

Apply for Funding

The Hereditary Disease Foundation provides Postdoctoral Fellowships and Grants to researchers around the world to advance the discovery and development of treatments for Huntington's disease and other brain disorders. Our Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) (/leadership) is composed of over 30 distinguished international scientists who set the scientific priorities for the Foundation. Each year, the Board reviews more than 100 grant and postdoctoral fellowship applications and selects the most groundbreaking research projects for funding.

Click here (<https://www.hdfoundation.org/funded-research-projects>) to see currently funded projects.

The Hereditary Disease Foundation is committed to funding innovative research to cure Huntington's disease and impact other brain disorders. Since 1968, we have been passionate about funding catalytic and paradigm-changing research – including identifying the Huntington's disease marker in 1983 and the HD gene in 1993 – and supporting gene lowering approaches since 2002. We continue to make an impact by funding research that pushes the envelope.

Types of Funding

Postdoctoral Researcher Fellowships: These fellowships are intended to cultivate interest in Huntington's disease research by encouraging promising early career scientists (postdoctoral fellows or up to 7 years past completion of PhD). HDF awards **two-year fellowships of up to \$100,000 per year**. Beginning with the 2023 funding cycle, fellowships will be funded for a maximum of 2 years in total funding. *Awarded postdoctoral researchers cannot apply for additional postdoctoral funding.*

Research Grants: Grants provide more experienced researchers with seed funding to enable them to collect the preliminary data needed to obtain major, long-term funding from other organizations, including the National Institutes of Health. The Hereditary Disease Foundation awards **one-year grants of \$100,000**. With (1) evidence of substantial progress and clear, compelling rationales for continuation; (2) a written request by the grantee for a one-year extension of the project as part of the grant progress report; and (3) competitive review by the HDF review committee, a subset of grants will be selected for the renewal for an additional year of funding of up to \$100,000 (maximum possibility of one year renewal).

Please feel free to share this notice with any researchers who may also be interested in applying.

Overview of Application Process

The Hereditary Disease Foundation accepts Letters of Intent (LOIs) for Postdoctoral Fellowships and Grants every year – see key dates (<https://www.hdfoundation.org/apply-for-funding-2024#keydates>) below. HDF provides funding to researchers to advance the discovery and development of treatments for Huntington's disease and other brain diseases.

The process of applying for funding for either a Postdoctoral Fellowship or a Research Grant starts with an applicant's submission of an LOI through ProposalCentral (<https://proposalcentral.com/GrantOpportunities.asp?GMID=262>) **between July 15, 2024 and September 3, 2024**. On ProposalCentral, click 'Apply Now' to begin your LOI.

LOIs should have a direct application to Huntington's disease. All LOIs related to Huntington's disease are reviewed by a committee comprised of members of the SAB, who independently review and score each LOI. Only the LOIs that the SAB review committee consider the most impactful will have a full application requested.

HDF funds Research Grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships at the post-graduate level. HDF grant and fellowship applicants must present a specific research plan. Please read FAQ (<https://www.hdfoundation.org/apply-for-funding-2024#FAQ>) before proceeding.

Key dates for 2025 applications*

Letter of Intent Submission Dates

July 15, 2024 - September 3, 2024 (BY 11:59 PM ET)

Invitation to Submit Full Application

October 17, 2024

Application Deadline

December 2, 2024 (BY 11:59 PM ET)

Funding Decision

Late winter, 2025

Start Date

March-April, 2025

*These dates are current for the 2025 Funding Cycle.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) About Grants

Before You Apply

HOW ARE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS REVIEWED?

The Hereditary Disease Foundation Scientific Advisory Board (/leadership) sets the scientific priorities of the Foundation, reviews fellowship and grant applications, and selects the most impactful research projects for funding. The SAB is comprised of over thirty of the world's leaders in basic science and clinical research, and includes clinicians specialized in Huntington's disease, and leading scientists from the biotech and pharmaceutical industry. Former and current members of our SAB include Nobel Prize recipients, National Academy of Science members, Royal Society members, American Academy of Arts and Sciences members, President's National Medal of Science recipients, MacArthur Foundation Genius Prize recipients, National Institutes of Health Directors, National Genome Research Institute, NIH Directors, and Society for Neuroscience Presidents.

Reviewers are selected from both the SAB and the wider scientific community for appropriate scientific expertise. Applications submitted by members of HDF's SAB members are reviewed by external reviewers in addition to one HDF-associated reviewer.

WHAT IS THE REVIEW PROCESS?

The Hereditary Disease Foundation is nationally and globally renowned and recognized by leaders in the fields of medicine and science. The HDF is dedicated to finding a cure for HD. LOIs should have a direct relevance to Huntington's disease research. Only the most meritorious applications are funded.

HDF fellowships and grants are among the most competitive and prestigious in the field. After initial review of LOIs, short-listed applicants are invited to submit full applications. All LOIs related to HD are reviewed by a committee comprised of members of the SAB, who independently review and score each LOI. LOIs that the review committee deems unlikely to produce a competitive and impactful proposal will not be invited to submit a full application. Feedback on LOIs is not provided, but reviewer comments for full applications will be provided to the applicants. These applications undergo thorough primary review by at least three reviewers. Each application is scored based on the criteria below, and a composite score is determined for each application. The committee's review process is strictly confidential. Approximately half of the applications are reviewed by the full SAB panel based on the merit of the proposal and strength of the application.

WHAT CRITERIA ARE USED TO JUDGE AND SCORE APPLICATIONS?

Each application is reviewed based on the following criteria:

- 1) **RELEVANCE:** Is the proposed project relevant to understanding fundamental disease mechanisms in Huntington's disease or advancing disease-modifying therapeutics?
- 2) **NOVELTY:** Are the hypotheses, approaches, and expected findings novel?

3) SIGNIFICANCE: If the proposed study is completed, will it make conceptual advance in understanding HD pathogenic mechanisms? Is the work feasible and will it provide new knowledge or broadly useful new tools or datasets for the HD field? Will it provide innovative therapeutic strategies or candidate therapies for HD?

4) SCIENTIFIC PREMISE: Is the proposed study based on strong evidence derived from literature or preliminary data?

5) APPROACH: Is the proposed scientific plan appropriate and feasible for addressing the main question(s)? Are the methodologies established? Are the experiments rigorously designed with sufficient statistical power? Are the numbers of animals/subjects proposed adequate to draw sound conclusions?

6) APPLICANT: Is the applicant qualified in conducting and/or supervising the proposed study? Does the applicant have a track record in the research field relevant to the proposal?

7) ENVIRONMENT: Does the applicant's institution provide sufficient support to ensure the proposed studies can be completed in an optimal and timely manner? Are the facilities and equipment made available to the applicant for the study?

8) BUDGET: Is the budget appropriate for the proposed plan? Is there budget overlap with applicant's other ongoing grants.

WHO RECEIVES HEREDITARY DISEASE FOUNDATION FUNDING?

The Hereditary Disease Foundation gives highest priority to funding investigators with the most innovative and impactful proposals to advance Huntington's disease research and therapeutics. Moreover, HDF gives priority to the early career stage investigators, including postdoctoral fellows, who are committed to a career in HD research.

DOES THE HEREDITARY DISEASE FOUNDATION SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS?

Yes! The Hereditary Disease Foundation funds applications for Postdoctoral Fellowships and Grants for researchers working in laboratories around the world.

WHEN CAN I APPLY FOR AN HDF GRANT OR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP?

The Hereditary Disease Foundation accepts and reviews Letters of Intent and Funding Applications once each year. Please see Key Dates (<https://www.hdfoundation.org/apply-for-funding-2024#keydates>) for the most current key dates for Letters of Intent, Application deadlines, as well as review and decision dates. All dates are subject to change.

MENTORSHIP CRITERIA FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Postdoctoral Fellowship applications must include a letter of support from their mentor.

WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Postdoctoral Research Fellowships: Postdoctoral Fellowships are up to \$100,000 per year for two years. This includes salary, supplies, equipment, and benefits. HDF will provide salary support based on the NIH Guidelines (<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/salary-cap-stipends>) per year for the two years as well as additional funding for supplies, equipment, and benefits. The

recipient should commit full-time professional effort towards the funded project. Budget for salary should take precedence and should be allocated prior to funding for NIH-approved direct costs that may include benefits, supplies, equipment, publication costs etc.

THE HEREDITARY DISEASE FOUNDATION DOES NOT PAY INDIRECT COSTS (overhead costs).

Please include amounts for Year 1 and Year 2 along with combined Total for both years.

Fellowships are for two years.

Research Grants: Grants are up to \$100,000 for one year for salary, supplies, equipment, and benefits. In general, our funding can be used to cover NIH-approved costs listed as directs (i.e. salary, benefits, equipment, supplies, publication costs, etc.). THE HEREDITARY DISEASE FOUNDATION DOES NOT PAY INDIRECTS (overhead costs). Those listed as co-investigators can request salary support. Investigators and co-investigators should each provide an NIH-style biosketch (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>). Collaborators do not need to provide biosketches and cannot request salary support. Incomplete applications will be reviewed as submitted. Hyperlinks should not be used in the LOI or research proposal.

DOES THE HEREDITARY DISEASE FOUNDATION OFFER SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR SCIENTISTS?

The Hereditary Disease Foundation presents two special prizes each year – the Leslie Gehry Prize for Innovation in Science and the Nancy S. Wexler Young Investigator Prize. Each award is nominated and selected by Prize Committees.

The Leslie Gehry Prize for Innovation in Science (</leslie-gehry-prize>) is presented annually to recognize an outstanding scientist whose originality, spontaneity, precision, and rigor have advanced the search for treatments and cures for Huntington's disease and other brain disorders. The award was created by the acclaimed architect and HDF Founding Director Frank Gehry and his family in memory of his late daughter.

The Nancy S. Wexler Young Investigator Prize (<https://www.hdfoundation.org/nancy-s-wexler-prize>) honors the pioneering spirit, relentless dedication, and enduring optimism of Nancy S. Wexler, PhD, President of the Hereditary Disease Foundation. It is presented annually to an early career researcher whose work reflects the highest caliber of excellence, diligence, and creative thinking.

Post-Award

IS IT POSSIBLE TO TRANSFER MY GRANT TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION?

Yes. If you would like to transfer your grant to another institution, please request an Institutional Transfer of Grants/Postdoctoral Fellowships form by emailing Sarah Hernandez, PhD (<mailto:sarahhernandez@hdfoundation.org?cc=julieporter%40hdfoundation.org>), Director of Research Programs.

Prior approval from the Hereditary Disease Foundation is required for the transfer of the grant. A grantee's transfer of Institution may involve the transfer of equipment purchased with grant funds. A grantee may transfer his/her grant from a U.S. institution to a foreign institution. The transfer request must be made before the anticipated start date at the new institution. The transfer form can be directly uploaded to ProposalCentral and will require:

- A letter from Grantee requesting the transfer to include: Grantee's Name, Grant type and year, Current and New Institution, Date of Transfer, Transfer Type (Pre-Award Transfer - applies to grantees who have not received any funding from the HDF, or Active-Award Transfer - applies to grantees who have received at least one payment from the HDF).
- A relinquishment letter from the current institution
- A final financial report from the current institution, including the total amount of funds to be transferred to the new institution (please send the financial report with a check for any unexpended funds, made payable to the Hereditary Disease Foundation) (for active-award transfers only)
- An acceptance letter from the institution stating willingness to administer the grant
- A letter from an on-site mentor in the grantee's new department stating willingness to act in the capacity asserting that the project can continue as stated in the original grant application (for Postdoctoral Fellowships only)
- New mentor's CV/NIH biosketch (for Postdoctoral Fellowships only)
- A revised budget, if necessary
- Updated contact information (mailing address, phones, emails) for both the grantee and mentor(s)
- Updated contact information (name, mailing address, phone, email) for grants office

HOW DO I REPORT MY PROGRESS?

Each grantee or postdoctoral fellows must submit a progress report every six months and a final report at the completion of the project that is satisfactory to the HDF's Scientific Advisory Board Leadership.

All reports, both interim and final, are due biannually in the Fall and Spring. Interim and final reports should be submitted through ProposalCentral. Each report should include a 150-word non-technical, lay summary of your current progress. Reports need to be submitted in order to initiate all payments. Payments are made based on approval of this progress report.

If the Grantee becomes aware that a progress report cannot be submitted on a timely basis the Grantee must promptly notify the HDF by contacting Sarah Hernandez, PhD (<mailto:sarahhernandez@HDFoundation.org?cc=julieporter%40HDFoundation.org>), Director of Research Programs.

WHAT ARE MY BUDGET REQUIREMENTS?

The Grantee and/or the Research Institution must maintain records of expenditures of the grant or fellowship, including out-of-pocket costs, and provide expenditure reports to HDF upon request. Budgets should be submitted through ProposalCentral.

The proceeds of the grant or fellowship must be used exclusively for the research project identified in the grant award letter.

CAN I MAKE REVISIONS TO MY ORIGINAL BUDGET?

Yes, changes can be made to your original budget proposal. If the Grantee becomes aware that (1) the research project should be modified, or (2) other research personnel are needed for the research, please promptly notify us by contacting Sarah Hernandez, PhD (<mailto:sarahhernandez@hdfoundation.org?cc=julieporter%40hdfoundation.org>), Director of Research Programs. Acceptance of any modification shall be at the sole discretion of the HDF.

Postdoctoral fellowship funding can be considered for reallocation in some cases and will be considered in a case-by-case manner. Allocation adjustment should allow for salary to remain at least 75% of the slated funds.

WHEN DOES MY GRANT BEGIN?

Once your grant has been approved for funding, you will receive a Funding Award Letter where you will be requested to select a start date for your project. Awarded Grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships can be initiated between March-April of the awarding year.

CAN I EXTEND MY PROJECT DATE PAST MY PROJECT END DATE?

Yes, if no additional funds are required from the Hereditary Disease Foundation and the project's originally approved scope will not change, the Grantee may extend the final completion date one time for a period of up to 12 months beyond the original approved completion date.

Such an action affirms that additional work remains to be completed on the project and that resources are available to continue to support the project, or that additional time is needed to provide for an orderly closeout. Please submit No Cost Extension requests through ProposalCentral no later than 3 months prior to your project completion date.

HDF will notify you of the acceptance of your extension upon approval by our Scientific Advisory Board.

ARE GRANT AWARDS GUARANTEED?

HDF reserves the right to terminate payment of the grant or fellowship at any time for any reason. If the Grantee desires to terminate the research project, the Grantee must promptly notify the HDF by contacting Sarah Hernandez, PhD (<mailto:sarahhernandez@hdfoundation.org?cc=julieporter%40hdfoundation.org>), Director of Research Programs and repay all unexpended amounts of the grant or fellowship.