Edward N. and Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation Awards Program in Age-Related Macular Degeneration Research

Applications Due:
Thursday, July 7th at 12 PM ET

Information Session
June 14, 2022
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM ET

- Tina Ta, MS,
  Grants Officer
- Lindsey Carver, MA,
  Senior Grants Officer
- Kim Lezak, PhD,
  Managing Director

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Program Mission & Research Focus

Program Mission

The Edward N. & Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation was created in 2002 to advance the health of older adults through the support of direct service projects and medical research on diseases and disorders affecting older adults. In keeping with the Foundation's mission, the goal of the 2023 Awards Program is to **support preclinical research that will lead to improved therapies and therapeutic strategies for individuals suffering from age-related macular degeneration (AMD)**.

Research Focus

Successful research proposals should fall along the preclinical research spectrum such that they can be "carried out using cell or animal models of disease; samples of human or animal tissues; or computer assisted simulations of drug, device or diagnostic interactions within living systems"[1]

Funding areas include, but are not limited to:

1. The discovery and testing of small molecule, genetic, and other therapies directed at promising targets associated with AMD

2. Local drug delivery systems and neuroprotective strategies

3. New imaging modalities or computational studies that improve treatment strategies and outcomes

Basic research and clinical trails are outside the scope of this program.

Program Overview

- **Award Period**: February 15, 2023 – February 14, 2025

- **Funding Amount**: $500,000 over 2 years

Initial Stage Application Deadline	Invitation to Full Stage Application	Full Stage Application Deadline	Award Start Date	Progress Report Due	Award End Date	Final Report Due
July 7, 2022	August/September 2022	October 2022	February 15, 2023	December 2023/2024	February 14, 2025	April 2025

Eligibility

- The administrative lead applicant must hold a faculty appointment at a non-profit academic, medical, or research institution in the United States.

- PIs must be independent investigators with demonstrated institutional support and specialized space and facilities needed to conduct the proposed research.

- Applicants and key personnel may not have funding for a similar project.

- Individuals who are current Thome Foundation Awards Program in Age-Related Macular Degeneration or Alzheimer's Disease Research awardees at the time of Initial Proposal deadline are not eligible to apply for the 2023 grant cycle.

- Each PI may only submit one application.

Review Criteria

Significance, Innovation, and Impact

- Seeks to improve therapies and therapeutic strategies for individuals suffering from AMD
- Seeks to move insights from basic sciences towards clinical practice
- Creative and addresses a critical scientific or therapeutic barrier/roadblock that will open a new avenue for AMD therapies

Research Project

- Based on sound precedents and clear rational
- Objectives are technically feasible
- Research methodology is realistic and sufficiently powered
- Proposed work suggests next steps upon the finding of positive, negative, or null results
- Timeline is comprehensive, activities described are related to the project completion and enhance the effectiveness of the scope of work
- Budget is realistic and appropriate

Applicant & Co-Investigators

- Applicant's background and experience is well-suited for completion of the proposed work
- Roles of the Co-Investigators are well-defined and aligned with the background and skills necessary for the successful completion of the research
- Application shows a strong commitment to fostering a positive research culture, including activities that support a diverse, equitable, and inclusive research environment

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

Clarity

- "Translatability of animal models to human AMD disease unclear."

- "The scope of the studies purposed is quite ambitious. While there are several questions posed in the proposal and endpoints are defined, it is not clear what will constitute a successful outcome and how the data will be used going forward."

- "While the logical structure and motivation of the aims are clear, the scope and nature of the experiments are not defined."

Research Focus

- "*New Mouse Model* does not model AMD well. This is an interesting basic science question, but it is not really ready for translation yet."

- "The power of the study is not evident – no sample calculations are presented for numbers needed in these groups."

- "The feasibility of the *fantastic sequencing* and other new techniques in the proposal have not been determined. Additional preliminary data is needed."

Funding Overlap

- "It is unclear if there is overlap between this application and current/pending funding."

Proposal Writing Tips

- Be reflective of the program goals and review criteria

- Be clear, concise, and logical

- Use language understandable to a general scientific audience (avoid jargon when possible)

- All personnel included should be clearly justified

- Be realistic (budget, work, timeline)

- Seek feedback from others

Questions?

- Program Website: https://hria.org/tmf/thomeamd/
- Contact: ThomeAwards@hria.org