



## 2026 Innovative Tinnitus Research Grants Program

### About the American Tinnitus Association

Since 1971, the American Tinnitus Association (ATA) has been the nation's leading organization dedicated to improving the lives of people who suffer from tinnitus. Guided by our core values of compassion, credibility, and responsibility, we provide strategies and resources that support relief, prevention, and effective management for the millions affected by this condition.

ATA brings together patients, researchers, healthcare professionals, industry partners, and policymakers to advance scientific understanding of tinnitus and accelerate breakthrough discoveries.

### Our Commitment to Research

Finding a cure for tinnitus is our highest priority, and rigorous research is essential to achieving this goal. Since launching our grants program in 1981, when little tinnitus research existed in the United States, ATA has invested more than \$7 million to advance treatments and cures. Funded entirely by donations, our grants provide critical seed funding that helps researchers generate preliminary data, launch innovative pilot studies, and secure larger federal awards.

ATA is committed to advancing the tinnitus research field through three strategic goals:

1. Attracting more researchers to the field by providing funding commensurate with the impact and importance of tinnitus research.
2. Encouraging innovative research that pushes boundaries and explores new approaches.
3. Advancing the careers of early investigators who represent the future of tinnitus research.

Our research program is dedicated to curing tinnitus through innovative science and by supporting the next generation of researchers and clinicians. Through competitive grants and fellowships, we advance technologies and discoveries that lead to effective treatments and interventions that support patients who experience bothersome tinnitus. Each award reflects our commitment to the tinnitus community and the life-changing power of research.

## 2026 Grant Program Overview

ATA Grants support one- or two-year research grants aimed at contributing substantively to the scientific understanding of tinnitus and improving patient care and quality of life for those affected by tinnitus. ATA also offers seed grants to support novel ideas that are not yet supported by preliminary evidence, including fundamental and clinical research, to advance scientific understanding of tinnitus, its treatment, and possible cures. ATA seed grants enable Principal Investigators to obtain quality data that can be leveraged for future grant submissions.

### Important Dates

- **Grant Application Opens:** March 9, 2026
- **Grant Application Closes:** April 24, 2026
- **Project Period:** July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028

### Award Levels

#### Foundational Research Grant

- **Research Focus:** This mechanism supports investigation into the fundamental mechanisms of tinnitus, and the identification of biological targets with translational potential in animal or *in silico* models. Maximum **\$100,000/year** in direct costs\* for up to two years.
- Applications from any university, academic medical center, or non-profit institution worldwide are eligible. Applications from for-profit institutions or companies are not eligible.
- The maximum funding for any project is \$220,000 over two (2) years (\$200,000 in direct costs plus up to \$20,000 in indirect costs for eligible US institutions). Multi-year investigations require submission of a satisfactory midterm progress and financial report to receive continued funding. Funding of multi-year projects is reviewed and appropriated on a year-to-year basis.

#### Translational/Clinical Research Grant

- **Research Focus:** This mechanism supports the collection of original data in human participants. Applications may emphasize the development of new biomarkers for the objective assessment of tinnitus. Alternatively, applications may propose research into novel interventions for tinnitus relief. Maximum **\$100,000/year** in direct costs\* for up to two years.

- Applications from any university, academic medical center, or non-profit institution worldwide are eligible. Applications from for-profit institutions or companies are not eligible.
- The maximum funding for any project is \$220,000 over two (2) years (\$200,000 in direct costs plus up to \$20,000 in indirect costs for eligible US institutions). Multi-year investigations require submission of a satisfactory midterm progress and financial report to receive continued funding. Funding of multi-year projects is reviewed and appropriated on a year-to-year basis.

### **U.S. Pilot Data Grant**

- Research Focus: This mechanism supports junior investigators whose tinnitus research requires acquisition of pilot data, or experienced scholars seeking to build a research portfolio related to tinnitus.
- Maximum **\$25,000** in direct costs\* for one year.

*\*Direct costs include salaries of research personnel; purchases of essential supplies and equipment, including drugs and services, and anything else that can be reasonably inferred to directly contribute to project success. For US institutions, up to 10% of direct costs (up to \$10,000/year for research grants and \$2,500 per year for Pilot Data grants) may be requested in addition to direct costs to support indirect expenses; indirect costs may not exceed this cap under any circumstances.*

## Grant Recipient Responsibilities

### **Progress Reporting**

ATA values transparency of research results and is committed to keeping the tinnitus community informed and engaged throughout the lifecycle of research projects we sponsor.

- One-Year Projects: Recipients will be required to submit a final progress report at the completion of the project period.
- Two-Year Projects: Recipients will be required to submit a midterm progress report at the end of Year 1 and a final progress report at the completion of the project period. Release of funding for Year 2 is contingent upon receipt of the midterm progress report and determination of acceptable progress toward project milestones.

### **TRI 2027 Conference Participation**

All grant recipients funded in FY25 and FY26 are expected to present their research at the 2027 Tinnitus Research Initiative (TRI) Conference in Washington, DC, September 15-18, 2027, hosted by the American Tinnitus Association. One travel award of **\$2,500** will be provided per grant recipient in addition to the awarded grant amount to support the primary investigator's attendance and presentation at TRI 2027.

This requirement ensures that ATA-funded research contributes to the broader scientific conversation and provides primary investigators the opportunity to engage with the international tinnitus research community, share findings, and build collaborations. In exceptional circumstances where the cost of travel and accommodations significantly exceeds this amount, ATA may be able to provide additional compensation on a case-by-case basis.

### **Public Engagement**

Grant recipients are expected to participate in at least one public engagement activity in collaboration with ATA during their grant period to communicate their research to the tinnitus community. This may include a live Q&A session, video presentation, podcast interview, or blog post in collaboration with ATA. Timing and format are flexible and will be determined in consultation with awardees.

## Data and Intellectual Property

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

Each funded organization retains ownership of all intellectual property developed by or on behalf of that organization under ATA funding, in accordance with the organization's applicable intellectual property policies.

ATA has the right to publicly disclose research progress in press releases, announcements, and other communications, subject to the funded organization's advance approval if any such public disclosure will occur prior to publication of the applicable results.

### **Data Sharing Requirements**

Each funded organization must agree to share project results, data (de-identified where applicable), reagents, and other research tools developed under ATA funding with other researchers for non-commercial use. This sharing advances the understanding of tinnitus and maximizes scientific and patient impact.

## Eligibility

Applications are open to all researchers, regardless of career stage or international status. Applicants should submit their proposal under the appropriate funding level and comply with the instructions outlined in this document.

Projects involving a member of the ATA Scientific Advisory Committee or Board of Directors and their laboratory are eligible for ATA research grants. However, these applicants may not participate in the review process for the corresponding grant type and must recuse themselves when the ATA Board of Directors votes on funding decisions.

## Questions?

For questions regarding the application process, documentation requirements, scientific priorities, eligibility requirements, or any other aspect of the ATA Innovative Tinnitus Research Grants Program, please contact: [grants@ata.org](mailto:grants@ata.org).

# Application Process

## How to Submit

ATA Grant Applications must be submitted through ProposalCentral following the instructions outlined in this document. Guidelines for creating an application can be found here: <https://docs.proposalcentral.com/CreateApp.pdf>.

## Review Process

ATA grant applications are reviewed by the ATA Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), an international team of researchers and clinicians that advises ATA staff and board members on all scientific matters. Final approval is voted on by the ATA Board of Directors.

## Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

**Significance:** Does the proposed work advance the field of tinnitus research and clinical care? Is the work relevant to the mission of the ATA grants program, as outlined above?

**Impact:** Does the research have potential or direct clinical applications? What is the probability that the proposed research will lead to a cure or treatment for tinnitus?

**Approach:** Are the specific goals appropriate for the funding period? Does the proposal include appropriate methodology to complete the study, a clear description of data collection, and adequate explanation and justification of goals?

**Resources:** Are the facilities and environment adequate to complete the proposed work? Does the proposal identify an appropriate team of researchers?

**Note:** *For all grants, priority is given to researchers pursuing projects that could open new lines of inquiry and understanding of tinnitus.*

## Budget Guidelines

Grant funds may not be used for recreational or leisure activities, general education materials unrelated to the proposed research, personal or living expenses, or travel that does not directly support research objectives. Expenses outside the approved budget scope are not eligible for reimbursement without prior written authorization from ATA.

# Application Instructions

ATA Grant Applications should be submitted through [ProposalCentral](#). Guidelines for creating an application can be found here: <https://docs.proposalcentral.com/CreateApp.pdf>

The following describes the sections that comprise the ATA Grant Application. The instructions below must be followed for applications to be eligible for review. Required sections are marked with an asterisk\*.

## Section 1: Title and General Information

*Provide basic information about your application.*

- **Project Title\*:**
  - Provide a project title that does not exceed 200 characters, including the spaces between the words.
- **Type of Proposal\*:**
  - New Proposal – a proposal that has not been funded by ATA
  - Continuation – a previously funded proposal applying for continued funding
    - If you select “Continuation,” please provide your current ATA award number
- **Resubmission\*:**
  - Is this proposal a resubmission? – yes or no
  - Prior Proposal – for resubmissions, select the appropriate proposal from the dropdown menu. First-time applicants should select ‘Prior Proposal Not in ProposalCentral’
- **Requested amount of funding\*:**
  - Funding Mechanism – select the appropriate funding mechanism for your proposal. Award levels can be found on the second page of this document.
  - What is the total budget requested?

## Section 2: Download Templates and Instructions

*Access instructions and templates that may be needed for your application.*

- Application Instructions

- Legal Policy\* — *All applicants must sign and agree to the ATA legal policy. If state laws prohibit you from signing the ATA legal policy as written, please submit your signed application with revised legal language that is acceptable to your institution.*
- IRS W8BEN Form
- IRS W9 Form

### Section 3: Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal

*Share your proposal with the necessary contacts for your application.*

- Provide access to co-investigators, departmental officials, and/or grants administrators to receive system notifications and view or edit the proposal. Refer to pages 5 and 6 of the [Proposal Central guidelines](#) for exact instructions.

### Section 4: Principal Investigator

*Provide relevant background information about the Principal Investigator.*

- Principal Investigator: Select 'Edit Professional Profile' to make profile changes
  - Select appropriate Principal Investigator from dropdown
  - Select 'Edit Professional Profile' to make profile changes
- ORCID iD: ATA strongly encourages providing an ORCID iD. ORCID iD connects researchers with their professional information, ensuring recognition of their work. Please see [orcid.org](http://orcid.org) for more details.

*Describe the Principal Investigator's role in the proposed research.*

- Narrative Biography: (Do not exceed 1,000 characters.)
  - Briefly describe the Principal Investigator's relevant work experience. Factors may include aspects of training; previous work in this research topic or related topics; and technical expertise. You may cite up to four publications or research products that highlight your experience and qualifications for this project. Research products can include, but are not limited to, audio or video products; conference proceedings such as meeting abstracts, posters, or other presentations; patents; data and research materials; databases; educational aids or curricula; instruments or equipment; models; protocols; and software or netware.
- Team Capabilities: (Do not exceed 1,500 characters.)
  - Provide a summary of the expected contributions from each team member involved in the project. If there are multiple Principal Investigators, provide

reasoning for the approach. Provide detail regarding the roles of each team member as it relates to administrative, technical and scientific responsibilities.

## Section 5: Institution Information & Contacts

*Provide information about your institution, describing the facilities and how they will support your proposed research.*

- Institution and Contacts:
  - Using the ProposalCentral portal, select the lead institution for this proposal. The portal will automatically populate the required fields.
- Facilities: (Do not exceed 2,000 characters)
  - Identify the facilities to be used and other resources that are directly applicable to the proposed work. Details should focus on the institution where the proposed research is to be conducted instead of listing all potential facilities accessible by the investigators of the proposed work.

*Provide contact information of officials at your institution to coordinate administrative details related to the grant application.*

- Required Institution Contacts:
  - Signing Official
    - Provide the email address of the Signing Official (SO). A SO has institutional authority to legally bind the institution in grant-administration matters by providing signature approval on grant application submissions. The SO monitors grant related activities within the extramural organization and may have several titles. The SO can also create additional accounts for personnel at their institution, including new signing official accounts.
  - Sponsored Programs Officer
    - Provide the email address of your Sponsored Programs Officer. A Sponsored Programs Officer is responsible for authorizing proposals for submission and for interpreting, negotiating, and accepting contracts and grants for sponsored projects funded by federal and state agencies, foundations, and other public and private sources.

## Section 6: Project Summary and Keywords

*Summarize your project and provide relevant keywords to ensure the selection of appropriate reviewers.*

- Lay Summary: (Do not exceed 1,500 characters.)

- Provide a summary in layman’s terms of your research proposal.
- Include the project’s broad long-term objectives, specific aims, and brief description of the research design.
- **Do not include** any confidential or proprietary information – if awarded, the lay summary will become public information.
- Write in plain language, so a non-scientist or patient member of the tinnitus community can understand the importance of the project.
- Keywords:
  - List any keywords that relate to your application to assist reviewers in associating your application to related materials and publications.
  - Provide at least 5 keywords that are appropriate to the proposed project. There is no limit to how many keywords you can choose. However, select keywords with care as they will be used to facilitate selection of appropriate reviewers.
  - If you cannot find keywords that sufficiently represent your proposed research, you may provide additional options in the above section titled “Other Keywords.” Be sure to include enough keywords in the text box to meet the minimum of 5 total keywords.

## Section 7: Budget Period Detail

*Provide the requested budget with justification of planned expenses.*

- Allowed expenses include salaries of research personnel; purchases of essential supplies and equipment, including drugs and services; and, for US institutions, indirect costs up to 10% of direct costs (not to exceed \$10,000/year). Indirect costs should be listed under "Other Expenses."
- Grant funds may not be used for travel or living expenses; leisure or recreational activities; information; education; or printing and publication costs.
- The maximum funding for any project is \$220,000 over two (2) years (\$200,000 in direct costs plus up to \$20,000 in indirect costs for eligible US institutions). Award information can be found on the last page of this document.

*Estimate the costs to be incurred over the grant period in the event the grant is awarded.*

- Personnel Costs: Provide information about personnel who will contribute to this research proposal
  - Name
  - Role

- Effort
- If receiving salary from this proposed research, include the following:
  - Base salary
  - Requested salary
  - Requested fringe rate
- Non-Personnel Costs:
  - For the applicable categories (equipment, supplies, and other expenses) provide the following information:
    - Description
    - Subcategory
    - Cost

## Section 8: Assurances and Certifications

*Describe any funding that may overlap with the proposed work to ensure that ATA funds are uniquely used to support the proposed work.*

- List active and pending support for key personnel that may overlap with the proposed work. For each instance of overlapping funding, provide the source of funding, title of the project, project status, start and end dates, annual direct costs, project summary, and a description of the overlap with the submitted proposal.

*Provide assurances on key ethical and biological resources.*

- You may wish to submit a copy of your IRB/IACUC approval or approval request, but this is not required at time of application. If your proposal is funded, relevant IRB and/or IACUC approval will be required prior to dispersal of funds.

## Section 9: Attachments

*Required attachments are marked with an asterisk (\*).*

- 1. Introduction to Revised Application** (if applicable)  
If this grant is a resubmission of a proposal previously submitted to and reviewed by ATA, a one-page description of changes may accompany the application. Applicants are encouraged to detail any improvements between the applications.
- 2. Research Narrative\*** (required)  
Provide the Research Proposal as a single PDF document that is no longer than 7 pages, including the sections outlined below. Use headers and sub-headers as appropriate to designate sections.

- **Specific Aims:** Provide a scientific summary of your research proposal. Include the project's broad long-term objectives and specific aims. Include a description of the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals.
- **Background, Preliminary Studies, and Significance:** Summarize previous research in this area and identify the gaps in knowledge your work will address. Describe the significance and relevance to patients with tinnitus. Preliminary data are not required but encouraged to demonstrate feasibility.
- **Research Design and Approach:** Proposals must clearly define the research design and methodology for the proposed work, as well as an analysis plan to accomplish the aims.
  - Define expected results and alternative outcomes. See [NIH Guidelines](#) for general guidance when writing research design documents.
  - A recruitment plan must be clearly defined if using human subjects in research. A power analysis is encouraged to ensure appropriate study design to detect meaningful effects and meet statistical standards.
  - Refer to the Review Criteria section to ensure the proposed research design addresses the areas to be evaluated and scored by ATA's Scientific Advisory Committee.
  - *Figures and Images:* Figures and legends must fit within the 7-page limit. Published figures may be referenced in text but cannot be replicated without author consent.
  - *Literature Cited:* Include an alphabetized list of citations used throughout the application. References do not count against the 7-page limit of the Research Proposal but should not exceed one page.

### 3. **Legal Requirement\*** (required)

All grant applicants must sign the legal agreement outlined in the online application. If state laws prohibit you from signing the ATA grant application as written, please submit your signed application with revised legal language that is acceptable to your institution.

### 4. **Biosketch\*** (required)

Use the NIH Forms-H Non-Fellowship biosketch for the Principal Investigator. If appropriate, include a biosketch for other key personnel making major contributions to the project.

### 5. **Glossary and/or Abbreviations** (optional)

- **Glossary:** For terms that are not commonly known, applicants may provide a brief description of terms used often in the main text to assist with ease of understanding.

- Abbreviations: In addition to defining abbreviations in the main text, applicants are encouraged to provide a list of all abbreviations to assist reviewers.

**6. IACUC Approval or Copy of Filing** (optional)

**7. IRB Approval or Copy of Filing** (optional)

## Section 10: Demographic Information

*Provide basic demographic information to contribute to improving our understanding of the populations and characteristics of applicants to the ATA Innovative Grants Research Program.*

## Section 11: Data Sharing and Access Plan

*Describe how you plan on storing and sharing data collected from the proposed work.*

- Date Plan:
  - Describe how you plan to make data gained from this project publicly available in the future. If appropriate, include data sharing costs in the budget. (Do not exceed 2000 characters)
- Repository:
  - Select the appropriate data repository to which you plan to submit your data. You may choose from the list of data repositories, or you may provide justification for an alternate repository.
- Data Plan Opt-Out Request:
  - If a data sharing plan is not included as part of the application, the applicant must provide an 'opt-out' request. The request should include a rationale for why it is unnecessary or inappropriate. (Do not exceed 2000 characters)
  - Exemption Grounds: check all that apply to your data plan opt-out request
    - Intellectual Property Grounds
    - Financial Grounds
    - Human Subjects
    - Superseding Regulations Grounds
    - Other

## Section 12: Required E-Signatures

*Route your application to the appropriate personnel for their electronic signatures.*

## Section 13: Validate

*Complete an automatic validation of your application to ensure all required components were submitted.*

## Section 14: Submit

After validating your application is complete, submit your application.