

Eligibility

- 1. Is the maximum of two and a half years of an independent faculty appointment flexible?**
Unfortunately, this is not flexible.
- 2. Who do I contact within my institution for the selection of the two applicants?**
Each academic institution, hospital, School, College or free-standing research facility conducts their internal review process differently so check with your Office of Sponsored Research or similar entity on how the competition will be handled.
- 3. Are faculty appointments outside the United States or in other institutions (in the same or different fields) counted toward the two and a half year ceiling?**
All previous faculty appointments, including any independent research position in a for-profit company or similar professional setting, count towards eligibility requirements.
- 4. My faculty appointment is at an out-of-state institution, but I am currently in a temporary position in Massachusetts. May I apply for this grant?**
No. The Applicant's faculty appointment must be at the institution which will administer the Award.
- 5. I have two private sector awards at \$200,000 each. Would this preclude me from applying?**
If the direct costs for these two awards added to your other federal and non-federal support is less than \$500,000 in either of the first two years (12.1.18 – 11.30.19 or 12.1.19 – 11.30.20) of the Smith Award, you are eligible to apply.
- 6. I have a PhD, was appointed as Instructor (a faculty position) following my fellowship training and just recently was promoted to Assistant Professor. If I use Instructor as my first faculty appointment, then I have exceeded the eligibility window. May I use the Assistant Professor appointment instead?**
For PhDs, the first independent faculty appointment is the first faculty appointment after completing postdoctoral fellowship training. Because each institution views the "Instructor" title differently, the applicant's Department Chair must clearly confirm and document when the Applicant became independent with committed institutional support. Typically, this includes designated laboratory and office space, core facility and staff support, and access to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, including those on training grant support.
- 7. Are leaves of absence counted towards the two-and-a-half-year ceiling?**
No. If you were not working during a specific period, you would not include that time when determining your eligibility. The Department or Division Chair's letter, must confirm both the duration of the leave of absence and applicant eligibility.

8. I am currently an Associate Professor. May I apply for this grant?

Typically, Associate Professor is not a first faculty appointment. However, if this is your first faculty appointment following completion of fellowship training and you meet the eligibility requirements for the PhD or MD (page 2 of the Application Guidelines), we will accept an application from you.

9. Is the \$500,000 limit in direct costs (in either of the first two years) inclusive of a Smith Family Foundation Excellence Award or Odyssey Award?

No, this figure does not include the Smith Excellence Award or Odyssey Award.

10. If I have \$500,000 or more in direct costs during the first year of the Excellence Award and nothing in the second year, will I still be eligible?

No, you are not eligible.

11. If I have been designated as a “short-term” PI on an R01 that was originally awarded to someone else who has left the institution, would I be eligible?

As long as you did not write or compete for this award, you would be eligible if the direct costs allocated to you from the R01, combined with your other federal and non-federal funding, do not total \$500,000 or more during either of the first two years of the Excellence Award.

12. May I submit a project that involves human subjects?

Although clinical trials are outside the scope of this program, basic research using human specimens would be eligible.

13. My project involves modeling the impact of different diseases on different populations and how this affects healthcare decisions. Would this be considered “biomedical research?”

The Excellence Awards support traditional laboratory/bench research and do not support health services research.

14. May I list collaborators or a Co-PI on this submission?

Collaborators and Co-Investigators may be included on your application but the Excellence Awards Program does not recognize a Co-PI.

15. Shall I include the C.V. of a collaborator?

Do not append a C.V. for a collaborator; that person should include a brief letter of collaboration and describe the particular expertise that s/he is bringing to the project.

16. If I am offered the Award but cannot accept it, may it be transferred to a Co-Investigator or other individual significantly involved in the project?

No. The Excellence grant can only be awarded to the Applicant who originally submitted the grant.

Application Instructions

1. Where do I find my Institution's Tax ID?

Contact your Office of Sponsored Programs for this information.

2. Does the budget page reflect the actual cost of the project or only what is requested from the Smith Family Foundation?

This page summarizes what is being requested from the Excellence Awards Program. If the project uses additional support from other sources, those amounts should be combined and noted in the last row, labeled "Other Support," on the "Budget Summary and Key Personnel" form.

3. Must we commit a certain percentage of time to the Excellence project?

The Program does not require that a specific percentage of time be allocated to the project. Although salaries requested for the Excellence project must be in proportion to the percent effort on this project, percent effort may exceed the amount of salary support requested.

4. Are subcontracts allowable costs and where do we note these expenses on the budget page?

The PI is allowed to pay subcontractors and these subcontracts can be listed as a line item under "Other Expenses."

5. Is graduate student tuition an allowable budget expense?

If the graduate student has a significant role on the proposed project, tuition may be charged as a personnel expense.

6. Is there a Biosketch format that I should use?

Applicants must use the latest NIH Biographical Sketch form, <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

7. In preparing the proposal section, may I use the NIH continuation pages?

Yes, this is acceptable.

8. What is the difference between the "Authorized Institutional Representative" and the "Institutional Officer to Receive Funds?"

The Authorized Institutional Representative is responsible for research oversight and is often in the Office of Sponsored Programs. This person signs off on the application to ensure that you and the Institution have met the eligibility requirements. The Institutional Officer to Receive Funds is typically the Fiscal Officer and receives award payments, prepares fiscal reports and oversees other financial requirements of your grant. The Institutional Certification of Application will now be completed electronically by the Authorized Institutional Representative (see Application Guidelines, page 5, item 5). Please see the "Online Submissions" section below for information on the electronic process.

9. To whom should letters of recommendation be addressed?

They may be addressed to the "Smith Family Scientific Review Committee."

10. My Department Chair will not be able to submit his letter by the online deadline. Can this letter be sent later on?

No. All materials must be submitted through the online system and by the application deadline. Unless all the confidential recommendation letters have been received by the online system, you will not be able to submit your application. Please contact your Recommenders early in the process and follow-up with them to make sure that they upload their letters in advance of the deadline.

11. My recommender is trying to log-in and upload his letter of recommendation. He keeps getting this error message: “Thank you for taking the time to respond to a request for recommendation. However, you cannot provide input at this time. Please contact the applicant if you have any questions.”

The error message you described is usually what happens when the recommender is trying to use **your** email address to log into the system, rather than his/her own where they received the email request from you. For example, if you used the online portal to send Dr. John Smith at john.smith@gmail.com a request to write you a letter, he would need to log into the system using that **exact email address** – john.smith@gmail.com

12. Can any letter be mailed separately?

No. The two or three letters of recommendation must be submitted online by the application deadline; otherwise, the system will not allow the Applicant’s materials to go through. Any collaboration letters must be forwarded directly to the Applicant for inclusion in the document upload.

13. Are the headings mentioned in the Research Proposal section required or may other section names be included?

These sections are required but other subheadings may be added if you wish.

14. Does my non-technical project summary need to be included in the Document Upload?

No, it does not.

15. Are any signatures required on the Face Sheet for the Document Upload?

Signatures are no longer required on the Face Sheet. The Institutional Certification of Application will now be completed electronically (see Application Guidelines, page 5, item 5). Please see the “Online Submissions” section below for information on the electronic process.

Online Submissions

1. I have started and saved an application but when I try to log in, I cannot find my previous application and need to start a new one.

There is a separate log-in for saved applications. Instead of using the link for, “Start a New Application,” click the link that states, “Continue a Saved Application.” After logging in, you

will see the name of the application that you started. Click on that link and then continue the submission process.

2. Do I also mail a paper copy of the PDF upload?

No, please do not mail a paper copy.

3. How do I complete the Institutional Certification of Application section? Do I need to transfer the application to my Authorized Institutional Representative?

Please see pages 5-7 of the Application Guidelines for a complete list of steps.

4. Where do I get an ORCID ID number?

Please visit <https://orcid.org/> to register for an ORCID ID. You are not required to provide an ORCID ID to submit your Smith Excellence application.

Award Statistics

1. What are my chances of receiving a Smith Award for Excellence in Biomedical Research?

Typically, up to 10% of submissions are funded.

2. Who were the successful applicants from the previous grant cycle?

Please see the listing of “Award Recipients” at <https://hria.org/tmf/Smith>.

Additional Questions

1. How do I combine and convert multiple documents into one PDF file?

Directions for combining and converting all requested materials into ONE PDF document for upload: Please name this file: LastName, FirstName.pdf. For example, Jane Smith’s file would be named, Smith, Jane.pdf.

The following instructions apply to ADOBE Acrobat Version 9. For instructions on combining files in Adobe Acrobat versions 5, 6, 7 or 8, visit the following website:

<http://etd.byu.edu/creation/PDFs/Adobe%20Acrobat%20PDFs/UsingAdobeAcrobat.pdf>

If you have Word documents to include, you must first convert everything to PDF.

1. Open the PDF that serves as the basis of the combined file.
2. Choose Document > Insert Pages.
3. Select the file to insert.
4. In the Insert Pages dialog box, specify where to insert the document (before or after the first or last page, or a designated page). Click OK.

Smith Family Awards Program for Excellence in Biomedical Research
Frequently Asked Questions, 2018 Grant Cycle

5. When you have added all the files to be converted and have the files in the desired sequence, choose Save As, and type a new name for the merged PDF. This file must be named, LastName, FirstName.pdf. For example, Jane Smith's file would be named, Smith, Jane.pdf.

For answers to any issues not covered in the program guidelines or the FAQs, please contact Lindsey Phelan, Grants Officer, at LPhelan@hria.org.