

# The Hilda and Preston Davis Foundation Awards Program for Eating Disorders Research



**Guidelines for  
SENIOR POSTDOCTORAL  
FELLOWS**

**Initial Proposal  
Online Application Deadline:**  
Friday, September 29, 2017  
12:00 Noon, U.S. EDT

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Established in 2009, the Hilda and Preston Davis Foundation was created to “...to advance the development of all areas of the lives of children and young adults...with special emphasis...on those suffering from eating disorders.” The primary goal of The Hilda and Preston Davis Foundation Awards Program for Eating Disorders Research is to support innovative, clinically relevant research that seeks to understand the underlying biology of eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, leading to improved patient care. To meet this goal, the Program provides vital support to Senior Postdoctoral Fellows and Junior Faculty Investigators working in non-profit academic, medical and research institutions in the United States to build a strong workforce dedicated to the etiology of eating disorders, its associated pathologies, and to drive therapeutic and treatment development. Applicants at the Junior Faculty level should refer to the Guidelines for Junior Faculty Investigators.

## **AWARD OVERVIEW**

The new Davis Foundation Awards Program for Eating Disorders Research is designed to distribute up to two (2) Senior Postdoctoral Fellowships annually beginning with the 2018 grant cycle. The funding level for the two-year senior postdoctoral fellowship award is estimated at \$110,000 each, but will be adjusted based upon awardee experience and will be comparable to current NIH fellowship levels. Funding will begin April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2020.

## **RESEARCH FOCUS AND CLINICAL RELEVANCE**

In keeping with the Foundation’s mission, the Program supports all areas of basic and translational research in eating disorders. Obesity research is outside the scope of this program. Proposals are encouraged that address current roadblocks to progress in the eating disorder field and include, but are not limited to, the interrogation of the genetics and associated molecular pathways that are specifically relevant to eating disorder pathology, the development of clinically-relevant mammalian animal models and systems biology approaches that address disease complexity and heterogeneity. Animal model research should be limited to mammals and exploratory clinical trials may be considered.

To advance our understanding of the underlying biology of eating disorders while maintaining relevance to human pathobiology and treatment, proposals will be required to provide support documentation taking the clinical perspective of the proposal into consideration. For example, such documentation will support the relevance of preclinical animal models to the human disease and assessing the appropriateness of proposed neural circuitry or cell-based studies for addressing disease-related questions. These recommended changes in the Program are designed keep the relevance of proposed projects sharply focused on eating disorders.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Hilda and Preston Davis Foundation works with The Medical Foundation at Health Resources in Action (HRiA), to select the most qualified applicants and awardees. HRiA is a nonprofit organization in Boston that advances public health and medical research. The Medical Foundation supports both gender and ethnic diversity across all of its grant programs.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS for SENIOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Senior Postdoctoral Applicants **must meet** the following eligibility requirements by the **Funding Start Date**:

- 1) Hold a Ph.D., M.D., or comparable degree and work in non-independent, mentored, training positions, at a non-profit academic, medical or research institutions in the United States;
  - a) Ph.D. candidates must have completed **at least three (3) years and no more than seven (7) years** of full-time postdoctoral research experience (see definition below).
    - **Postdoctoral research experience is defined** as full-time employment, after receiving one's first doctoral degree, as a mentored postdoctoral fellow in a research laboratory or similar professional experience (e.g. equivalent positions in biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries) five full days each week. All postdoctoral research experience completed domestically and abroad is counted;
    - Exclude any interrupted research time for family or medical leave or for other reasons, from the total years of postdoctoral experience. However, part-time employment may be cumulative towards these eligibility requirements;
    - Must commit at least 90% time to research;
    - Confirmation of meeting these eligibility criteria must be documented by the Mentor;
  - b) M.D. candidates with Clinical Responsibilities:
    - Must have protected time of at least 70% to devote to research;
    - Must be engaged in mentored postdoctoral research;
    - Candidates with an M.D. or combined degree may have **up to five (5) years** of full-time employment (see definition below) since completion of **residency** training;
    - **Full-time employment is defined** as employment following residency (or similar clinical training). For M.D. applicants, periods of **full-time** research training in a degree-granting program (i.e., study for a Ph.D, MPH, or MSc degree) beyond those required as part of an ACGME- approved training program are excluded;
    - Clinicians in fields without formal internship and residency requirements (e.g. PhD Psychologists and PharmD applicants) may have **up to five (5) years** after completion of all clinical education required for licensing in their respective fields;
- 2) Apply under the guidance of a Mentor who is an established investigator with an active research program. **Mentors are expected to be involved** in the planning, execution, and supervision of the proposed research and must submit a Letter of Support including a mentorship plan (see below);

- 3) Research must have clinical perspective, confirmed through a Letter of Support for the project from a clinician with proven experience and qualifications for treating eating disorders (see below);
- 4) Applicants may not hold Career Development Awards or be a PI/Co-PI on federal and non-federal funding (see below);
- 5) Only one applicant per Mentor may apply per application cycle; there are no institutional limitations on the number of applicants who may submit applications;
- 6) United States citizenship is not required; visa documentation is not required.

### **MENTOR'S LETTER OF SUPPORT**

All Mentors **must confirm** the following within their Letter of Support:

- The Senior Postdoctoral Fellow meets all eligibility requirements as stated in the Guidelines.
- Include plans for mentoring the applicant in support of the proposed project, and plans for the applicant's continued progress towards becoming an independent investigator.
- If applicable, Mentors must also confirm an applicant's degree(s) obtained outside the U.S. are equivalent to the M.D., D.M.D., Ph.D., or other doctoral degree.
- If applicable, anything other than full-time experience in fulfillment of these requirements must also be documented.
- See additional detail in the Instructions for Application Submission.

### **CLINICIAN'S LETTER OF SUPPORT or COLLABORATION**

A letter of collaboration or support is required from a qualified clinician and/or clinical advisor that is experienced in the treatment of eating disorders must accompany the application in support of the clinical relevance of the project to eating disorders and their treatment. The letter should also indicate the recommender's relevant clinical background and expertise or experience in treating eating disorders.

- A letter of collaboration or support is required from a qualified clinician and/or clinical advisor experienced in the treatment of eating disorder.
- The letter must outline the clinician's support of the project and its clinical relevance to eating disorders and their treatment.
- See additional detail in the Instructions for Application Submission.

### **CAREER DEVELOPMENT AWARDS**

Senior Postdoctoral Fellow Applicants **may not** hold a concurrent Career Development Award, including an NIH K Award or equivalent, at the time of application or award. **It is the responsibility of applicants/awardees** to contact The Medical Foundation regarding the following:

- Applicants must withdraw their proposals if they receive a Career Development Award or equivalent before the funding start date;
- Awardees must relinquish their award if they receive a Career Development Award or equivalent, and/or a faculty appointment, after the fellowship has been awarded. All outstanding Fellowship funds must also be returned.
- If Applicants are notified of funding **after 9/29/17**, this will not impact eligibility for a Davis Foundation Award. **It is the responsibility of all applicants to contact The Medical Foundation as soon as any new funding is received.**

## **SELECTION CRITERIA for SENIOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS**

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

- Impact on the applicant's professional training and growth towards establishing a successful independent research career in the eating disorders field;
- Career goals and trajectory of the applicant in the eating disorder research field;
- Qualifications of the **Mentor** and the degree of commitment to supervise and train the Applicant during the research period and strength of their Letter of Support;
- Letters of Project Support that demonstrate the importance of the proposed research and clinical relevance to the understanding and treatment of eating disorders;
- Strength of publications relevant to the field of study;
- **Research Proposal:**
  - Hypothesis is novel and/or builds on current knowledge;
  - Proposal reviews the relevant literature;
  - Objectives are well conceived, realistic, and important;
  - Research methodology, data collection, and analytical plan are feasible and appropriate to the proposal's aims.

## **NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANTS**

The Davis Foundation Awards Program is a two-stage proposal process. All applicants will be notified of status in November 2017 and invited applicants will receive instruction to submit a Full Proposal. Funding begins April 1, 2018.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Download and review the following items: [Hria.org/tmf/DavisFellow](http://Hria.org/tmf/DavisFellow)

- **Terms of the Award** - information on use of the grant funds, payment schedule, reporting schedule and other Award Recipient and Institutional requirements.
- **Frequently Asked Questions**
- **Application Forms**

**Continue to the following page for Application Submission Instructions**

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Initial Proposal  
Online Application Deadline:  
Friday, September 29, 2017  
12:00 Noon, U.S. EDT

## SECTION I: ONLINE APPLICATION

Begin a **New** Online Application: [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=SNA&FID=35131](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_738?SA=SNA&FID=35131)

Return to a **Saved** Online Application: [https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_738?SA=AM](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_738?SA=AM)

**The following sections are required within the Online Application:**

- Institution's Tax ID Number
- Eligibility Quiz
- Applicant Data: Institution, Contact, and Educational background information
- Research Project: Project Title, Keywords, Project Summary, Non-technical Summary, Clinical Relevance, Career Trajectory, and Mentor information
- Letters: Please see Section II below.
- Attachments: Please see Section III below.

## SECTION II: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

**Two confidential letters are required and must be submitted through the online system.** They must be from 1) Mentor and 2) Clinician/Clinical Advisor.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to request these letters prior to the Online Application deadline. **Members of the Review Committees give considerable weight to these letters.** Please notify your Recommenders early on in the application process to allow them sufficient time to prepare your letter. It is advisable that you begin an online application immediately, enter the names and emails of the Mentor and Clinician and then send each the email request from the online system. For additional instruction regarding the **monitoring and upload of letters**, please see the last page of this document. Only the requested letters are allowed. Updated letters submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

### **1. Instructions for Mentor's Letter of Support (maximum of four pages):**

- Describe the Applicant's qualifications and provide a clear mentorship plan (included within the four page maximum) stating how the Mentor will be involved in the planning, execution, and supervision of the proposed research, and support the Applicant to further develop his/her independence and promote their scientific career. The mentorship plan must also specify the Mentor's allocation of time and effort in training and support for the Applicant and the proposed research.

- A brief description of the research facilities and equipment available to the Applicant should also be included.
- Mentor must confirm the Applicant's **eligibility**, including: percent of time dedicated to research, number of years of full-time employment or postdoctoral research experience as described in the Eligibility section of the Guidelines. Please explain if other than full-time experience is being considered in fulfillment of these requirements, or if there was time taken for leaves.
- Publication and publication history will be used as criteria to judge the productivity of the Applicant. The Mentor must comment on the applicant's publication record or lack thereof.
- Confirm degrees obtained outside the United States are equivalent to the M.D., D.M.D., Ph.D. or other doctoral degree.

## 2. Instructions for Clinician's Letter of Support/Collaboration (maximum of four pages):

A letter of collaboration or support is required from a qualified clinician and/or clinical advisor that is experienced in the treatment of eating disorders must accompany the application in support of the clinical relevance of the project to eating disorders and their treatment. The letter should also indicate the recommender's relevant clinical background and expertise or experience in treating eating disorders.

- This letter should describe the Clinician's association with the Applicant/project as well as the Clinician's own relevant clinical background and expertise or experience in treating eating disorders.
- Address the applicant's proposed project in terms of clinical relevance and ensure that the proposed work has taken the clinical perspective into consideration.

## SECTION III: PDF ATTACHMENT

**Items A-D must be combined into ONE PDF for upload to the Online Application.**

Please do not add page numbers to PDF prior to upload.

### A. Application Face Sheet:

The Face Sheet must be completed and signed by the Applicant and the Authorized Institutional Representative administratively responsible for the oversight of the project. Once all signatures have been obtained, the Face Sheet should be scanned and used as page 1 of the PDF. Download the Face Sheet Template here: [Hria.org/tmf/DavisFellow](http://Hria.org/tmf/DavisFellow)

### B. Initial Research Proposal (maximum of 2 pages, excluding references cited):

Outline succinctly how the proposed research project will address the program's research focus.

**Within the 2-page limit, include these sections:**

- 1) Significance, Impact and Clinical Relevance to Eating Disorders
- 2) Specific Aims;
- 3) Preliminary data (if available);
- 4) Research design, experimental methods and analytical plan

Research Proposal Format:

- The Principal Investigator's full name should be included at the top right of the page. The name is permitted in the margin as long as it does not exceed the standard paper size.

- Arial 11 font and size must be used in the text of the research proposal section.
- Use single spacing within paragraphs, double spacing between paragraphs, and at least one-half inch margins on all four sides.
- Any figures, graphs, tables or pictures must be included within the research proposal page-limit. For these visuals, the minimum font-size is Arial 8.
- Appendices are not permitted.

**C. Applicant's Biosketch (use the latest NIH biosketch).** Maximum 5 pages.

In the Personal Statement be sure to describe your career trajectory plans as well as your interests and goals with respect to eating disorder research.

**D. Mentor's Biosketch and List of Trainees:** Maximum 6 pages.

Use the latest NIH biosketch, incorporating up to one page listing of previous trainees with their current positions (included in page count)

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*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 materials will be rejected.*

**Contact Information:**

The Medical Foundation at HRiA

617-279-2240

[grants@hria.org](mailto:grants@hria.org)

## ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTION: MONITORING AND UPLOAD OF LETTERS

### Instructions for Applicants to send an email request to your Mentor/Recommender:

Within the online application form, on the “Recommenders” page:

- Input the Mentor and up to two additional Recommender’s names and emails.
- Check the “Send Email” box for the specific individual you are contacting. (Note: the form default is to have all of the Send Email boxes checked off so be careful to uncheck the boxes for the individuals you are not contacting).
- Click on the “Send” button.
- This will bring you to the “Notify Selected Recommenders” page:
  - Draft your email: customize the subject an email message for each individual contact.
  - Click on the “Write Email & Send” button. This will send the email to your selected mentor/recommender(s). Included in the sent email is an automatically generated website link that the Mentor/Recommender **must use** to upload their letter.
  - After sending your email, you will be redirected back to the “Recommenders” page.

### Tips:

- Send Mentors/Recommenders the Guidelines, noting the specific content instructions for the Letters.
- The letter of support must be in a PDF format and official letterhead is preferred. Do not password-protect the letters. All letters must be written in English. Before upload, PDFs should be titled, ApplicantLastNameFirstName(MentorLastName).
- Notify your mentor/recommenders to expect the email request from you. If they do not receive the email(s) within the same day as the request, they should check their junk email folder.
- The mentor/recommenders must use the link provided in the email request and log-in with the email address that the Applicant provided.
- If the mentor/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.
- If a mentor is a recommender for a different applicant, please advise them to confirm they are uploading the correct letter to the correct application.
- When the mentor/recommender submits their letter, it will become a part of your application. You can view the status of your online recommendations each time you log into your My Accounts page ([https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_738/?SA=AM](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_738/?SA=AM)). It is the applicant’s responsibility to monitor the status of the online recommendations prior to the application deadline.
- Only one Mentor’s Letter is allowed. If applicable, any co-mentor letters should be one of the two additional recommendation letters.
- Applicants will not be able to complete the application process if the letters are not uploaded.
- Letters will not be accepted after the deadline.
- Paper copies of the letters of support/recommendation will not be accepted.