Annual Open 2024
APPLICATION GUIDELINES

ALTERNATIVES
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION

PART I – GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The mission of the Alternatives Research & Development Foundation (ARDF) is to fund and promote the development, validation, and adoption of non-animal methods in biomedical research, product testing, and education.

KEY DATES:

- **The deadline for proposal submission is 11:59 pm (ET) on April 19, 2024**

- Recipients will be notified July 22, 2024

- Funds will be distributed by August 1, 2024

- The preferred project period is August 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025, however, projects may start as late as November 1, 2024. All projects must be completed in one year (from the start date).

The maximum award amount is $40,000 (including indirect costs). Only non-profit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)), educational and/or research institutions, or a foreign equivalent, are eligible to receive Annual Open grant funds.

PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR PROJECTS THAT:

- Use intact, non-human vertebrate or invertebrate animals

- Use monoclonal antibodies produced by in vivo methods

PROPOSALS WILL BE EVALUATED ON:

- The extent to which the project would contribute to significantly reducing or replacing laboratory animals, and

- The scientific merit and feasibility of the proposed project

PREFERENTIAL CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO PROPOSALS THAT:

- Are from U.S. institutions or organizations

- Utilize in silico or in vitro methods with human cells or tissue

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MATERIALS/REAGENTS:

- If antibodies will be used, information regarding the source(s) and production method(s) must be clearly described in the proposal (see Application Requirements). ARDF prefers non-animal methods of generation as well as production.

- Investigators are strongly encouraged to minimize or avoid the use of serum or medium supplements obtained from non-human vertebrates (for example, fetal calf/bovine serum). The type and source of all culture supplements must be clearly described in the proposal (see Application Requirements). ARDF recommends investigators consider using the FCS-Free Database (fcs-free.org) as a resource.

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

- Projects may be submitted without prior approval of the appropriate institutional review entity. **However, successful applications must have such approval before funds can be disbursed.**

- Applicants must state their intention if patents, copyrights, or intellectual property rights are expected to be secured from work sponsored by ARDF, in which case ARDF expects to retain an interest, financial and otherwise, in the work product. The extent of the interest is negotiable.

- ARDF encourages the publication of funded research and expects awardees to submit at least one abstract for consideration (e.g., a conference presentation, call for papers, etc.) during the funding period.

- Any publications or presentations resulting from the funded work must include the "Alternatives Research & Development Foundation" in the acknowledgments, with copies sent to ARDF.

- Reporting: an interim progress report is due 7 months after the project start date. The progress report is a webform in Proposal Central that is listed in the project deliverables. A final project report is due 5 months after the project end date (including any no-cost extensions). The final project report should be uploaded to Proposal Central as a Word file or PDF. A separate financial report must also be uploaded to Proposal Central. If funds are not used, ARDF must approve an extension or alternate proposal, or a refund must be issued.

PART II – APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All application information must be submitted using ARDF's online application portal in Proposal Central: https://proposalcentral.com/GrantOpportunities.asp?GMID=222

A. ARDF APPLICATION FORM:

The applicant will need to provide the project title, project period, names and contact information for primary investigator(s), and institution information. Note: The preferred project period is August 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025, however, projects may start as late as November 1, 2024. All projects must be completed in one year (from the start date).

This information should be entered directly into the proposal submission site (Proposal Central).

B. ABSTRACT:

Applicants must submit an abstract (up to 300 words) describing the proposed research and explaining how the project would contribute to reducing or replacing current uses of laboratory animals in biomedical research, product safety testing, or educational demonstrations. It should briefly describe the long-term objectives of the project and include the specific aims.

The abstract should be entered into the appropriate field ("Abstract") in the proposal submission site (Proposal Central).

C. PROJECT PROPOSAL:

The project proposal will be uploaded to the proposal submission site (Proposal Central) as three or four separate documents (PDFs): 1) Research Plan, 2) Budget and Justification, 3) Applicant biosketch/CV, and 4) Relevant Publications (optional). Each file should be uploaded in the correct file location, listed in the dropdown menu after clicking "Attach Files" in the "Uploads" section of the proposal submission site.

1. RESEARCH PLAN:

The Research Plan should be a clear and detailed description of the proposed work that includes the following sections, which should be clearly marked with headings: significance and background, materials and methods, expected results, and references.

NOTE: The Research Plan must be no more than 10 pages, however, references are not included in this page limit. (I.e., the significance and background, materials and methods, and expected results sections cannot exceed 10 pages. There is not a page limit for references.)

1.A. Significance and Background

This section should include a brief statement describing the significance of the project, both in terms of its scientific value and its potential impact on the use of animals in research, testing, or education. This section can also include the long-term objectives and specific aims as well as the background information necessary to highlight the significance of the project.

1.B. Materials and Methods

This section should include a detailed description of the materials and methods to be used in the proposed work as well as supporting information that justifies the selected methods.

NOTE: The Materials and Methods section must include a statement regarding antibody sources and culture media if either will be used (only required if applicable, but if applicable this statement must be included). The statement must clearly describe the source and production method for all antibodies to be used as well as the type and source of all culture supplements. It should include a justification if cell culture media containing animal-derived serum will be used. ARDF recommends investigators consider using the FCS-Free Database (fcs-free.org) as a resource.

1.C. Expected Results

This section should include a description of the expected results and the investigator's plans for analyzing and/or interpreting the results.

1.D. References

This section should include references for any citations that occur throughout the Research Plan. Applicants may use their preferred citation style, however, all references must include the full title of the journal article (or book chapter) being cited.

NOTE: References do NOT count toward the 10-page limit that applies to the Research Plan and there is not a word/page limit for this section.

2. BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION:

A detailed Budget and Justification for personnel, materials, and supplies is required. This section should also describe additional funding related to the proposed project over the past two years, for example, previous grant support related to the proposed work. If applicable, describe additional sources of funding for the project (both currently available or pending award).

This section should be uploaded as a separate document (PDF) using the "Attach Files" button in the "Uploads" section in Proposal Central. ARDF does not require a specific format for the Budget and Justification section, however, most applicants include a table that lists the planned expenditures. This information should be presented so readers can understand the proposed budget quickly and easily.

Applicants should consider the following when preparing the Budget and Justification:

- Funding is for one year, with a default start date of August 1, 2024. If a later start date is preferred, please note this in the ARDF Application Information (above).

- ARDF funds may not be used for tuition, travel, or a principal investigator's salary or salary supplements.

- Publication costs, up to 5 percent of the total requested amount, are permitted expenses.

- ARDF can provide up to 10 percent for indirect costs. Applicants are encouraged to request an indirect cost waiver from their institution(s). If a waiver is not possible, indirect costs must be justified and assurances provided that funds will not support programs contrary to ARDF's mission to replace and reduce animal-based research methods.

- The total of direct and indirect costs may not exceed $40,000.

3. APPLICANT BIOSKETCH OR CV:

A CV is required for the Principal Investigator (PI), who should be listed on the application as the Primary Contact. The NIH Biosketch format is preferred but not required. If the project includes a co-PI, a Biosketch/CV up to three pages should be included for the co-PI as well. Biosketch/CV information for investigators other than the PI (up to three personnel) is recommended but not required, and this information should be no more than one page for each investigator.

The CV/Biosketch section should be uploaded as a single, separate document (PDF) using the "Attach Files" button in the "Uploads" section in Proposal Central.

4. RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS (OPTIONAL):

Applicants are encouraged to submit copies of their prior publications that directly support or are relevant to proposed project. Publications should be compiled into a single PDF document and uploaded using the "Attach Files" button in the "Uploads" section in Proposal Central.

If applicants wish to include letters of support (optional), they should be added to this section and included in the single PDF upload, either before or after any relevant publications (if included).

NOTE: This section (Relevant Publications) is not required. Applications will be considered complete if no file is uploaded for this section.

PART III – TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL PROPOSAL

A proposal will address the goals of the ARDF Annual Open Grant Program if it directly answers the following questions:

- How does the project contribute to **significantly** reducing or replacing laboratory animals?

- How does the proposal demonstrate **practicality** in terms of reducing or replacing the use of animals, not on a theoretical basis to be explored, but to be applied or implemented in the near future?

- How does the project demonstrate **innovation** in replacing or reducing animal use in areas not successfully addressed thus far?

- To which other areas of laboratory animal use in biomedical research, education, or toxicology would the project be **applicable**?

For technical assistance with the grant submission process:
Please contact pcsupport@altum.com or call 800-875-2562 (8:30 am - 5 pm ET)

For programmatic or scientific questions:
Please contact grants@ardf-online.org

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