

amfAR Grant Policies

TO WHOM GRANTS ARE MADE

Grants are awarded to nonprofit institutions; they are not awarded to individual investigators. Accordingly, an application, if solicited, must bear the signature of an official authorized to sign for the institution and, if requested, the applicant institution must submit proof of its nonprofit status. Applications are neither requested nor accepted from for-profit entities. Institution endorsement or approval signature is not required for Letters of Intent or Proposal Synopses.

By accepting an amfAR grant, the recipient institution will accept full responsibility for the conduct of the investigation and for the acts of the investigator(s). Both are under the direction of the institution and are subject to its medical and scientific policies. Similarly, project personnel compensated with funds awarded by the Foundation are employees of the recipient institution; they are not amfAR employees.

Investigators and other personnel need not be U.S. citizens, and there are no restrictions as to age, color, creed, gender, gender identity, medical condition, handicap, national origin, parental status, political affiliation, race, religion, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Members of the Foundation's board of trustees are not eligible investigators for Foundation-supported research. Members of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) are eligible. Members of the board of trustees and SAC must comply with the Foundation's policies regarding the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

Additional eligibility requirements may be stipulated in an RFP or other solicitation for submission of a proposal or application.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

All amfAR grants are awarded contingent upon the availability of funds and without guarantee of subsequent of continued funding.

NO-COST EXTENSIONS

No-cost extensions (NCEs) are not allowed for grants with September 30 performance period end dates. If the end date is not September 30, an NCE that ends no later than the immediately following September 30 may be requested. For example, if a grant ends on March 31, 2024, an extension to September 30, 2024 may be requested.

The NCE restrictions align with amfAR's fiscal year end and are in place to ensure that funding is available to support new research in future years. In the past, extensions beyond fiscal year ends were approved. This is no longer the case. Investigators and application institutions are advised that research plans that cannot be completed in the one- or two-year allowed by the RFP should not be submitted.

NCEs are not allowed for phase 1 Mathilde Krim Fellowship grants.

ALLOWED USE OF FUNDS

In general, a grant is applied to direct costs of salaries for professional and technical personnel, laboratory supplies and equipment, travel, and the publication of findings. For-profit organizations may receive sub-awards or subcontracts supported with grant funds contingent upon amfAR's prior written approval.

Funds are not awarded for the following:

- Major construction or the remodeling of facilities (minor alterations are allowed with adequate justification and pre-approval);
- The direct cost of support services and facilities generally available at a sponsoring institution (occupancy costs, utilities, maintenance, telephone, office furniture and supplies, etc.) except when directly allocable, and essential to carrying out the proposed research;
- The purchase, lease, rental, or servicing of office equipment
- Funding for dissertation research

Recipient institutions agree not to promote or engage in violence, terrorism, or the destruction of any state, and to take prudent measures to ensure that they do not provide support through sub-grants or other financing to any entity that engages in those activities.

Indirect Costs—Foundation grants are not meant to cover the total cost of a proposed research project. A grantee institution is expected to provide the necessary physical facilities and administrative services, as well as other supporting services normally available at a sponsoring institution. Expenses generally considered to be indirect costs may be budgeted as direct costs only when required for the operation of remote sites deemed necessary and leased or rented exclusively for conduct of the funded research. Such requests will be carefully assessed for appropriateness and are subject to peer review and administrative approval. Indirect costs for research grants are allowed at a maximum rate of 20% of direct costs excluding the full amount of subawards. However, subawards may include indirect costs at maximum rate of 20% of direct costs to be paid to the subawardee. The maximum indirect rate for phase 1 and phase 2 Mathilde Krim Fellowship grants is 15%.

Travel Expenses—Research grants may include up to a direct cost total of \$1,000 to support travel expenses (transportation, accommodation, registration, etc.) related to attendance at up to one meeting or conference related to, or to report findings from, the funded project. Travel arrangements must be at a level that affords comfort while practicing economy. Consistent with Institution policies, transportation is to be at the lowest reasonable commercial airfare. Care must be taken to secure the most economical accommodations that offer reasonable comfort and proximity to the conference/meeting venue.

Travel costs are not allowed for Mathilde Krim Fellowship grants.

OVERLAP

amfAR will not award or continue funding grants for which there is scientific, budget, or commitment overlap.

Scientific Overlap—Scientific overlap occurs when substantially the same research is proposed in more than one application; or is submitted to two or more different funding sources for review and funding consideration; or a specific research objective and the experimental design for accomplishing that objective are the same or closely related in two or more currently funded or pending applications or awards for which there is any overlap in the period of performance, regardless of funding source.

Budget Overlap—Budgetary overlap occurs when duplicate or equivalent budgetary items (e.g., equipment, salary) are requested in an application but are already funded by another source.

Commitment Overlap—Commitment overlap occurs when any project-supported personnel has time commitments (i.e., percent effort) exceeding 100 percent, regardless of how the effort/salary is being supported or funded.

It is the recipient institution's responsibility to ensure that accurate and complete information about all sources of current and pending support is provided when an application is submitted, approved for funding and every time any new funding or other support is awarded, regardless of potential for overlap.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Funds available to the Foundation are obtained principally from private donations.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

amfAR intends to encourage and support HIV/AIDS research of the highest quality. Therefore, every properly prepared and submitted LOI or application received in response to an amfAR solicitation is peer-reviewed by members of the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). Each is subject to an overall conformance review by the Foundation staff. Those found to be inconsistent with the guidelines and instructions are eliminated at that time, and the investigator and the applicant institution's grants official are notified. Applications are solicited from investigators whose letters of intent have been recommended by the Foundation's SAC or whose Proposal Synopsis have been found by amfAR program officers and/or advisors to be in line with the intent and scope of the RFP. Unsolicited applications are not accepted for consideration.

The SAC, a volunteer body of scientists who are experts in various fields of HIV/AIDS research, evaluates (1) the scientific merit of LOIs and applications; (2) the degree of innovation in concept and design; (3) the relevance of the research to the RFP, control of the epidemic, or to the benefit of patients with AIDS or HIV/AIDS-related conditions; (4) the qualifications, experience, and productivity of the investigator/sponsor; (5) the facilities available; and (6) the likelihood of success. The SAC's determinations are considered by the amfAR board of trustees, which holds the sole authority to approve project funding.

Submission of an LOI or Proposal Synopsis does not guarantee an invitation to submit a complete application. The LOI process, in particular is very competitive and only a limited number of proposals are approved for additional review. Similarly, an invitation to submit an application does not guarantee that funding will be awarded.

Written critiques are not available for LOIs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Throughout the review and award process, the Foundation respects the privacy of the applicant and endeavors to protect from disclosure any confidential or proprietary information contained in a submitted proposal. However, amfAR has no mechanisms in place to maintain or guarantee confidentiality and, as a not-for-profit corporation, lacks the financial resources to (1) institute such mechanisms or (2) accept liability for the disclosure of information. At the same time, the Foundation does not consider information in a "lay language summary" to be confidential. That information may be made public as a description of the project being funded by amfAR. Submission of an application, LOI or Proposal Synopsis is deemed acceptance of these provisions.

REVIEWER CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A Conflict of Interest (COI) exists when a reviewer (or their close family member) has a professional or financial interest that does, or could be perceived to, bias their assessment of an application.

COIs include, but aren't limited to, the following situations.

A reviewer or a close family member (now or in the past year):

1. Collaborates with the applicant
2. Subcontracts or consults with the applicant
3. Works at the same institution* as the applicant

**Institutions that are part of a large system are considered separate as long as they are operationally and financially independent of each other. For example, UCSF and UCLA are considered separate institutions.*

Investigators who are key personnel on large complex grants (such as NIH UM1) are not considered to have a COI unless they are collaborating directly or co-authoring with the applicant investigator.

A reviewer may not review or be present for the discussion and scoring of an application or letter of intent when a COI exists.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL SUBJECTS / BIOHAZARDS

Recipient institutions agree to accept full responsibility for ensuring that research activities (e.g., experiments and protocols), facilities, and employees comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Investigations involving human or animal subjects or derivatives of such subjects, or biohazards may not be initiated until its entire protocol has been reviewed and approved in accordance with regulations established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

For projects involving human subjects, documentation of approval by the INSTITUTION's institutional review board (IRB), and a copy of the IRB-approved patient's informed consent form, if required, must be submitted to the Foundation.

Projects involving animal subjects must adhere to the following principles:

- Animals are to be used only when no other means of obtaining scientifically valid and useful results is available.
- Only the minimum number of animals required to obtain valid results are to be used.
- The most appropriate and humane forms of anesthesia and euthanasia consistent with the purposes of the research are to be used.
- Acquisition, use and care of animals must comply with the Animal Welfare Act, the National Research Council's Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and the DHHS, NIH, and USDA regulations cited above.

Documentation of approval by the institution's animal care and use committee (IACUC) must be submitted to amfAR.

If the project requires the use or will result in the production of biohazards, documentation of approval by the institution's bio-safety committee must be submitted to amfAR.

Institutions outside of the United States of America are required to provide similar institution approvals, certifications, and assurances.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

From time to time, amfAR may establish special initiatives to address specific, timely issues in HIV/AIDS research. Such initiatives may involve pre-application, application and review requirements, and/or funding terms and conditions that are different from those described above. Specifics will be detailed in RFPs or invitations to submit an application for funding.