



Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation

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Research Grant Guidelines

Purpose

The Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation, Inc. (AA&MDSIF) is pleased to help researchers dedicated to the study of bone marrow failure advance the understanding and treatment of aplastic anemia, myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), and paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH). For more than twenty years, the AA&MDSIF has provided financial support to research that leads to new insights into the causes of the bone marrow failure and that leads to the development of new therapeutic approaches.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a research grant, an applicant must hold a Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Science, or other doctoral level degree (e.g., PharmD). There are no nationality restrictions. Research may be carried out in the United States or abroad but not at a for-profit laboratory in the private sector.

Grants can be awarded to New Investigators and Established Investigators. New Investigators are post-doctoral fellows, instructors, and those who have been assistant professors for fewer than five (5) years. Established Investigators have been assistant professors for five (5) years or more or are associate or full professors.

Application Peer Review

An NIH-model peer-review process is used to evaluate applications. Reviewers include members of the AA&MDSIF Medical Advisory Board (MAB) as well as ad hoc reviewers.

It is the AA&MDSIF policy not to reveal the names of the individuals who have reviewed the specific application. Critiques of research proposals and scores are available to the applicant upon request.

Selection

Applications are reviewed by members of the Medical Advisory Board. Awards are based on the scientific quality of the research plan, the relevance of the proposed research to the AA&MDSIF's goals, the applicant's qualifications, and the quality of the research institution and facility where the research will be conducted. In the case of New Investigators, the quality and support of the research mentor also will be considered. Topic areas considered for funding include:

- Promoting understanding of the etiology and pathogenesis of aplastic anemia, MDS, or PNH;
- Improving symptom management and the quality of life for aplastic anemia, MDS, or PNH patients;
- Discovering new treatments for aplastic anemia, MDS, or PNH;

- Understanding and preventing complications of bone marrow failure conditions (e.g., blood clotting/thrombosis in PNH, iron overload in MDS, etc).

Applications that do not fall within the selection criteria, or that address a disease outside of the scope of AA&MDS (for example, acute leukemia), will be disqualified. MAB members will recuse themselves from review of grants submitted by institutional colleagues or collaborators who submit a grant in the same disease area.

Application Due Date

Applications are due Friday, February 27, 2009 and must be submitted electronically. (See Application for special instructions for submitting Certification Page.) Notices of awards are expected to be sent on Monday, June 1, 2009 with funding to begin July 1, 2009.

Amount of Foundation Support

Successful applicants can be funded up to \$60,000 for two years (\$30,000 each year, with second-year funding pending approved progress in the first year). Grant funds may be used only to support the direct costs of research and indirect costs of up to 10% of the grant. Grant funds may not be used for purchase of permanent equipment (defined as equipment expected to last at least three years and computer hardware) or for repair or service contract costs for institutional equipment; the construction or renovation of facilities; furniture; salaries of collaborators at other institutions; honoraria; membership dues; subscriptions; books; or journals.

Allowable use of grant funds includes salary for the principal investigator and for scientific personnel directly engaged in the research project at the principal investigator's institution; consumable supplies, disposables, and animals necessary to fulfill the project's specific aims; and travel necessary to conduct research or to present the results of the research at appropriate scientific or medical meetings sponsored by non-profit associations. The maximum amount of funds expendable for travel is \$2,000 per year. Travel funded by this grant must be done during the funding period.

Support from Other Sources

An applicant may not apply for, use, or accept AA&MDSIF funds for a research project or part of a project already supported by the AA&MDSIF. Accordingly, full disclosure of all available and pending funds for research support must be made in the budget included with the grant application. If funds from other sources become available to the applicant during the review or tenure of an AA&MDSIF research grant, the principal investigator must inform the AA&MDSIF in writing. The AA&MDSIF and its advisors will then make a decision about the continuation of the research award.

Grant Payments

Checks are made payable to the grantee's institution and are issued quarterly. The institution's financial officer should establish an account from which research expenses may be paid under the terms of the approved award. No funds will be released before receipt by the AA&MDSIF of a signed copy of the Notice of Award. Additionally, the AA&MDSIF reserves the right to withhold payments for failure to meet the Foundation's reporting requirements outlined in this document and the Notice of Award.

Expenditures Beyond the Grant Period

Expenditures may not be made against a grant after its expiration date except with prior authorization in writing from the AA&MDSIF.

At the termination of the grant unexpended funds may, under exceptional circumstances, be used for an approved period of time. The grantee must request in writing such an extension of the use of grant funds. The request must state the amount of unexpended funds and how those funds will be used during the extension period. In addition, the grantee must provide a detailed justification satisfactory to the AA&MDSIF and its MAB. Such a request must be made no later than two (2) weeks after the termination date of the award.

Change in Status

The continued use of grant funds following any change in the status of the principal investigator requires approval in writing by the AA&MDSIF. Such changes include, but are not limited to, a move by the investigator to a new institution, the institution's withdrawal from the project, the investigator's termination from the institution, or an absence of the grantee longer than six weeks. Because the grant is awarded to the investigator and not to the institution, upon approval by the AA&MDSIF, grant funds remain with the principal investigator.

Should the Foundation not approve the use of funds following the change of status, a financial report and progress report must be sent via electronic mail four weeks following the Foundation's decision. The progress report must justify the spending to date and will be reviewed by the MAB. All funds not spent before the investigator's change in status must be returned within six weeks following the Foundation's decision not to approve the use of funds following the change of status. Funds that are found by the MAB to be spent without justification must also be returned.

Cancellation of Grant

If, for any reason, the grantee must relinquish the award, he/she must notify the AA&MDSIF in writing within two weeks of the decision to relinquish the award. The AA&MDSIF reserves the right to discontinue a grant or fellowship if circumstances render the grantee unqualified and/or unable to perform under the terms and conditions of this policy and the Notice of Award. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, loss of license, conviction of a crime in relation to research or clinical activities, or withdrawal of insurance. Failure to submit a progress report by the specified deadline will result in withdrawal of funding.

Reports

A financial report form will be mailed to the grantee's financial officer with a copy of the award letter. The completed form must be returned to the AA&MDSIF within twelve (12) weeks after the termination date of the award.

A detailed progress report must be submitted to AA&MDSIF by May 15, 2010; the report should explain how the research results have to date met the objectives established in the application. The report must be reviewed and approved by the AA&MDSIF's Medical Advisory Board (MAB) in order to receive the

second year of funding. In addition, a one-page summary of the above information in lay language intended for patients must be submitted at the same time. The Foundation may use the summary in its website, newsletters, annual reports, and other material.

A final report is due to the AA&MDSIF six weeks after the close of the award period (June 30 of the second year). The report will include an outline as well as a detailed discussion of the work performed, results (particularly as they compare to the objectives established in the application), and future plans for related research. Reprints of any publication written by the grant recipient and relating to the work performed during the award period must be included. Additionally, a one-page summary of the above information in lay language intended for patients must be submitted. The Foundation may use the summary in its website, newsletters, annual reports, and other material.

Publications and Oral Presentations

All manuscripts on findings produced with assistance from the research grant must be submitted to the AA&MDSIF within one month of publication. Recipients must cite support from the AA&MDSIF in all published work and in all oral presentations that relate to findings produced with assistance from the research grant.

Human and/or Animal Subjects/Tissues

When human subjects or tissues are to be used in a research project, it is the responsibility of the grantee and the institution to ensure that the institution has on file:

- A complete copy of the research protocol approved by the Institutional Review Board with oversight on human subjects and a copy of that Board's current approval notice (or, for research conducted outside of the United States, the equivalent of an IRB), and
- A copy of the informed consent form(s) to be used by patients.

When animals and/or animal tissues are used, it is the responsibility of the grantee and the institution to ensure that the institution has a complete copy of the institution's animal care and use committee approval on file.

A copy of these documents must also be submitted with the application or delivered upon notice of award and before grant funds are transmitted.

AA&MDSIF Policy on the Use of Animals in Research

All entities that receive funding from the AA&MDSIF adhere to the following principles:

- Animals shall be used in biomedical research only when no other means of obtaining scientifically sound, valid, and useful results are available.
- The minimum number of appropriate animals required to obtain and to validate results shall be used.
- The acquisition, care, and use of animals must be in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, whether the research is conducted in the United States or abroad.
- Certifications must be received from research facilities prior to being approved for a research fellowship that the facility(ies), its researchers, and its employees adhere to the Animal Welfare

Act, National Research Council Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and any appropriate U.S. Department of Agriculture and/or National Institutes of Health regulations and standards, whether the research is conducted in the United States or abroad.

- In research requiring the death of an animal, only the most appropriate and humane form of euthanasia shall be used consistent with the purpose of the research.

Conflict of Interest

Any real or potential conflict of interest on the part of the grantee or any collaborators/mentors in relation to the project must be revealed. It is expected that AA&MDSIF grantees will observe the highest ethical standards while conducting research.

TERMS OF THIS POLICY ARE SUBJECT TO REVISION OR ALTERATION AT ANY TIME.

Questions?

Contact Alice Houk, Director of Health Professional Programs, at 301.279.7202 x101 or hok@aamds.org.