

Edward N. & Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation
Awards Program in Age-Related Macular Degeneration Research
Bank of America, N.A. Trustee

Invited Full Proposal Guidelines

2020 Grant Cycle

Full Proposal Online Submission Deadline:

Wednesday, September 9, 2020

12:00 PM, Eastern Time

The Thome Foundation Awards Program in Age-Related Macular Degeneration Research is a two-step proposal process. After the Initial Proposal phase, selected applicants are invited to submit a Full Proposal.

The Full Proposal process requires an online submission. The Full Proposal consists of an Online Application, Application Face Sheet (with signatures), Project and Non-Technical Summaries, ten-page Research Proposal, Applicant Biosketch, Co-Investigator Biosketch(es) (if applicable), Budget and Justification Forms, Department or Division Head Letter, and Letter(s) of Collaboration (if applicable).

Notification to Applicants

Applicants will be notified of the final funding decisions in January 2021.

Award Period:

February 1, 2021 – January 31, 2023

Size of the Award

Up to nine \$500,000 two-year grants (\$250,000 per year) will be made to independent investigators working in nonprofit, academic, medical or research institutions within the United States. Awards do not cover indirect costs.

Program Overview and Statement of Purpose

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 Awards Program is to support translational research that will lead to improved therapies for individuals suffering from age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

As steward of the Thome Memorial Foundation, Bank of America, N.A. works with The Medical Foundation's Scientific Review Committees to select the most qualified candidates. The Medical Foundation at Health Resources in Action (HRiA), is a non-profit organization in Boston that advances public health and medical research.

Research Focus

Successful research proposals will extend recent basic research findings regarding the underlying mechanisms of AMD. Examples of funding areas include, but are not limited to, genetically engineered

animal models, the discovery and testing of small molecule therapies directed at promising targets including immune-, inflammation-, or lipid-related pathways associated with AMD, local drug delivery systems, and neuroprotective strategies.

Basic research and clinical trials are outside the scope of this Program. However, clinical studies that involve the evaluation of new imaging modalities with no potential risks to human subjects are eligible.

Applicant and Research Project Eligibility

1. Applicants must submit an Initial Proposal and be invited to submit a Full Proposal.
2. Applicants must hold a faculty appointment at a non-profit academic, medical, or research institution in the United States.
3. Individuals who are current Thome Foundation Awards Program in Age-Related Macular Degeneration Research awardees at the time of Initial Proposal deadline are not eligible to apply for the 2020 grant cycle.
4. Only one application may be submitted per applicant.
5. Applicants do not need to be nominated by their institutions.
6. United States citizenship is not required; visa documentation is not required.

Eligibility is not limited to those investigators currently working in age-related macular degeneration research; scientists who have conducted research exploring the biologic causes of related disorders and/or similar translational research programs are encouraged to apply.

The sponsoring institution must accept responsibility for the scientific, administrative and financial management of the overall project including any subcontracts involved in the project.

Award Selection Criteria

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

- Qualifications of the applicant and prior experience in conducting innovative research;
- Hypothesis that is clearly stated, based on sound precedents and supported by relevant literature;
- Objectives that are well thought out, realistic, and technically feasible;
- Research methodology, data collection, and data analyses that are feasible and appropriate to the proposal's aims;
- Quality and originality of the research project; and
- Potential of the research project to lead to effective treatment of AMD.
- Preference will be given to originality of ideas, regardless of faculty seniority.

Terms of the Award

Please download the Terms of the Award from www.tmfgrants.org/ThomeAMD for information on use of the grant funds, indirect costs, payment schedule, reporting schedule and other Awardee and Institutional requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions may also be found on this site.

Please continue to the next page for Application Instructions.

Instructions for Invited Full Proposal Application

Full Proposal Online Submission Deadline:

Wednesday, September 9, 2020
12:00 PM, Eastern Time

NOTE: Invited applicants to the Full Proposal received an email with a link to access the online application. Please contact LCarver@hria.org if you have misplaced this email.

SECTION I: Online Submission:

Please **review and update** any of the following sections for the second online submission:

- Applicant Data: Institutional information, Applicant contact and educational background
- Research Project: Project Title, Keywords, Project Summary, Non-Technical Summary

The following section **must be uploaded** to the online application form:

- Attachment: A PDF document must be uploaded. See instructions below.

Attachment Instructions for PDF: The documents listed below must be combined and converted into **ONE PDF** file for upload to the Online Application. Name this document LastName, FirstName.pdf (for example: Smith, Jane.pdf).

Application Forms and a Budget Spreadsheet are required for the uploaded PDF document. They are downloadable here: www.tmfgrants.org/ThomeAMD

1. **Application Face Sheet:** The Face Sheet is the first template provided in the Application Forms. It must be completed and signed by the Applicant and the Office of Sponsored Programs or the Institutional Officer administratively responsible for the oversight of the project.

The signature of the Applicant on the Face Sheet will confirm their responsibility for obtaining any required human subjects (IRB), animal use (IACUC), or institutional equivalent approvals. In addition, the Institutional Officer's signature will confirm that all eligibility requirements have been met. Endorsement by the Institutional Officer confirms that the Institution will commit to appropriate oversight if the project is funded.

The address for the Institutional Officer to receive funds should be the Lockbox or mailing address of where the award payment checks should be sent.

Once all signatures have been obtained, scan the Face Sheet and use as page 1 of the PDF.

2. **Table of Contents:** Follow the order of the Table of Contents provided in the Application Forms and fill in the page numbers for each section.

3. **Project Summary** (*maximum of 300 words*): Please copy the Project Summary from the Online Application into the Application Form template. The 300-word summary must include the project's broad, long-term objectives and specific aims.
4. **Research Proposal** (*maximum of ten pages, not including references cited*): Outline succinctly the nature of your proposed project and its relevance to AMD.

Within the page limit, include these sections:

- 1) Background and Significance (discuss project impact on AMD and how the project contributes to improving current therapeutic strategies or revealing new therapeutic approaches for individuals suffering from AMD);
- 2) Specific Aims;
- 3) Preliminary data (if available);
- 4) Research design, experimental methods and analytical plan;
- 5) Research limitations and contingencies;
- 6) Projected Timeline of proposed research project

Proposal Format:

- Include at the top of each page the Principal Investigator's full name, degree(s) and Institution.
 - Arial size 11 font must be used in the text of the research proposal section.
 - Any figures, graphs, tables or pictures must be included within the ten pages. For these visuals, the minimum is an 8 point-font size.
 - Use single spacing within paragraphs, double spacing between paragraphs. Margins on all 4 sides must be at least ½ inch wide.
 - Appendices are not permitted, however References Cited should be added to the Proposal (*not included in the 10 page count*)
5. **Budget, Summary, and Justification:** Complete the three tabs in the Excel spreadsheet template (downloadable here www.tmfgrants.org/ThomeAMD). Total support from the Thome Foundation is \$500,000 (\$250,000 each year for the two-year award). Please note that overhead (indirect costs) will not be covered by the award.
 6. **Biographical Sketch of Principal Investigator** (*maximum of five pages*): The most current NIH Biographical Sketch Form must be used.

NOTE for Section D. Research Support: The Edward N. & Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation does not support overlapping aims. Should overlap exist, the pre-existing funded aims should be provided along with a detailed explanation of how this overlap will be resolved. If no overlap exists, please state as such. If needed this disclosure can be up to a page in length. However, Biosketch sections up through Section C should not exceed 5 pages.

If applicable, Co-Investigator Biographical Sketch(es) should be included.

7. **Department or Division Chair's Letter** (*forwarded to the Applicant for upload*): This letter must address the applicant's qualifications to conduct the proposed research independently as well as note the space and

equipment available for the completion of the project. If the applicant is Chair of his/her department, a letter of recommendation from the Dean should be submitted.

8. **Letter(s) of Collaboration** (*if applicable*): When applicable, letters confirming the availability of resources outside the Applicant's institution or letters confirming any significant collaboration may be included (forwarded to the Applicant for upload). These are not additional letters of recommendation.

Important! Out of fairness to applicants who adhere to the guidelines, applications that do not conform to the stated application procedures or that contain more than the specified number of pages or letters will be rejected. Applications that are not properly organized will be rejected.

Contact Information:

Lindsey Carver, Grants Officer
The Medical Foundation at HRiA
LCarver@hria.org