Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award
A program of the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation

Invited Full Proposal Guidelines   **2022 Grant Cycle**

> Full Proposal Deadline:
> Tuesday, May 17, 2022
> 12:00 Noon, U.S. ET

Award Period: November 1, 2022 – October 31, 2024

Up to five $300,000 two-year awards will be made to independent junior faculty in nonprofit academic, medical, and research institutions in Massachusetts as well as at Brown University and Yale University.

Junior faculty who are beyond 4 years from their appointment to Assistant Professor and have not yet received tenure are eligible to apply for this award. There is an upper eligibility limit at 9 years past the first independent faculty appointment. Those investigators with tenure, or who are beyond the 9-year limit, are ineligible to apply for this award. Eligible applicants must have less than $750,000 per year in combined federal and non-federal funding in direct costs, excluding the institutional start-up package and other intramural support. **If you receive a tenure-level promotion with a start date on or before November 1, 2022, or if you are notified on or prior to September 1, 2022 of funding that will put your annual total above $750,000 per year, or if your proposed project is funded by another source, you are no longer eligible for this award and must withdraw your application.**

Health Resources in Action promotes diversity of gender, ethnicity, and perspectives, among many other forms, across its grant programs. Applications from women and people of color are particularly encouraged.

Research projects must be conducted at the site within the School/College or other entity that is submitting the application. Award funds will go to that entity. For example, if an applicant submits from Harvard Medical School, the research project must be conducted at Harvard Medical School and not at an affiliate location (such as Massachusetts General Hospital or Boston Children's Hospital).

The Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award is managed by The Medical Foundation at Health Resources in Action (HRiA). HRiA is a nonprofit organization in Boston that advances public health and medical research.

Program Overview and Mission

The Smith Family Foundation is committed to effecting permanent positive change in the lives of the residents of Greater Boston, particularly individuals and families in economically disadvantaged communities. In the area of health, the Foundation supports the advancement of biomedical research and the expansion of access to high-quality health care at safety net institutions serving low-income individuals and communities of Greater Boston.

The Smith Family Foundation Odyssey Award was created in 2017 to fuel creativity and innovation in junior investigators in the basic sciences. The Award supports the pursuit of high impact ideas to generate breakthroughs and drive new directions in biomedical research. The awards will fund high-risk, high-reward pilot projects. **Projects should be conceptualized as a novel research line and a distinct and novel off-shoot from the applicant's current research. The review committee weighs this criterion heavily in making final funding decisions.** Both the applicants as well as any institutional review committees should bear this in mind in preparing/vetting applications.

Research Focus

The two-year Award supports established junior faculty engaged in basic biomedical research. Investigators in the physical sciences (physics, chemistry, and engineering) whose projects focus on biomedical science are also encouraged to apply. While biomedical research projects involving human subjects, data, and samples are eligible, clinical trials research is beyond the scope of this Program.

In recognition of the importance of research collaboration within the scientific community, collaboration is an additional, but not required, positive ancillary factor. These projects may involve researchers within and/or outside the applicant's institution.

Eligibility Requirements

United States citizenship is not required.

Applications will be accepted from full-time, independent faculty at academic research institutions who have not yet achieved tenure or its equivalent by the funding start date of November 1, 2022. Applicants must have received their first independent faculty appointment on or between November 1, 2013 and November 1, 2018.

We understand that there is a continuum of independence at many institutions beginning with emerging independence at the Instructor level. However, to level the playing field and ensure that all applicants have only one window of eligibility, we are considering the tenure track Assistant Professor appointment to be the first independent faculty appointment.

If an Applicant has been on medical or family leave, or if research was interrupted for other reasons, this period of absence does not count towards eligibility. Please address any gaps in work history in the Personal Statement on the Biosketch. The Office of Sponsored Research must confirm the leave of absence as well as applicant eligibility.

Change in Tenure Status
Applicants who have been nominated for promotion to a tenure track Associate Professor level position or its equivalent, with a promotion date on or before November 1, 2022 **must notify HRiA by contacting SmithOdyssey@hria.org as soon as possible and must notify HRiA of the final decision regarding the promotion as soon as this is known**. To be fair to other applicants and to respect the time of the reviewers, we strongly encourage applicants to withdraw their Smith Odyssey applications as soon as receipt of tenure is reasonably assured. In no case will applicants be allowed to accept a Smith Award if they have received a tenure-level promotion by November 1, 2022.

Current, Pending and Post Award Funding
Concurrent Federal and Non-Federal Support
Applicants are ineligible if, at the time of application, they will have combined federal and non-federal funding totaling $750,000 or more in direct costs in either of the years (11/1/22 - 10/31/23 or 11/1/23 - 10/31/24) of the two-year Smith Odyssey Award. This figure refers to external funding only and not an Applicant's start-up package, other intramural support, or the Smith Award.

Pending Federal and Non-Federal Support
If notified on or prior to September 1, 2022 that they have been successful in securing federal or non-federal grant support, which, when combined with other support, totals $750,000 or more in direct costs in either of the first two years of the Smith Award, applications to this program will be ineligible for review. Notification of funding **after** September 1, 2022 will not impact eligibility for a Smith Family Award. **It is the responsibility of all applicants to contact SmithOdyssey@hria.org as soon as any new funding is received.**

Applicants who have pending R01s or other large applications to the NIH and other agencies are encouraged to submit proposals to the Smith Family Foundation.

Please note that if a Smith Odyssey award is made, neither the Institution nor the awardee may accept funding that results in an overlap of funding for the Smith Odyssey project. **If the work proposed in the Smith Odyssey proposal is funded by another source before the Smith awards are announced, the applicant must notify HRiA at SmithOdyssey@hria.org and withdraw the application immediately.**

Award Selection Criteria
The Scientific Review Committee uses the following criteria to evaluate applications:

Innovation
- The project is a creative and novel research line <u>and</u> is *a new and distinct off-shoot from the applicant's current research*. Innovation is an essential prerequisite to a favorable score.

Impact

- The proposed research addresses an important problem and has high potential for driving new directions in research and/or generating a biomedical breakthrough in the longer-term. May be high risk.

Applicant

- The applicant has high potential to successfully carry out the proposed research. (Applicants are encouraged to propose projects in areas outside their primary expertise.)
- The Institution has demonstrated an appropriate level of commitment to her/him.
- Collaboration is an additional, but not required, positive ancillary factor.

Research project

- Hypothesis is clearly stated, based on sound precedents and a clear rationale, and supported by relevant literature. Preliminary data may be minimal.
- Objectives are technically feasible, and personnel are qualified to carry out the proposed research

Innovation Score

In addition to assigning a numeric score for overall impact, reviewers will assign a color rating for innovation that is used to guide discussion at the review meeting. This metric is based on the following criteria, **both** of which must be met to receive a favorable score:

- Is the proposed work a creative and novel research line? Does it have potential to establish a new ground-breaking direction of inquiry or research paradigm?
- Is this a distinct or novel off-shoot from the applicant's current research?

Proposal Writing Tips

Dream big. Odyssey projects must be a distinct and novel off-shoot from your current research. Reviewers do not look favorably on proposals that look and feel like a shrunken, repurposed R01. The program is intended to give you the freedom to be creative and ambitious.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to prioritize good grant writing in drafting their applications to maximize their chances of being funded. The Review Committee is composed of a diverse group of researchers who can assess a wide range of biological proposals, including biologists whose work focuses on cancer genetics, the microbiome, regenerative biology, transcriptional regulation, mitochondria, neuroscience, epigenetics, and immunology. Characteristics of a well-written proposal include the following:

- Main points are communicated clearly and concisely. The big picture of what will be done, why it is important, and how it will advance the field is clear.
- The language is understandable to a general scientific audience. When jargon must be used, it is clearly explained, and complex technical points are put in context.
- Specific aims and concise/essential background, experiments, and analysis plan are connected with clear logic, and key choices are justified. Sufficient detail about the approach is provided that the reviewers can clearly understand the proposed experiments.
- The novel and innovative aspects of the work are clearly explained and put in context. Impact and novelty in the field _should not be overstated_. Reviewers typically check this.

- For applicants in crowded fields, the proposal makes clear how the study will bring a fresh perspective.
- The explanation of how the proposal is distinct from the applicant's ongoing work is clear and supported by the biosketch.
- The longer-term goals of the project are clear, including where it is expected to take the research program in 5-10 years.
- Goals and metrics of success are well-defined.
- Any scientific or budgetary overlap with other current or pending support is clearly described, including a clear plan to avoid duplication of funding.

Applicants are encouraged to seek grant writing advice within their institutions and externally, and to read examples of successful proposals, such as those found in the grant-writing tip sheets for NIH research grants. Institutions and colleagues may also be willing to provide examples of well-written and successful grant applications.

Suggested resources:
Secrets to Writing a Winning Grant: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03914-5
NIH grant writing tips:
https://www.nlm.nih.gov/ep/Tutorial.html
https://www.nimh.nih.gov/funding/grant-writing-and-application-process/grant-writing-tips.shtml
https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/format-and-write/write-your-application.htm#Important%20Writing%20Tips

Notification to Applicants
The online application system will notify applicants once the Full Proposal upload is received. Final notification to Award Recipients will occur in late October followed by an emailed Award Notification and Award Agreement. Unsuccessful applicants will also be notified at that time.

PLEASE NOTE: If the Applicant is unable to accept the Award, the Award will not be transferred to another investigator involved in the research project.

Acknowledgement of Support
The Award Recipient and Institution are encouraged to announce receipt of this Award entitled, the **Smith Family Foundation Odyssey Award** and credit financial support to the **Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation, Newton, MA.**

Publications
Publications or presentations resulting from research supported by this Award must also acknowledge support from the **Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation, Newton, MA.**

Terms of the Award
Please download "Terms of the Award" from https://hria.org/tmf/SmithOdyssey for information regarding use of the Award funds, indirect costs, payment schedule, reporting schedule, and other Awardee and Institutional requirements. A listing of **Frequently Asked Questions** may also be found at this site.

Application Instructions

APPLICATION DEADLINE
Tuesday, May 17, 2022 *(12:00 PM, U.S. Eastern Time)*

Before beginning the online submission, **download and save the "Odyssey Application Forms" which can be found at https://hria.org/tmf/SmithOdyssey.**

Use one of the following links to begin or continue the application process:

Continue a Saved Application: https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM

The following sections must be completed for the online submission:

1. **Institution's Tax ID Number**

2. **Eligibility Quiz**

3. **Application Data**: Institution where proposed research will be conducted, Applicant's contact information and educational background

3. **Key Personnel**: *This is read-only based on the names entered in the Initial Proposal. If this section needs to be edited, please email the Grants Officer with the correct information at SmithOdyssey@hria.org.*

4. **Research Project Information**: Project Title; Key Words; Research Project Summary; Non-Technical Summary; Non-Technical Overview; Experimental System(s), Key Tools and Techniques to be Utilized; Description of Novel Research Direction; and Brief Biographical Statement

5. **Institutional Contact Information:** Department/Division Chair and Authorized Institutional Representative

6. **Letter of Recommendation**: Follow the online instructions, as well as page 8 of this document, for obtaining your confidential letter of recommendation.

7. **Attachments**: (1) PDF Proposal and (2) Excel Budget
   - **PDF Proposal Upload**: The following documents and forms must be converted into ONE PDF file, in the order noted, for upload. This document must be named LastName, FirstName.pdf (for example, Doe, Jane.pdf). Make sure all pages are numbered sequentially starting with the Cover Sheet as Page #1.
      - **Application Cover Page**
      - **Table of Contents:** Follow the Table of Contents and number ALL pages consecutively.
      - **Research Project Summary, Performance Sites, Non-Technical Overview, and Description of Novel Research Direction:** Complete these sections according to the

instructions on the template. The Research Project Summary will be posted on our website if the project is funded (*suggested length of 200 words*).

- o **Key Personnel:** Collaborator information (this should match the Key Personnel tab on the online form. If this section on the online form needs to be edited, please email the Grants Officer at SmithOdyssey@hria.org

- o **Research Proposal:** A maximum of 5 pages is permitted, **not inclusive of a bibliography of references**. Proposal sections include Specific Aims, Background and Significance, Preliminary Data *(if available)*, Research Design and Methods, Potential Limitations, Project Timeline.
    - ▪ Include all figures, graphs, tables, and images related to the project within the 5 pages. For any projects involving collaboration, please include a brief description of these efforts within the 5 pages.
    - ▪ Format this section with **Arial 11** as the font and size. Use single or double line spacing within paragraphs, double line spacing between paragraphs, and 0.75 inch or larger margins on all four sides. Figures, legends, and tables may use a font size of 8. Include the Applicant's name at the top of each page.

- o **Grants Program Budget Template:** Complete this form for the two years of the project. Total support from the Smith Family Foundation, including overhead, is $150,000 per year for two years.
    - ▪ Indirect costs (institutional overhead) may not exceed 5% of direct costs or $7,143 per year. Please fill in all relevant sections of this form and provide clear itemization and detail within line items as requested.
    - ▪ For projects whose total costs exceed $150,000 per year, list the other sources of support in the "Other Support" tab.
    - ▪ Applicants must disclose all current, pending, and completed support regardless of relationship to the current Smith request on the "Other Support" tab.
    - ▪ **The Budget Template must be (1) included in the PDF for committee review and (2) uploaded separately as an Excel document** to be used in expenditure tracking if the grant is funded. Please ensure that the numbers you have entered are identical in both formats, or we will not be able to process the application. *Incomplete forms will not be processed.*

- o **Applicant Biosketch:** Use the new, updated March 2021 form for your NIH Biographical Sketch (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm).

- o **Letters of Collaboration(s)***:* Collaboration letters must be forwarded to the Applicant for inclusion in the document upload. Applicants are required to submit letters confirming the availability of resources outside their institutions, and a letter confirming any significant collaborative relationship, either within or outside the Applicant's institution. These are brief letters (up to one page) addressing the collaboration. These letters are included in the PDF upload because they do not need to be kept confidential.

- **Grants Program Budget Template:** The budget form should also be attached in the online application system as a separate Excel file. The budget figures in the Excel file must exactly match the figures included in the PDF upload. The Excel file must be named LastName, FirstName_Budget.xlsx (for example, Doe, Jane_Budget.xlsx).

Please note: Supplemental materials are not permitted and will be removed (e.g., letters of collaboration or recommendation).

Letter of Recommendation Upload

ONE confidential letter is required which must be submitted through the online system, from a Recommender of your choice. The Recommender does not need to be based at your institution. We encourage you to choose someone who knows your work well, and who can present some aspect of your professional background or project that we might not appreciate otherwise, and/or who can explain why you are a great match for this funding opportunity and its focus on innovation. Department Chair letters are no longer required for this program. Only one Recommender letter may be submitted.

The Applicant must send an email request via the online system and the Recommender must use the website link provided in the email to upload their letter of recommendation. It is critical that you contact your Recommender early on in the application process to allow them sufficient time to prepare and upload the letter.

Instructions for Sending an Email Request to a Recommender:
- On the "Recommenders" page, input the names and emails of the one Recommender.
- Check the "Send Email" box for the specific individual you are contacting.
- Click on the "Send" button.
- This will bring you to the "Notify Selected Recommenders" page. Here, you will customize the subject line and email message for your Recommender.
- Draft your email.
- Click on the "Send" button again. This will send the email to your Recommender. Included in the sent email is an automatically generated link that will allow him/her to upload their confidential letter.
- After sending your email, you will be redirected back to the "Recommenders" page.

IMPORTANT: It is the Applicant's responsibility to monitor the status of the online recommendation prior to the application deadline. Applicants will not be able to complete the application process if the letter is not submitted. Late submissions will be rejected.

Additional Information:
- Notify your Recommender to expect the email request from you. If they do not receive the email within the same day as the request, they should check their Junk Mail folders.
- The Recommender must use the link provided in the email request and log-in with the email address that the email was sent to.
- The letter of recommendation must be in PDF format on institutional letterhead. Letters must not be password-protected.
- When the Recommender submits the letter, it will become part of your application. You may log into your My Account page (https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM) to view the status of the letter. The file will appear on this page but you will not be able to open or read it.
- If a Recommender is unable to find the email with the link or if you want to change the Recommender, use the My Account page to access your application, remove that request and restart the process.
- Paper copies of the letter of recommendation will not be accepted.