

# 2024 Innovative Project Award

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## Important Notes:

- Proposals must be received no later than 3 p.m. Central Time on the deadline date. Early submission is encouraged.
- Before beginning an application, review the eligibility and requirements that apply to all AHA research awards at [AHA Application Resources](#) page.
- All proposals must be [submitted electronically via ProposalCentral](#). The system will open eight weeks prior to the application deadline to complete your proposal and upload documents. You can begin to create your documents now; please refer to the [AHA Application Instructions \(PDF\)](#). All submissions require a signature from a designated institutional representative.
- Applicants must be [AHA Professional Members](#) at the time of application. This must be done online. Join or begin the membership process well before the deadline.

## Deadline for required pre-proposals:

Friday, December 1, 2023

Invited full applications due: Friday, March 8, 2024

Award start date: July 1, 2024

## Purpose

- To support highly innovative, high-impact research that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements that will accelerate the field of cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular research.
- Research deemed innovative may introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or exhibit other uniquely creative qualities.
- The Innovative Project Award (IPA) promotes unexplored ideas; therefore, preliminary data is not required and not accepted as part of the proposal. However, a solid rationale for the work must be provided. If you provide preliminary data, the application will be disqualified.

- Should you include information about preliminary work, then the proposal is not innovative. You may refer to previous projects you have conducted to demonstrate that you possess a competency or technique that equips you to take on this new direction. Proposals may also refer to existing, unanalyzed datasets and the types of data they contain (e.g., geospatial, demographic, billing, molecular) that could be leveraged in conducting the proposed work, but there should be no preliminary descriptive summaries of the data itself.
- Proposed work should not be the next logical step of previous work, but should have a high probability of revealing new avenues of investigation, if successful.
- The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for clearly and explicitly articulating the project's innovation and the potential impact on cardiovascular and cerebrovascular research.
- The idea proposed here should not have been submitted in whole or in part in a previous proposal for AHA support

## Eligibility

At the time of award activation:

- The candidate must hold a post-baccalaureate Ph.D. degree or equivalent, or a doctoral-level clinical degree, such as MD, DO, DVM, PharmD, or PhD in nursing, public health, or other clinical health science.
- This program places no limit on eligibility based on career stage, academic rank or discipline. It requires only evidence of employment at a qualified institution, beyond the fellowship/training stage..
- While no minimum percent effort is specified, the principal investigator must demonstrate that adequate time will be devoted to ensuring successful completion of the proposed project.

## Required Pre-proposal (Letter of Intent)

The American Heart Association is piloting double blind peer review for the 2024 Innovative Project Award pre-proposal review. Pre-proposals are reviewed for the proposed research idea only. While some identifying information will be collected within ProposalCentral, it will be for AHA use only and will not be shared with reviewers. [See pre-proposal instructions.](#)

## Budget

Award: \$100,000 per year, including 10 percent indirect costs

The award may be used for salary and fringe benefits of the principal investigator, collaborating investigator(s), and other participants with faculty appointments, and for project-related expenses, such as salaries of technical personnel essential to the conduct of the project, supplies, equipment, computers/electronics, travel (including international travel), volunteer subject costs, data management, and publication costs, etc. The proposed budget must be justified in the application.

Award Duration: Two years.

Total Award Amount: \$200,000

## Abbreviated Proposal

The Innovative Project Award proposal is limited to five pages (does not include literature/references cited).

## Restrictions

- AHA does not permit resubmission of a previous Innovative Project Award application.
- Resubmission of a prior application to the AHA Innovative Research Grant program for an Innovative Project Award will not be accepted.
- An applicant may submit more than one Innovative Project Award application; each proposal to an AHA innovative program (Innovative Research Award and Transformational Research Award) must have clearly distinct aims.
- In addition, applicants to this program may submit one Transformational Program Award application, and one investigator-based application (Career Development Award, Established Investigator Award, or Merit Award) per fiscal year.
- The Innovative Project Award may be held concurrently with another Association award.
- Innovative Project Awards are not renewable. The award may be held more than once by a single investigator provided the projects are separate in nature and concept.
- Awards are not intended to supplement or duplicate currently funded work.
- The project submitted may have no scientific or budgetary overlap with other funded work.
- If you provide preliminary data, the proposal will be disqualified.
- Postdoctoral fellows and others in research training positions at time of application must obtain a faculty appointment by the award activation date.

# Innovative Project Award Peer Review Criteria for Invited Full Proposals

Applicants should never contact reviewers regarding their applications. Discussing the content of an application or attempting to influence review outcome will constitute a conflict of interest in the review. Reviewers must notify the AHA if an applicant contacts them.

To judge the merit of the application, reviewers will comment on the following criteria. Fully address these in your proposal.

1. **Innovation:** Assessment of the proposal's innovative nature -- Is the proposal innovative for the investigator and not a logical next-step? Is the proposal original and have the potential to ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements that will accelerate the field of cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular research? For example: Does the proposal challenge existing paradigms and present an innovative hypothesis or address a critical barrier to progress in the field? Does the proposal develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area?
2. **Impact:** Does the proposal have a high probability of sustained and powerful influence on the research field(s) of study? How does this proposal relate to and support the mission of the American Heart Association: to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives? This potential impact assessment will be based primarily on the Summary for Non-scientists. This assessment will be factored into the Impact peer review criterion, which will account for 5-10% of the overall priority score.
3. **Significance:** Does this proposal address an important problem directly related to cardiovascular and/or cerebrovascular disease? If the aims of the application are achieved, will scientific knowledge or clinical practice be significantly impacted? Will there be an effect on the concepts, methods, and technologies that drive this field?
4. **Approach:** Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, integrated, well-reasoned and appropriate to the aims of the proposal? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

5. Investigator: Is the principal investigator appropriately trained and suited to carry out this work, even if a new area of investigation? Does the investigative team bring complementary, appropriately qualified, and integrated expertise to the proposal (if applicable)?
  
6. Environment: Does the environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Does the proposal demonstrate that resources will be available to complete the project? Does the proposed benefit from specific unique features of the environment, or subject populations, or employ useful collaborative arrangements?