



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

2022 AASLD FOUNDATION PINNACLE RESEARCH AWARD IN LIVER DISEASES

Application Deadline: December 2, 2021
Award Period: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025 (3 Years)
Award Amount: \$300,000 (\$100,000/Year)

AASLD Foundation's Mission

To invest in innovative hepatology research and in the people who study and treat liver disease.

Award Description

The purpose of this basic science award is to provide young scientists with support for their research to bridge the gap between completion of research training and attainment of status as an independent research scientist. The additional research experience provided by this award is intended to enable young scientists to successfully compete for research awards from national sources, particularly the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Well-trained investigators who hold MD, PhD, or MD/PhD degrees and are pursuing a career in liver disease research are encouraged to apply.

The Pinnacle Research Award is intended to develop the potential of outstanding, young scientists and encourage research in liver physiology and disease. Individuals who are already well-established in the field are not eligible for this award.

Award Details

- Awards of \$300,000 will be provided over three (3) years (\$100,000 per year).
- Funds may only be used for **PI salary support** and/or for **technical support/laboratory supplies** (excluding capital equipment) for the recipient. **No additional or indirect costs, registration fees, or travel expenses are allowed.**
- Unexpended funds at the end of the award term must be returned to AASLD Foundation.
- Awards cannot be transferred to another institution without prior written approval from AASLD Foundation.
- Annual renewal will depend on scientific progress, verification of faculty status, and other received or pending research funding.
- Funding notifications for the 2022 awards cycle will be sent no later than May 15, 2022.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for this award, the applicant must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. The applicant must:
 - Be within the first six* years of their first faculty appointment (including prior appointments in universities outside of North America) at the start of the award (faculty appointment starting no earlier than July 1, 2016). **The standard eligibility period for this award is within five years of the applicant's first faculty appointment. In consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on researchers, AASLD Foundation has extended the eligibility window for the 2022 Awards cycle. This extension is not guaranteed for future cycles.*
 - i. If the applicant does not have a faculty appointment at the time of application, the letter of commitment from their department chair must explicitly confirm that the applicant will have a faculty appointment (i) no later than the Award start date and (ii) for the full award cycle.
 - Be a member of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) at the time of award application and maintain active membership for the duration of the award period.
 - Be able to devote at least 50% effort to the research project on which this application is based.

- Be sponsored by a public or private non-profit institution accredited in the United States, Canada or Mexico engaged in health care and health-related research. Individuals employed at the NIH, FDA, and CDC are not eligible to apply.
 - Have a research mentor or co-mentor who is an AASLD member in good standing at the time of application and for the duration of the award period.
 - Not hold/have held any other similar award that is intended to primarily support the salary of early career investigators (including but not limited to NIH R, P or most K level grants, or similar career development awards from federal or non-federal sources. [See eligibility list for more common programs](#)).
2. The proposed project must:
- Be a basic science research project.
 - Be conducted at the sponsoring institution within the United States, Canada or Mexico.
3. Application limits:
- There is no restriction on the number of applicants an institution can sponsor each cycle, but only one applicant may be funded per distinct department within each institution in this award category.
 - Applicants may only apply for one AASLD Foundation award per application year.

Selection Criteria

Applicants will be evaluated based upon their background, their commitment to a research career, the scientific merit of their research project and the environment in which they will conduct this project. Applications will be reviewed based on the written materials submitted. **Incomplete applications and applications that fail to adhere strictly to the instructions (including the submission deadline and page limitations) will not be reviewed.** All decisions are final.

Application Formatting Instructions

1. Use pages 5-6 of this application as cover pages. Type responses.
2. Include only the required documents and provide signatures as requested.
3. Include a header at the upper right corner of each page with your name (last name, first name) and award name.
4. Use half-inch margins. Do not use lettering smaller than 10 point.
5. Adhere to page limits and complete all sections. Applications that do not meet the requirements, in content or format, will not be reviewed.
6. The completed application, letters of support or commitment, and other documents as applicable must be combined in the order listed in the Required Documents section (pages 3-4) and submitted as one PDF document. Name the PDF file as follows: 2022 PINNACLE_Last name, first name (Example: 2022 PINNACLE_Smith, Jane)

Application Submission

The application deadline for this award is **11:59 pm Eastern time, December 2, 2021**. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.

Submit your application at www.liverresearchawards.org. You will be sent an email confirmation that the application was received. If an email confirmation is not received in two (2) business days, please contact awards@asld.org to confirm receipt.

Application Resources

AASLD Foundation Research Award Glossary: www.aasldfoundation.org/glossary
Applicant FAQ: <http://www.aasldfoundation.org/awardsFAQ>
Previous Funding Programs Eligibility List: <http://www.aasldfoundation.org/eligibility>
NIH Biosketch Format: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
NIH Other Support Format: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm>

Required Documents		
Submit only the documents listed below. Any additional documents (including letters of collaboration, additional letters of recommendation, or documents that exceed the stated page limitations) will be removed from consideration.		
1	Cover Pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use pages 5-6 of this RFA as your application's cover pages. Complete all information and include all required signatures. Signatures may be digital, electronic, or "wet."
2	Abstract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide your project's abstract on page 7 of this application.
3	Resubmission Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete page 8 of this application and include with cover pages. If applicable, use the provided form to briefly describe how your resubmission responds to the issues and criticisms raised by reviewers in the original application. Also briefly describe any major additions, deletions, or changes to the application.
4	Biosketches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit five pages each Provide a Biosketch in NIH format for the applicant, mentor, and any other key personnel or other significant contributors/collaborators.
5	Specific Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit one page State the proposed project's overall research hypothesis, objectives, specific aims, and impact of the results.
6	Research Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit eight pages, not including references Prepare according to NIH guidelines: background, significance, innovation, and approach. The section on previous work should highlight the candidate's previous studies and their contribution to knowledge in this field. (Appendices should not be included.)
7	Project Timeline and Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit one page Describe goals and timeline for completion of project milestones. Proposed work must clearly be able to be accomplished in the award term (3 years).
8	Research Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit three pages The research environment should be described, including access to patients, laboratory space (if applicable), consultants and technical (including computer) resources.
9	Research Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an accounting of all other institutional, federal and non-federal support using the NIH "Other Support" form (link goes to direct download). Include all funding available from collaborators and sponsors.
10	Letter(s) of Collaboration/Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit one page each If applicable, letters of collaborative or mentoring arrangements that are significant to the proposal may be included. Biosketches for significant contributors/collaborators should be included as part of required documents section 4.
11	Candidate's Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit two pages Provide a career development plan that includes your background, short/long term goals, plan for career development/training activities during award, and the impact receiving this award would have on your research career.
12	Letter of Commitment from Department Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit one page The Department Chair's letter should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explicitly confirm the percent of available time that will be devoted to research activities on which this application is based during the award (minimum 50%). Confirm and describe the institution's support of the candidate and commitment to their research success. If the applicant does not have a faculty appointment at the time of award application, the letter must explicitly confirm that the applicant will have a faculty appointment (i) no later than the Award start date and (ii) for the full award cycle.

Required Documents		
13	Mentor Letter of Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One letter, limit one page • The Mentor's letter should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm and describe their personal support of the candidate and commitment to their success. ○ Explicitly state that they have reviewed the full research proposal prior to submission. ○ Attest to the candidate's qualifications, commitment to research and quality of scientific work. • If the mentor is also the department chair, they can opt to submit separate letters for required documents 12 and 13 or submit one combined letter (2 page maximum) that clearly indicates dual role and addresses points requested for both these required documents.
14	One additional Letter of Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit one page • Letter should attest to the candidate's qualifications, commitment to research and quality of scientific work.
15	Institutional Review Board (IRB) or IACUC Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use page 9 of this application to verify if IRB or IACUC approval is needed for this project. • If human or animal subjects are to be used, verification of IRB or IACUC approval of the proposed research in the applicant's institution should be provided prior to the award being granted. • IRB/IACUC approval (if necessary) must be applied for at the time of application.

The following pages contain forms that must be included in **all** applications. Please refer to the list of required documents above when assembling your final application package.

2022 PINNACLE RESEARCH AWARD APPLICATION

Project Title	
Applicant Name (last, first, middle initial)	AASLD Member Number
Applicant Degrees(s)	Date of Terminal Degree (MM/YYYY)
Applicant Current Position Title	Appointment Date (MM/YYYY)
Applicant Telephone	Applicant Email
Sponsoring Institution	
Sponsoring Division or Department	
Mentor Name (last, first, middle initial)	AASLD Member Number
Mentor Title	Mentor Institution
Mentor Telephone	Mentor Email
Institution's Grant Administrator Name (last, first, middle initial)	Institution Fiscal Officer Name, if different (last, first, middle initial)
Institution's Grant Administrator Telephone	Institution Fiscal Officer Telephone
Institution's Grant Administrator Email	Institution Fiscal Officer Email

Required Signatures

NOTE: By signing below, you are certifying that the information in this application is accurate and that you understand that Foundation guidelines do not allow for any indirect costs (e.g., facilities management and utilities; general-purpose or capital equipment; travel; memberships and dues; subscriptions/books/periodicals; etc.).

Applicant Signature	Name (Printed)	Date
Mentor Signature (if applicable)	Name (Printed)	Date
Department / Division Chair Signature	Name (Printed)	Date
Institution's Grant Administrator Signature	Name (Printed)	Date

2022 AASLD FOUNDATION PINNACLE RESEARCH AWARD ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

Complete the eligibility checklist below and include the completed page as page 2 of your application package.

1. The applicant:

- Is a junior faculty member (at or below the rank of Assistant Professor for no more than six years at the start of the award / faculty appointment starting no earlier than July 1, 2016); or
- Has a faculty appointment that will start on or prior to the award start date.

Confirm the applicant's actual or anticipated faculty start date: _____

2. The applicant confirms that (select all that apply):

- They are a member of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) at the time of award application and will maintain active membership for the duration of the award period.
- They will be able to devote at least 50% effort to the research project on which this application is based.
- They are sponsored by a public or private non-profit institution accredited in the United States, Canada or Mexico engaged in health care and health-related research.
- The proposed project will be conducted at the sponsoring institution within the United States, Canada or Mexico.
- They have a mentor or co-mentor who is an AASLD member in good standing at the time of application and for the duration of the award period.

3. Applicants cannot hold other similar research awards that are intended to primarily support the salary of early career investigators, including but not limited to NIH R, P or most K level grants, or similar career development awards from federal or non-federal sources ([See eligibility list for more common programs](#)).

The applicant confirms that:

- They **have not** held nor currently hold any similar research awards.
- They **have** held or currently hold a similar research award.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

In our efforts to fund more high-impact proposals, AASLD Foundation seeks partnerships with individual or private foundation donors that have expressed interest in supporting research projects in specific diseases or areas of focus.

Please indicate below if you give AASLD Foundation permission to share your de-identified application with potential individual or private (non-industry/corporate) foundation donors in the event your application is highly meritorious and matches with one of these opportunities.

- Yes, I agree to allow AASLD Foundation to share my de-identified application with potential individual donors or private (non-industry/corporate) foundations that have an interest in supporting research in my area of focus.
- No, I do not agree to allow AASLD Foundation to share my de-identified application with any potential private donors.

Abstract of Proposed Research

In the box below, briefly describe the research project, technical approach and anticipated results. Include this page as page 3 of your application package.

Research Information

Current Percent Effort:

_____ Research
_____ Administration
_____ Clinical Activities
_____ Teaching

100%=Total

Projected Under This Award:

_____ Research (this project)
_____ Research (other)
_____ Administration
_____ Clinical Activities
_____ Teaching

100%=Total

Resubmission Information

Complete and include as page 4 of your application package.

Is this application a resubmission to the AASLD Foundation awards program?

- No.
- Yes. If yes, briefly describe how your resubmission responds to the issues and criticisms raised by reviewers in the original application in the box below. Also briefly describe any major additions, deletions, or changes to the application.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)/ANIMAL CARE AND USE COMMITTEE (IACUC)

Complete this page and include it at the end of your application, with appropriate supporting documentation.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

- A. Does the proposed study require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval? Yes No
- B. If the proposed study requires IRB approval, has the documentation verifying approval been obtained and included in the award application? Yes No Not Required

If the proposed study has been approved, please provide documentation of verification with your application (**limit 2 pages**).

If IRB approval is not necessary or not attached, please state why below:

ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION

- A. Does your proposed study involve the care and use of animals? Yes No
- B. If the proposed study involves the care and use of animals, has the proposed study been approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) of the applicant's institution and do they follow the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Guidelines on the care and use of laboratory animals? Yes No Not Required
- C. If the proposed study requires (IACUC) approval, has the documentation verifying approval been obtained and included in the award application? Yes No Not Required

If the proposed study involves the care and use of animals and has been approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, please provide documentation of verification with your application (**limit 2 pages**).

If approval by the Animal Care and Use Committee of the applicant's institution is not necessary or not attached, please state why below: