

AASLD Foundation's Mission:

The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) Foundation invests in innovative hepatology research and in the people who study and treat liver disease.

Grant Overview:

The purpose of this award is to support investigators who have recently submitted an NIH R or other federally funded equivalent award application and have received competitive scores on their proposal, but were not funded, as they strengthen their proposal for resubmission to the NIH or other federal agency.

The Bridge Award in Liver Diseases program accepts applications two times each year.

Who Can Apply: Faculty at or below the rank of Associate Professor
Type: Basic Science Research, Clinical, Translational, or Outcomes Research
Award Term: February 1, 2026 – January 31, 2027, or July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027 (1 Year)
Award Amount: \$100,000

The application deadline for this award is **11:59 pm Eastern time on the dates listed below**. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.

Notice of Special Interest:

Additional dedicated funding to advance research activities in Autoimmune Hepatitis is available for the 2026 Awards cycle. Applications in autoimmune hepatitis are encouraged in all early to mid-career research award categories and the Pilot and Autoimmune Exploratory Research Award categories.

Key Dates:

	Summer/ Fall Cycle	Winter/Spring Cycle
RFA Posted	Aug 15, 2025	January 15, 2026
Application Deadline	Oct 15, 2025	Mar 16, 2026
Peer Review	Nov - Dec 2025	Mar – Apr, 2026
Earliest Notification Date	Jan 2, 2026	May 1, 2026
Earliest Funding Start Date	Feb 1, 2026	Jul 1, 2026

Research Objectives and Selection Criteria:

AASLD Foundation is soliciting research grant proposals focused on all aspects of liver diseases.

Applicants will be evaluated based upon their background, their priority score and summary statement critique, and their strategy to address comments in the critique/summary statement.

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.

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 at or below the rank of Associate Professor.
- 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.
- Have submitted their highly scored NIH R or other federal equivalent application within the last 18 months as of the application deadline (eligibility window starts on the date your application was reviewed by the NIH/federal equivalent study section). The applicant must be able to provide their Summary Statements and their submitted award materials on Standard Forms SF424 (R&R).
- Not currently hold a federally funded non-mentored grant (e.g., R01, P01, VA Merit) and not hold such a grant during the award period.
- Not hold other significant extramural mentored or non-mentored research funding (greater than \$50,000) during the award period. Institutional funding and/or pilot research funding may be held during the award term.

2. The proposed project must:

- Be a resubmission (A1) application. New applications based on non-funded resubmission applications are not eligible.
- 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 research award per calendar year.

Use of Funds:

Total Award Amount: \$100,000

- Award funds of \$100,000 will be provided in four quarterly installments of \$25,000.

Funds may only be used for **PI salary support, technical support, laboratory supplies** (excluding capital equipment), and **limited travel support** for the recipient.

- PI salary support is limited to \$20,000.
- PI salary support or salary for technical support may include fringe.
- Capital equipment is defined as items that cost \$5,000 or greater, have a useful life of more than one year, and will not be expended or consumed in research.
- PIs will receive complimentary registration for The Liver Meeting during their one-year grant term. Up to \$2,000 of Award funding may be used for travel support to offset the PI's costs to attend The Liver Meeting during their grant term and present an in-person progress update on their funded project to AASLD Foundation leadership.

No additional or indirect costs, registration fees, or travel expenses other than described above are allowed.

This grant is intended as bridge support. If the application is funded by the NIH/equivalent during the AASLD Foundation Bridge Award period, the applicant must notify the Foundation and any unspent funds at the start of the other award must be returned.

Unexpended funds at the end of the Award term must be promptly returned to AASLD Foundation.

Reporting Requirements:

All reports to be provided by the PI for this award shall be in writing and acceptable to the Foundation as to the type of content and format. Failure by the PI to provide Research Progress or Fiscal Accountability Reports could jeopardize both the PI's and Institution's future eligibility to receive Foundation awards funding for other projects.

Written Final Research Progress Report and Fiscal Accountability Report	Reporting Period	Due to Foundation
Summer/Fall Cycle	Feb 1, 2026 – Jan 31, 2027	Mar 31, 2027
Winter/Spring Cycle	Jul 1, 2026 – Jun 30, 2027	Aug 31, 2027

PIs are further required to present an in-person progress update to AASLD Foundation leadership on their funded project during their grant term at an event held annually during The Liver Meeting.

PIs will be responsible for promptly responding to requests from the Foundation for updates on their scientific accomplishments and participate in all efforts to track outcomes associated with this funding, including responding to annual post-award impact update surveys for up to five years following completion of their award.

PIs must also provide the Foundation with a digital copy of any published report of research sponsored in part or in full by the Foundation within one year of publication.

Intellectual Property:

Applications for patents related to discoveries or inventions resulting from research during the award period will be subject to the policies of the Institution where the work is performed. However, the PI must notify the Foundation in advance of the intent to file such an application.

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>

Application Submission and Formatting:

1. Assemble your application package in the order listed in the required documents section below.
 - Type responses where prompted and provide all requested signatures.
 - Include a header at the upper right corner of each page with your name (last name, first name) and award name.
 - Use half-inch margins. Do not use lettering smaller than 10 point.
 - Adhere to page limits and complete all sections.

Applications that do not meet the requirements, in content or format, will not be reviewed.

2. 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 and submitted as one PDF document. Name the PDF file as follows: 2026 BRIDGE_Last name, first name (Example: 2026 BRIDGE_Smith, Jane)
3. 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.

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 6-7 of this document as your application's cover pages. Complete all information and include all required signatures. Signatures may be digital, electronic, or "wet."
2	Copy of the Originally Submitted Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include all components of the application, including the research and career plans, supporting documents, budget pages and other components.
4	NIH/Other Federal Entity Summary Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including critique and priority score.
5	Summary of Changes to Original Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using page 8 of this document, verify if there have been any changes to the following since the submission of the original proposal: Biosketch, facilities, letters of collaboration. Include updated documentation, with changes highlighted or noted as appropriate.
6	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.
7	Candidate's Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit four pages The statement should outline the candidate's strategy and methods for responding to the NIH/equivalent critique that address concerns and will result in a resubmission during or immediately following AASLD Foundation Bridge funding. The statement should contain an expected timeline for resubmission and what impact receiving the award would have on the applicant's research program and career.
8	Budget and Budget Justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the NIH PHS 398 Detailed Initial Budget Period Form, show proposed budget for use of \$100,000 AASLD Foundation Bridge funding during the one-year award term. Provide a budget justification narrative to support the proposed budget. Note that no indirect costs are allowed, and PI salary support must be limited to no more than \$20,000.
9	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.

10	Institutional Review Board (IRB) or IACUC Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use page 9 of this document 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.
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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.

2026 BRIDGE AWARD IN LIVER DISEASES APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Complete the form below and include the completed page as page 1 of your application package.

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	
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 except as noted; memberships and dues; subscriptions/books/periodicals; etc.).

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

2026 BRIDGE AWARD IN LIVER DISEASES 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 rank of Associate Professor
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.
 - ☐ Have submitted their highly scored NIH R or other federal equivalent application within the last 18 months as of the application deadline (eligibility window starts on the date your application was reviewed by the NIH/federal equivalent study section).
Date application was reviewed by the NIH/equivalent study section: _____
3. Applicants are **not eligible** for this award if they:
 - Currently hold a federally funded non-mentored grant (e.g., R01, P01, VA Merit) or will hold such an award during the award period.
 - Will hold significant extramural mentored or non-mentored research funding (greater than \$50,000) during the award period.

The applicant confirms that (select **one**):

- ☐ They do not currently hold a federally funded non-mentored grant and will not hold a federally funded non-mentored grant or significant extramural mentored or non-mentored research funding (greater than \$50,000) during the award period.
- ☐ The applicant currently holds a federally funded non-mentored grant or will hold a federally funded non-mentored grant or significant extramural mentored or non-mentored research funding (greater than \$50,000) during the award period.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO ORIGINAL DOCUMENTATION

Complete this page and include it in your application following your NIH/other federal entity summary sheets, with appropriate supporting documentation.

BIOSKETCHES

Are there any changes to the biosketches included in the original application? Select all that apply.

- A. Updated biosketch(es) for key personnel/collaborator(s). ☐ Yes ☐ No
B. New key personnel/collaborators. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have answered **yes** to either of the above, list the names of the Senior/Key Personnel you are providing updated or new biosketches for in the box below and attach the updated/new biosketches following this page.

- Biosketches should be limited to 5 pages each using the NIH format.
- For updated biosketches, highlight changes from original documentation.

FACILITIES DESCRIPTION

- A. Are there any changes to the facilities description included in the original application? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have answered yes to this question, provide an updated facilities description after any updated/new biosketches.

- Limit 3 pages
- Note changes from original application.

LETTER(S) OF COLLABORATION/SUPPORT

Are there any changes to collaborative/mentoring arrangements included in the original application?

- A. Updates to collaborative/mentoring arrangements. ☐ Yes ☐ No
B. New collaborative/mentoring arrangements. ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have answered yes to either of the above, list the names of the Senior/Key Personnel you are providing updated or new letters of collaboration/support for in the box below and attach the updated/new letters following this page.

- Limit one page each

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

C. Does the proposed study require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval? ☐ Yes ☐ No

D. 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: