



American Foundation *for* Suicide Prevention

Information for Grant Applicants

New Submission Deadlines for Research Grants (Effective Dec. 15, 2007)

Beginning Dec. 15, 2007, AFSP will accept and review applications for all categories of research grants and fellowships two times a year, with submission deadlines of Dec. 15 and June 15.

In making these changes, the AFSP Scientific Council is seeking to make the Foundation's research grant program more responsive to time-sensitive topics with high relevance for suicide research, lessen the waiting time required for applicants to resubmit promising applications, and streamline the administrative processes related to grants review.

A second change approved by the Scientific Council is an increase in the grant amounts for Standard Research Grants (from a maximum of \$60,000 to \$75,000), Young Investigator Grants (from \$70,000 to \$85,000) and Pilot Grants (from \$20,000 to \$30,000). These changes will also go into effect beginning with the **Dec. 15, 2007** cycle. Distinguished Investigator Grants and Postdoctoral Research Fellowships will remain at their current levels of \$100,000.

[Click here](#) for a print copy suitable for posting.

All questions should be directed to: Tracey Auster, research administrator, at tauster@afsp.org or (212) 363-3500 Ext.15.

Eligibility

AFSP research grants support studies that aim to increase understanding of the causes of suicide and factors related to suicide risk, or to test treatments and other interventions designed to prevent suicide. Investigators from all academic disciplines are eligible to apply, and both basic science and applied research projects will be considered, providing the study has an essential focus on suicide or suicide prevention. AFSP grants are awarded for one or two-year periods.

As a general policy, an individual can hold only one AFSP grant at a time. During the second year of funding (of the first year in the case of one-year grant) a current grant holder may apply for another AFSP grant which if approved, would start after the first grant period has ended. Applicants should carefully review the appropriate [grant policy statement](#) for additional guidelines and restrictions. Grant applications that do not conform to the stated policies will not be reviewed. Forms for grant applications can be obtained by using the links below.

Grant Categories

AFSP offers five types of research grants:

- [Distinguished Investigator Grants](#) for up to \$100,000 over two years are awarded to investigators at the level of associate professor or higher with an established record of research and publication on suicide.
- [Standard Research Grants](#) for up to \$75,000 over two years are awarded to individual investigators at any level.
- [Young Investigator Grants](#) for up to \$85,000 over two years are awarded to investigators at the level of assistant professor or lower. In addition to a maximum of \$75,000 for the investigator's research, these grants provide an additional \$10,000 (\$5,000 per year) for an established suicide researcher who will mentor the Young Investigator.
- [Postdoctoral Research Fellowships](#) for up to \$100,000 over two years are awarded to investigators who have received a Ph.D., M.D., or other doctoral degree within the preceding six years and have not had more than three years

of fellowship support. Fellows receive a progressive stipend of \$42,000 in the first year and \$46,000 in the second, with an institutional allowance of \$6,000 per year.

- **Pilot Grants** of up to \$30,000 over one or two years are awarded to investigators at any level. These grants provide seed money for new projects that have the potential to lead to subsequent larger investigations.

Grant Policy Statements and Application Forms

Distinguished Investigator Grant: | [policy statement](#) | [application form](#) |

Standard Research Grant: | [policy statement](#) | [application form](#) |

Young Investigator Grant: | [policy statement](#) | [application form](#) |

Postdoctoral Research Fellowship: | [policy statement](#) | [application form](#) |

Pilot Grant: | [policy statement](#) | [application form](#) |

Application Dates

Applications for all categories of grants and fellowships that intend to begin between July and September of the following year must be received by Dec. 15. Applications for projects that intend to begin between January and March of the following year must be received by June 15. Decisions on funding are normally made by April 15 and Oct. 15, respectively.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Overall, is the competition increasing for AFSP grants?

The number of grant applications received has increased markedly in recent years, but AFSP funding for research grants has also increased. Since 2001, roughly one out of five applications has been funded and we are striving to maintain that ratio.

2. Do some types of grants have a better chance of being funded by AFSP than others?

AFSP does not set a quota for the number of grants in each category (Distinguished Investigator Grants, Young Investigator Grants, etc.) that will be funded in a particular cycle. Rather, grants are selected for funding based on their individual merit. Applicants should select the grant category that is most appropriate to their level of research experience and to the type of research proposed. A relatively new investigator who has had a number of years of formally or informally mentored research experience may be more favorably considered for a Standard Research Grant than for a Young Investigator Grant, for example.

3. Are certain topics given priority over others?

Currently, AFSP does not give priority to any particular research topics. All proposals, however, are judged for relevancy to existing needs in suicide research, as were identified in the Institute of Medicine report (2002).

4. The topic I'm proposing to study has implications for understanding suicide, but is more directly focused on an underlying condition, such as depression or other mood disorder, or a neurobiological dysfunction. Is such a topic appropriate for an AFSP grant?

The AFSP research grants program is designed to support studies that have the greatest potential to advance knowledge of suicide and suicide prevention, and all grant applications are judged on their relevance to this mission. Basic research, as well as mood disorders research, may well be relevant, but it is the task of the applicant to clearly articulate how the study will contribute to better understanding or preventing suicide. Proposals that are not clearly related to suicide, no matter how scientifically sound, will generally not be funded.

5. What process does AFSP use for reviewing and making funding decisions about grant applications?

Procedures are explained in detail elsewhere on this website. (See [How AFSP Funds Research](#)).

6. Do grant applicants need to have a doctoral degree?

The AFSP research grants program is designed with postdoctoral investigators in mind, and almost all funded proposals are from applicants who have already received a Ph.D. or M.D. Exceptional proposals from pre-doctoral applicants will be considered within the regular grant categories, however.

7. Can international applicants apply for AFSP grants?

Yes, AFSP grants and fellowships can be awarded to applicants at institutions outside the U.S., as well as to international applicants who are working at U.S. institutions, providing they meet the general eligibility requirements described in the AFSP Policy Statement for each category of grant.

8. Can a research proposal submitted to AFSP also be submitted to another funding agency?

Yes, but the overlap between the research proposed in the AFSP application and research that has been, or will be proposed to any other funding agency or agencies must be clearly identified. This should be done in the Biographical Information form included in the application packet, under the category of Pending Support. It is the applicant's responsibility to inform AFSP of all applications for funding of research that overlaps with that proposed to AFSP, which are submitted after the AFSP application deadline and were not identified in the application.

9. If my proposed study is approved for funding by both AFSP and another agency, can I hold both grants simultaneously?

No, AFSP does not co-fund with other agencies. If the AFSP grant or fellowship is accepted, other offers of support for the same or substantially similar research must be declined. Failure to reveal another source of funding for the study will result in termination of AFSP support in the event that an award is made.

10. Do I need to have approval of my Institutional Review Board (or relevant committee for human subjects' protection) before sending in the grant application?

No, but the research proposal should be submitted for approval to the relevant committee at the sponsoring institution at the same time the application is sent to AFSP. This should be indicated on the Certification for Protection of Human Subjects form included in the application packet. If the grant is funded, it cannot begin until AFSP has received proof of IRB or human subjects committee approval.

11. Should a full CV be included for each investigator on the proposed research?

No, CVs are not to be included in the application. Instead, relevant information from each investigator's CV should be abstracted and included in the Biographical Information form included in the application packet.

12. What types of expenses can be included in the budget? Are overhead or indirect costs allowed?

Allowable and non-allowable costs vary somewhat for each AFSP grant category and are outlined in the relevant Policy statements. The Foundation does not reimburse the sponsoring institution for any overhead or indirect costs associated with any of its grants or fellowships. The relevant Policy statement should be carefully reviewed by the applicant before the budget is prepared, as funds requested for non-allowable items will be subtracted from the grant total in the event that an award is made.

13. Can additional materials be included in an Appendix to the grant application?

Appendices are permissible but should be limited to data collection measures or instruments that are not likely to be known to reviewers, treatment manuals and other materials that are directly related to the proposed research. Letters of support from consultants or collaborators in the research can also be included in an appendix.

14. Have any common problems been identified by the grant reviewers that I should be careful to avoid?

In treatment research and other clinical studies, a frequent problem is the applicant's failure to address the issue of patient/subject availability. Recruitment and enrollment projections should be supported by empirical data, wherever possible. Since problems related to patient recruitment are the single most common reason for premature termination of grant projects, reviewers will give particular attention to this aspect of the proposal.

15. Do all applicants receive feedback from AFSP on their proposals?

All applicants will be informed of the funding decision and the final priority score (1.0-5.0) assigned to their application. To be funded, a score of 1.9 or less is generally required. Applicants who are not funded may request a written summary of the reviewers' comments, and AFSP will respond to such requests to the fullest extent allowed by its limited staff resources. Priority in providing feedback will be given to applicants whose priority scores indicate the greatest potential for successful resubmission.

Young Investigator Grants

1. Is it possible to have two mentors on a Young Investigator Grant? I am bringing together two bodies of knowledge and will be getting help from an expert in both fields.

The one individual whose expertise and experience is most relevant to the proposed research should be identified as the mentor, and designated to receive the mentor's fee. An additional expert who will be involved in the study should be listed on the budget page as a consultant, with the fee to be paid. The role of each consultant should be described in the Budget Justification section of the application.

2. Can fringe benefits be requested for the mentor on a Young Investigator Grant?

No, the mentor's fee is limited to \$5,000 for each year of the study (maximum \$10,000). How these funds are spent is at the discretion of the mentor and the sponsoring institution.

Resubmitted Applications

1. Are there any different procedures for resubmitting an application that was not funded in an earlier cycle?

Resubmissions are encouraged only in those cases where the applicant has received a summary of the reviewers' comments and believes that the key concerns and recommendations can be adequately addressed. In resubmitting the application, the applicant should include a cover letter, identifying the original title of the application and date of submission, as well as the priority score received. The letter should succinctly detail how each of the reviewer concerns and recommendations has been addressed in the revised application. If a particular recommendation has not been followed, a clear explanation should be presented.

2. Are resubmitted applications sent back to the same reviewers who evaluated the original application?

Wherever possible, the reviewers are the same.

3. Are resubmissions funded at a higher rate than original applications?

In cases where the applicant adequately addresses the reviewers' concerns about the original application, the chances of being funded are generally good. However, if key concerns appear to have been overlooked or dismissed without discussion, reviewers frequently give the resubmission a less favorable priority score than the original application.

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