Organization Assurances

Assurance numbers cannot be entered on this screen – they will appear only if properly entered in the institution profile (for the institution you selected in the institution section of the proposal). If no assurance number appears here, please contact your institution's grants and contacts office to have them add the assurance numbers to the institution profile. If you need assistance, contact ProposalCentral customer support.

The applicant must answer the questions regarding experimentation in the 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:

  - to develop specific treatments for persons suffering from diseases, and
  - 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

Answer 'no' if you will use data or tissue samples that were previously collected. If you will use new human subjects for this project, an approval letter will be required at the time of 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 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.

f. 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 Page Setup/Formatting on page 10 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 in the "Upload Attachments" section. The system will only accept a .pdf file.

Institutional Award for Undergraduate Student Training Program Directors:
You do not need to upload this document into the proposal. Instead, please email it to apply@heart.org and reference your AHA Application ID number on the subject line.

A-TRAC Pilot Program applicants do not need to upload the file into the proposal.

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. 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.

15 Upload Attachments

Attachments required for each program type – and templates, if required – are listed on the AHA Required Application Documents page.

YOU MUST ATTACH THIRD-PARTY PERSONNEL REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS FROM THE THIRD-PARTY PERSONNEL SCREEN. Third party document status is listed on this screen only for your information. This screen lists the documents that have been uploaded and required attachments that have not been uploaded. Optional attachments that have not been uploaded are not shown.

16 Data Sharing Plan

The AHA requires applicants to include a data sharing plan as part of the application. This does not apply to Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants. 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). Please provide the following:

Research Output (2050-character limit): Describe the data (i.e., recorded factual material) that would be necessary to validate your research findings. This should be just a few sentences that describe the data and accompanying metadata. Please do not reference potential publication or presentation of your results.

Approximate date when the data will be shared.

Where will the data be made available? Select all that apply from the drop-down menu.

Explain any limits to data sharing that might be required. (1000-character limit)

Refer to the Open Science Policy Statements for AHA Funded Research for more information.

17 Validate

Click the 'Validate' button below to check for any missing REQUIRED information or files. All missing required information will be listed on the screen. Please correct any missing information before proceeding to the next step.

18 Signature Page(s)

The AHA does not accept any printed application material.

Printing: If you wish to print After you complete all the proposal sections, click one of the Print buttons on this page to open and print the cover/signature pages and application files.

Click "Print Signatures Pages" to print only the signature pages. Clicking the print button will open the cover/signature pages in PDF format. Data that you entered in the other sections of the proposal are automatically included in the cover/signature pages. If information is missing in the cover/signature pages, it could be because you have not entered the information in one of the proposal sections OR the information is not required for this grant program.

Click "Print Signature Pages with Attachments" to print the signature pages with attachment files.

- Before printing, please use the 'Validate' option (in the navigation menu to the left) to verify that you have entered all the required information.
- You must have the FREE Adobe Acrobat Reader installed to view either of the above options.
- Attention Apple/Mac users: The default Apple PDF viewer will not work properly. Download the latest version of the Acrobat Reader from Adobe at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readermain.html

Signatures: The Applicant and Grant Officer are to type their names in the signature box, exactly as it appears on this application. Click the "sign" button. If successful, the date and time signed will appear to the right of the signature line.

19 Submit

To submit your proposal, please click the 'Submit' button. You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. Any missing information will be listed on the screen. If your submission is successful, you will receive a confirmation message on the screen, and a confirmation email will be sent to the applicant.

Once the application is submitted to AHA, no changes can be made.

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 the AHA by email to 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 proposals will be reviewed based upon the peer review and eligibility criteria for the

research funding program the applicant selected. The program cannot be changed once a proposal has been submitted.

Important Notice:
Verify that the status of your proposal has changed to "Submitted".
For best results, log out and close all ProposalCentral browser windows.
Log in and select the "Proposals" tab, and then select "Submitted" from the Proposal Status dropdown list. Once properly submitted, your proposal no longer appears on your Home tab.

Document Uploads

Required documents vary by program and will be automatically displayed in ProposalCentral. See the AHA's Required Application Documents web page for the required documents, instructions, format and page limits for all open programs. A document that exceeds the page limit will be rejected by ProposalCentral.

A. Biographical Sketch

(Five-page limit) Upload your NIH biosketch OMB No. 0925-0001 and 0925-0002 (Rev. 10/2021 Approved Through 01/31/2026). It is not necessary to reformat to AHA page specifications.

Address the following AHA requirements in the Personal Statement section of the biosketch:

All applicants: Data Sharing
If public sharing of your research outputs such as data, code, or material led to scientific advances by others, you are encouraged to detail this.

All applicants (except fellows): Inclusive, safe, diverse environment

- Explicitly state how you contribute to a safe, inclusive, and diverse work environment.
- In addition, mentors on Fellowships, Career Development Awards, and Diversity Supplements should complete recognized training specific to sexual and gender-based harassment.

Predoctoral Fellowship and Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants: Career Goals
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 the AHA to be traditional academic or clinical research work.

Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Science: Fellowship Trainee

- In "Section A. Personal Statement," briefly describe why you are well-suited for your role 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; and/or your past performance in this or related fields.
- Also state your career goals and how conducting this research will facilitate achievement of these goals. AHA does not require career plans to be traditional academic or clinical research work.
- In addition, detail how your experiences as an underrepresented individual has shaped your scientific journey. Please also note which underrepresented group listed above you identify with.

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

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 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_employee/carguide.html

C. Proposed Research Plan/Pre-proposal Instructions

Research Plans and Pre-proposals must be created as Word documents and then saved as Portable Document Format (PDF) files. Only PDF files will be accepted in ProposalCentral.

The length of the Pre-proposal and Research Plan varies by program. Specific limits are listed on the table and pages below and in the RFP for each program. Documents that exceed the page limit cannot be uploaded.

Before beginning the Pre-proposal or the Research Plan, review the characteristics of all research programs and program description for the program to which you are applying. Note especially the qualifications and any restrictions for the program to which you are applying. The Research Plan should address all the peer review criteria, which are included in the program description.

Note: Submission of a proposal 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 an application to the AHA with identical or significantly similar content from a mentor to a grant program and their fellow to fellowship program is prohibited. In such cases, both applications may be removed from funding consideration. Proposals submitted by a mentor and their 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 proposal.

Literature citations should be marked in the text of the Proposed Research Plan. The mark may be a number or letter. You may use superscript, such as[1] or a bracket [1].

When citing specific sections or page numbers, you may indicate these with superscript, such as [1, pp. 345-361] or within the bracket [1, pp. 345-361]

The works cited should not be listed in the Proposed Research Plan. Full and complete citations with marks that correspond to those in the Proposed Research Plan are to be listed in a separate "Literature Cited" upload of up to four pages. See instructions below in *Section D. Literature Cited*.

Proposed Research Plan Page Limits*

AHA Foundational Research Awards	Pre-proposal (letter of intent), if required	Proposed Research Plan
AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award		8
ASA/Bugher Foundation Award	5	17
Career Development Award		8
Collaborative Sciences Award	3	10
Established Investigator Award	2	8
Innovative Project Award	1	5
Institutional Award for Undergraduate Training (Implementation Plan)		12
Merit Award	2	6
Predoctoral Fellowship		5
Postdoctoral Fellowship		5
Research Supplement to Promote Diversity		3
Transformational Project Award		8

*Note: Not all awards are offered each year.

For Strategically Focused Research Networks and special awards, please refer to the RFAs.

- The trainee and mentor should collaboratively provide a thoughtfully planned, systematic proposal aimed at clearly answering an investigative question in cardiovascular, cerebrovascular or brain health research. A fellow must have primary responsibility for the writing and the preparation of the application, understanding the mentor will play a significant part in providing guidance to the applicant. Because the fellow receives only a stipend from the award, additional monetary support for the proposed work MUST come from the mentor's laboratory. Therefore, the proposal will likely be related to the mentor's currently funded work. The mentor should clarify the role the applicant played in developing the proposal, the relationship of the proposal to ongoing work in the mentor's laboratory, and how the proposal will contribute toward the training and career development of the applicant.

- A new fellow may not have had adequate time to generate preliminary data; therefore, applicants may present preliminary data generated by the mentor. The assessment of preliminary data, whether generated by the mentor or the applicant, should be put into perspective so that bold new ideas and risk taking by beginning investigators are encouraged rather than stymied. Submission of an application to the AHA with identical or significantly similar content as a submission by another investigator is prohibited. Also, the submission of an application to the AHA with identical or significantly similar content from a mentor to a grant program and their fellow to fellowship program is prohibited. In such cases, both applications may be removed from funding consideration. If a grant application is submitted by the mentor of a fellowship application, both applications may be funded if there is no duplication of aims.

Type the research plan specifically following the outline below, in the same sequence. Address all items. Indicate N/A or None if not applicable to this proposal. 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 the project's 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 proposal. 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.

For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.

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 proposal.
- 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.

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 proposal. 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.

   For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.

   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 proposal.
- 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.

ASA/Bugher Foundation Awards

The intent of this initiative is to support a collaboration of basic, clinical and/or population researchers from different disciplines. The Centers within the Network will propose projects related to a specific, targeted topic of research. Refer to the RFA for specific details regarding the focused topic and program requirements.

Each applicant will submit a Center application and a specified number of Project proposals.

Required documents for submission may include:

Pre-proposal/Letter of Intent (5 pages)

CENTER

- Applicant/PI Biosketch (5 pages)
- Budget Justification (2 pages)
- Research Project Environment (2 pages)
- Literature Cited (no limit)
- Center Science Vision and Synergy (8 pages)
- Center Collaboration (5 pages)
- Current Postdoctoral Training Program (no limit)
- Proposed Multidisciplinary Training Program (8 pages)
- Center Director Qualifications (2 pages)
- Center Administrative Structure (2 pages)
- Publications (up to 3 separate uploads, no page limits)

PROJECT

- Applicant/PI Biosketch (5 pages)
- Budget Justification (2 pages)
- Research Project Environment (2 pages)
- Publication (up to 3 separate uploads, no page limits)
- Research Plan (17 pages)
- Literature Cited (no page limit)
- Center Director's Vision and Synergy (8 pages)

Career Development Award
8-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 proposal. 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.

   For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.

   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 proposal.
- 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
Pre-proposal (required letter of intent), 3-page limit

A pre-proposal (letter of intent) is required to ensure responsiveness to the novel, collaborative nature of this program. The novel relationship and proposed collaboration of investigators from at least two widely disparate disciplines will be given the most weight in evaluating the pre-proposal to determine which teams will be invited to submit full applications.

The pre-proposal must describe the specific inclusion of at least one early or mid-career Co-PI, and an innovative, collaborative approach to research which incorporates a novel grouping of investigators from at least two widely disparate disciplines and/or areas of expertise. The written summary must focus on the collaborative relationship of the investigators, such that the scientific objectives cannot be achieved without the efforts of at least two co-principal investigators and their respective disciplines and expertise. If any of the Co-PIs have collaborated in the past, explain how this collaboration is different from previous interactions. The combination and integration of studies may be inclusive of basic, clinical, population, behavioral, and/or translational research.

Pre-proposals for the Collaborative Sciences Award will be assigned to a group of multidisciplinary reviewers. Your proposal may be reviewed by someone working in a related area and/or experts directly related to your science area. Aim the pre-proposal at both the expert in the field and at the generalist. The pre-proposal should be appropriate for reviewers who have a broad knowledge of the scientific area.

Proposed Research Plan, 10-page limit
After submitting a pre-proposal (letter of intent), if you are invited to submit a full proposal:

The proposal must expand on the pre-proposal (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 proposal. 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.

For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.

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 proposal.
- 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.

Established Investigator Award
Pre-proposal (required letter of intent), 2-page limit

AHA will contact applicants with the highest-rated pre-proposals and invite them to submit a full proposal. Applicants will receive no reviewer feedback on letters of intent.

A Pre-proposal (letter of intent), limited to two (2) pages, should briefly describe why the AHA should invest in your proposed vision for the future in terms of the following:

- Likelihood of transforming and advancing the future of CV and stroke science.
- Potential to move your research into emerging and/or difficult areas of inquiry, being consistently at its forefront.
- Ability to develop new tools and methods that support creative experimental approaches to questions, encompassing concepts or techniques from other disciplines.
- Capacity to forge links between disparate disciplines.
- Strong track record of collaboration with other distinguished scientists across disciplines.
- Evidence of great promise for future original and innovative contributions.
- Demonstrated commitment to the mission of the American Heart Association and to advancing the ideals and guiding principles through volunteer service.

Proposed Research Plan, 8-page limit
After submitting a pre-proposal, if you are invited to submit a full proposal:

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 eight (8) 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 proposal 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 proposal 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
Pre-proposal (required letter of intent), 1-page limit

A pre-proposal, limited to one (1) page, will be required. This pre-proposal should briefly address the following points.

- Clearly and explicitly articulate the project's innovation and the potential impact on cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular research.
- The Innovative Project Award (IPA) promotes unexplored ideas; therefore, if you include information about preliminary work, then the proposal is not innovative. You may refer to previous projects you have conducted to demonstrate that you possess a competency or technique that equips you to take on this new direction. Proposals may also refer to existing, unanalyzed datasets and the types of data they contain (e.g., geospatial, demographic, billing, molecular) that could be leveraged in conducting the proposed work, but there should be no preliminary descriptive summaries of the data itself.
- How your proposed project will introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or exhibit other uniquely creative qualities.
- Provide a solid rationale for the work.
- Discuss new avenues of investigation that will be revealed, if successful.

Proposed Research Plan, 5-page limit
After submitting a Letter of Intent/Pre-proposal, if you are invited to submit a full proposal, the proposal must expand on the pre-proposal 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. <u>If you provide preliminary data, the proposal will be disqualified</u>.

   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 proposal. 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.

   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.

For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.

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 proposal.
- 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 Award for Undergraduate Training
This program requires an Implementation Plan, as outlined below, 12-page limit

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

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

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 mentor 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 mentor/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
Pre-proposal (required letter of intent), 3-page limit

Proposal, 6-page limit
After submitting a pre-proposal, if you are invited to submit a full proposal, refer to this web page for detailed application instructions: https://professional.heart.org/en/research-programs/aha-funding-opportunities/merit-award/merit-award-invited-applicant-instructions

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 6-page limit).

   This section should build upon the pre-proposal 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)

   AHA Ambassadorship: Positive advocacy, volunteer service, and commitment to AHA's science and mission-related activities. This advocacy maybe demonstrated by:
   - Active involvement in local or national level AHA committees and activities
   - Consistent championing of AHA's mission to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives
   - Vision to assist the AHA in becoming a catalyst to achieve maximum impact in equitable health and wellbeing.

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

5. Two referees will be asked to submit letters to support the applicant. Each letter has a 4-page limit.

Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Science
The documents required from the Mentor and the Fellow (applicant):

Mentor:

- Biosketch of Mentor and Co-Mentor, if applicable (5-page limit per mentor)
- Past and Current Trainees (3 pages per mentor)
- Training Plan of Mentor (and Co-Mentor, if named) (3 pages total)

  The trainee's career goals, as stated in "Part A - Personal Statement" of the fellow's biosketch, and the mentor's training plan must be complementary to one another and focus specifically on the individual. A standardized training plan will not be viewed favorably. AHA does not require but strongly encourages the use of Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for AHA training programs. IDPs provide a structure for the identification and achievement of career goals.
- Research Project Environment (no page limit)

Fellow:

- Proposed Research Plan (3-page limit)
  The fellow and mentor should collaboratively develop a thoughtfully planned, systematic proposal aimed at clearly answering an investigative question in cardiovascular or cerebrovascular research related to the mentor's existing AHA award.

  Because the fellow receives only a stipend from the award, additional monetary support for the proposed work MUST come from the mentor's laboratory. Therefore, the proposal will likely be related to the mentor's currently funded work. The mentor should address the relationship of the proposal to ongoing work in their laboratory, and how the proposal will contribute toward the fellow's training and career development.

- Biosketch (5-page limit)
  In "Part A - Personal Statement", briefly describe why you are well-suited for your role 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; and/or your past performance in this or related fields. Also state your career goals and how conducting this research will facilitate achievement of these goals. AHA does not require career plans to be traditional academic or clinical research work.

- Summary for Non-scientists (2500-character limit)
  With guidance from the mentor, the fellow should create a Summary for Non-scientists (lay summary). Applications for research funding will be assessed for their potential impact on the AHA Mission, and on the description of the proposal and its potential outcomes to non-scientists.

  The AHA recommends that the lay summary be written on a 10th grade level. If your summary is written above the 12th grade comprehension level, your application cannot be submitted. The parts of your summary that would benefit from editing will be highlighted in yellow and red in ProposalCentral. For assistance with editing your summary, you may use https://readable.com/text/ or a similar online tool.

No reference reports are required for the Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Science.

Transformational Project Award
Proposed Research Plan, 8-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 proposal. 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.

   For all applications that include vertebrate animals or human subjects, applicants must explain how relevant biological variables, such as sex, are factored into the research design, analysis and reporting. Furthermore, strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to study only one sex.

   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 proposal.
   - 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.

Strategically Focused Research Network (SFRN) Awards

Details for each SFRN may vary; always refer to the current Request for Proposals (RFP). The intent of this initiative is to support a collaboration of basic, clinical and population researchers whose collective efforts will lead to new approaches related to a specific, targeted topic of research. Each Center must propose two (2) or three (3) projects representing at least two of the following research disciplines: basic, clinical, and population science. Population studies are inclusive of projects ranging from cohort studies to translational or implementation research involving community interventions. Refer to the RFP for specific details regarding the focused topic and program requirements.

The Pre-proposal/Letter of Intent is REQUIRED and must be initiated by the proposed Center Director and submitted within ProposalCentral by the deadline. Refer to the RFA for specific details and requirements for the pre-proposal/letter of intent.

Each applicant will submit a Center application and a specified number of Project proposals. Refer to required application documents for instructions about the documents required for the SFRN for which you are applying. All possible required documents are listed here. Required documents may vary for each SFRN, and those required will be listed in ProposalCentral.

Center:

- Applicant/PI Biosketch (5 pages)
- Budget Justification (2 pages)
- Research Project Environment (2 pages)
- Literature Cited (5 pages)
- Center Science Vision and Synergy (8 pages)
- Center Collaboration (5 pages)
- Current Postdoctoral Training Program (no limit)
- Proposed Multidisciplinary Training Program (8 pages)
- Center Director Qualifications (2 pages)
- Center Administrative Structure (2 pages)
- Applicant Publications (up to 3 separate uploads, no page limits)
- Partnering Institution Letter (2 pages)

Project:

- Applicant/PI Biosketch (5 pages)
- Budget Justification (2 pages)
- Research Project Environment (2 pages)
- Applicant Publication (up to 3 separate uploads, no page limits)
- Research Plan (17 pages)
- Literature Cited (5 pages)
- Center Director's Vision and Synergy (8 pages)

Health Equity Research Network (HERN) on Community-Driven Research Approaches

The Pre-Proposal is REQUIRED, please refer to the respective RFP for specific details and requirements. Each applicant will submit their respective application in ProposalCentral. Refer to required application documents for instructions about the documents required for the respective HERN for which you are applying. All possible required documents are listed here as well as in ProposalCentral.

Health Equity Research Network (HERN) on Community-Driven Research Approaches – Partner Hub

The key outcome of this HERN is the establishment of new models for community-driven research that can be scaled and used as a foundation for shifting norms, paradigms and practices within all domains of health research. Each Partner Hub must have two research projects and be represented by a community-based organization and an academic institution. The collaborations between and among the Partner Hubs build momentum around both systems change and knowledge of a particular issue, making it an ideal mechanism to meet the interrelated objectives.

Partner Hub Applicant:	Partner Hub Projects:
• Current Postdoctoral Training Program (no page limit) • Director(s) Administration Structure (2 pages) • Director(s) & Project PI Biosketch (5 pages) • Director(s) & Project PI Letter of Support (2 pages) • Director(s) Qualifications (2 pages) • Partner Hub's Science Vision and Synergy (8 pages) • Literature Cited (5 pages) • Co-Applicants Collaboration Letter (1 page) • Co-Applicants Historical Collaborations (1 page) • Proposed Multidisciplinary Training Program (8 pages) • Publications (N/A page limit – up to 3 uploads) • Third Party Personnel listed as Consultant, Collaborator or Other Professional will each require Biosketch & Letter of Support	• Budget Justification (2 pages) • Partner Hub's Science Vision and Synergy (8 pages) • Department Head Letter (5 pages) • Literature Cited (5 pages) • Project PI Biosketch (5 pages) • Project PI Letters of Support (2 pages) • Publications (no page limit / 3 uploads limit) • Research Plan (17 pages) • Research Project Environment (2 pages) • Third Party Personnel listed as Consultant, Collaborator or Other Professional will each require Biosketch & Letter of Support

Health Equity Research Network on Community-Driven Research Approaches – Community Engagement Resource Center

The Community Engagement Resource Center (CERC) will, under leadership of the Director, incorporate a multidisciplinary approach to provide capacity building, training, evaluation, and the management of a Community of Practice for the full Network. The CERC will facilitate engagement across the Partner Hubs and service as a coordinating center, facilitating capacity building, study optimization, communication, evaluation, and a Community of Practice.

Community Engagement Resource Center Applicant:

- Budget Justification (2 pages)
- Community Engagement Resource Center Administration Structure (2 pages)
- Director(s) CV/Biosketch (5 pages)
- Director(s) Letter of Support (2 pages)
- Director(s) Qualifications (2 pages)
- Center Science Vision and Synergy (8 pages)
- Literature Cited (5 pages)
- Pre-proposal Partnering Institution Letter (1 page)
- Proposed Multidisciplinary Training Program (8 pages)
- Pre-proposal Proposed Program for CERC (1 page)
- Community Engagement Resource Center Environment (2 pages)
- Third Party Personnel listed as Consultant, Collaborator or Other Professional will each require Biosketch & Letter of Support

D. Literature Cited

4-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.

Literature citations should be marked in the text of the Proposed Research Plan. The mark may be a number or letter. You may use superscript, such as [1] or a bracket [1]. When citing specific sections or page numbers, you may indicate these with superscript, such as 1, pp. 345-361 or within the bracket [1, pp. 345-361]. The works cited should not be listed in the Proposed Research Plan. Full and complete citations with marks that correspond to those in the Proposed Research Plan are to be listed in this "Literature Cited" upload of up to four pages.

Standard abbreviations are acceptable with two exceptions: full titles and full paging must be provided.

Each reference must list:

- Corresponding mark in the Proposed Research Plan
- Authors in the same order as they appear on the paper (list all or up to 15)
- Full Title
- Name of the book or journal
- Volume number
- Page numbers
- Year of publication

Upload your completed document within ProposalCentral as a PDF.

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

E. Research Project Environment

2-page limit, unless noted below

Use the AHA template on the next page. Address each topic listed.

The form is similar to 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 proposal (2-page limit each).

Merit Award - One additional page may be used if a more extensive description is required, for a maximum of 3 pages.

Fellowship/Training Programs -Mentor's Research Environment has no page limit.
This document should include the mentor's and co-mentor's (if applicable) 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 this project.

AHA RESEARCH PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

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

2-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 (DOCX)

If the proposal is funded, the budget 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 (PDF).

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 Programs: Yes, up to 10% of total annual expenses, unless otherwise specified. 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 proposal submission.

G. Resubmission Modifications

2-page limit

Some AHA programs permit resubmission of the same or similar proposal (similar aims) as one submitted in a previous cycle, up to three times (the original plus two resubmissions). Resubmissions are accepted for the AHA Predoctoral Fellowship, AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship, Career Development Award, Collaborative Sciences Award, Established Investigator Award, Transformational Project Award, Institutional Undergraduate Student Fellowship Program, and AHA Institutional Research Enhancement Award (AIREA).

If your proposal is a resubmission of a proposal unfunded in a previous AHA review, you must create a document to explain the changes. In this document, specify significant changes made in response to major comments/criticisms from the scientific critiques, and explain how the proposal has been strengthened or modified (additions, deletions, revisions).

It is essential that this document complies exactly with the association's Page Setup/Formatting Requirements.

Definition of a Resubmission

A resubmission is the same or similar proposal (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 proposal 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 proposal three times (the original plus two resubmissions). *The same or similar proposal 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 proposal will be assigned to at least one of the previous primary reviewers. Reviewers of resubmitted proposals will be provided with the critiques and scores from the previous round for reference.

Withdrawing a Proposal

Proposals 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 proposal is withdrawn.

Proposals 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 proposal 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 a proposal that is duplicated by another applicant.

Peer Review

Assignment: When a proposal is submitted to the American Heart Association, it is assigned to a peer review committee based on the award type and the first major science classification choice of the proposal. 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 a proposal based upon their broad knowledge of the science and methods contained in the proposal. Each peer reviewer is assigned a limited number of proposals to review in detail. All peer reviewers may access all proposals in their committee, if not in conflict, and may review on their own initiative proposals not specifically assigned to them.

Summary for Non-scientists (lay summary): Proposals 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 (lay summary) and any lay reviewers' impressions. This assessment will be factored into the Impact peer review criterion, which will account for 5-10% of the overall priority score.

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 and/or brain health. 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.

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

Streamlining: AHA reserves the right to an initial streamlining, whereby up to half of the submissions may be streamlined with no reviewer comments and no peer review score. Of the remaining proposals that will be peer reviewed, up to half will be streamlined and will receive reviewer comments.

Applicants should never contact reviewers regarding their proposals. Discussing scientific content of a proposal or attempting to influence review outcome will constitute a conflict of interest in the review and will result in the removal of your proposal from funding consideration and institutional notification of ethical concerns. Reviewers are directed to notify the AHA if an applicant contacts them.

Funding Notification

When peer review is complete, the AHA Research Committee will meet to make funding decisions. An email notice will be sent to applicants, mentors (where applicable) and grants officers advising them to log in to view the proposal's funding status. Check your email address in your ProposalCentral profile 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 proposal.

Next Deadlines

The American Heart Association has rolling deadlines throughout the year. If your proposal is unsuccessful, you are encouraged to reapply the next time the program is offered 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.