



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

2023 AASLD FOUNDATION PILOT RESEARCH AWARD

Application Deadline: December 5, 2022
Award Period: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 (1 Year)
Award Amount: \$50,000

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 award is to support highly innovative research ideas that have a clear potential to produce high-impact results, but that have little or no preliminary data to successfully compete for funding from other sources. This award is not intended to support ongoing research in the applicant's laboratory, but rather support new ideas or approaches that have not previously been studied.

Clinical/Translational/Outcomes and Basic Science projects will be evaluated independently, with separate funding reserved for each category.

Award Details

- Award of \$50,000 will be provided over (1) one year.
- Funds are unrestricted for direct project expenditures, except that equipment acquisition of \$5,000 or greater requires prior written approval from AASLD Foundation.
- **No indirect costs, registration fees, or travel expenses are provided.**
- 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.
- Funding notifications for the 2023 awards cycle will be sent no later than May 15, 2023.

Eligibility

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

1. The applicant must:
 - Have a faculty appointment and be at least three years from their first appointment at the Assistant Professor level up to an Associate Professor at the start date of the award (faculty start date must be July 1, 2020 or earlier).
 - 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 20% 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.
 - If the applicant is at the rank of Assistant Professor, they must 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. Mentors are **not** required for Associate Professor level applicants or equivalent.
 - Not hold federal funding (e.g., U, P, R, K, VA Merit, VA CDA) **unless** they are able to justify the following in their application:
 - i. The project is truly completely distinct and non-overlapping from existing funding.
 - ii. The proposed work cannot be completed using existing funds.

2. The proposed project must:
 - Not be an established project with alternate funding and must be clearly different than existing research portfolio of the PI.
 - Be hypothesis based.
 - Include only 1-2 aims that can be completed within the one-year award term.
 - If the project is Clinical/Translational/Outcomes Research, intervention must involve a direct clinical interaction with patients (clinical), patient clinical data (outcomes), or patient samples (translational). No clinical interaction is required for Basic Research proposals.
 - 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 calendar 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.

- Project feasibility, an appropriate environment to conduct the project, and relevant collaborators will strengthen the application.
- Work proposed must clearly be able to be accomplished in one year.
- Highly innovative, high-risk/high-reward projects will be prioritized.
- For Clinical/Translational Research proposals:
 - Interventions addressing disparities in healthcare access or quality will receive priority consideration.
 - Operational/clinical interventions will be judged on potential for generalizability to other institutions (i.e., intervention that can only applied in a single center due to specific local infrastructure requirements will receive lower priority).

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: 2023 PILOT_Last name, first name (Example: 2023 PILOT_Smith, Jane)

Application Submission

The application deadline for this award is **11:59 pm Eastern time, December 5, 2022**. 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>

NIH PHS 398 Detailed Initial Budget Period Form: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>

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. 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 1-2 aims may be proposed. 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 three pages, not including references Prepare according to NIH guidelines: background, significance, innovation, and approach. If project is Clinical/Translational Research, intervention must involve a direct clinical interaction with patients (clinical), patient clinical data (outcomes), or patient samples (translational). No clinical interaction is required for Basic Research proposals. 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.) Inclusion of preliminary data is not required. This award is not intended to support ongoing research in the applicant's laboratory, but rather support new ideas or approaches that have not previously been studied. Please be specific with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why this project is novel and distinct from other ongoing work. The applicant's plan to translate the Pilot Study into future federally funded grant applications. Proposed work should be well defined and feasible within the fiduciary and temporal limitations of the award (\$50,000 and 1 year respectively).
7	Budget and Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the NIH PHS 398 Detailed Initial Budget Period Form, show proposed budget for use of \$50,000 AASLD Foundation Pilot funding during the one-year award term. Equipment costs of \$5,000 or greater require specific justification. No indirect costs, registration fees, or travel expenses. Provide a budget justification narrative to support the proposed budget.

Required Documents		
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 one page • Describe the potential benefits of this project to your research career development and/or future funding and, where applicable, the impact the research preceptor will have on your research development.
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 20%). ○ Confirm and describe the institution's support of the candidate and commitment to their research success.
13	Letter of Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One letter, limit one page • If the applicant is below the rank of Associate Professor, the letter of recommendation should be written by the applicant's mentor and should explicitly confirm that the mentor has reviewed the full research proposal prior to submission. • Letter should attest to the candidate's qualifications, commitment to research and quality of scientific work, and the importance/potential impact of the project. • If the mentor is also the department chair, the mentor 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	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.

2023 AASLD FOUNDATION PILOT 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

2023 AASLD FOUNDATION PILOT RESEARCH AWARD RESEARCH ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

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

1. The applicant:

- ☐ Has a faculty appointment at or below the Associate Professor level and will be at least three (3) years from their first appointment in an accredited North American (US, Canada, or Mexico) academic institution at the award start date (faculty start date must be July 1, 2020 or earlier).

Confirm the applicant's first faculty appointment 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 20% 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.
- ☐ If the applicant is below the rank of Associate Professor, they have a 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 federal funding (e.g. U, P, R, K, VA Merit, or VA CDA) **unless** they are able to confirm that:

- ☐ The project is truly completely distinct and non-overlapping from existing funding;
- ☐ The proposed work cannot be completed using existing funds.

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.

Applicant Effort 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

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
- C. If the proposed study requires (IACUC) approval, has the documentation verifying approval been obtained and included in the award application? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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: