



american federation
for aging research

AFAR Grant Programs Overview

Boston University, October 19, 2023

Odette van der Willik, Deputy Executive Director and Director Grant Programs, AFAR



About AFAR

- Founded in 1981
- Mission: To support and advance healthy aging through biomedical research
- 2023 Programs
 - Focus primarily on basic, translational and clinically-relevant research
 - 8 funding mechanisms
 - > 60 investigators – from undergraduate students to full professors
 - > \$12 million
 - 3 NIA-funded networks



Review Process

- Most AFAR programs have a two-tiered review process
- **First stage is Letter of Intent**
 - Administrative review for eligibility and completeness
 - LOIs are reviewed by three members of AFAR's National Scientific Advisory Council (about 300 members)
 - No feedback is provided
- **Second Stage is Full Application**
 - A subset of applicants is invited to submit a full application
 - Review by a Selection Committee; members represent a broad range of expertise
 - Recommendations from Selection Committee go to AFAR Board (and sometimes also program sponsor for final funding decisions)
 - No feedback is provided



Glenn Foundation and AFAR Junior Faculty Grants

- Who is eligible: Independent Junior Faculty, no more than 10 years beyond start of postdoc training. US-based investigators only.
- Research Area: Biology of Aging
- Award: \$150,000 for up to 2 years
- Up to 15 awards
- Deadline LOI: December 18, 2023
- Funding Success rate in 2023: ~ 16%



Sagol Network Geromics Award for Junior Faculty

- Who is eligible: Independent Junior Faculty, no more than 10 years beyond start of postdoc training. US-based investigators only.
- Research Area: Omics-related aging research
- Award: \$150,000 for up to 2 years
- 1 award
- Deadline LOI: December 18, 2023
- Funding Success Rate in 2023: ~ 11% (we will consider competitive Sagol applications for the regular AFAR award)



Hevolution/AFAR New Investigator Awards in Aging Biology and Geroscience Research

- Who is eligible: Independent Junior Faculty, with at least 3 years of independent research. No more than 12 years beyond start of postdoc training. US- and Canada-based investigators only
- Research Area: Biology of Aging and Geroscience
- Award: \$375,000 for 3 years
- Up to 18 awards
- Deadline LOI: 2024 deadline to be determined. Likely in Spring/Summer 2024
- Funding Success Rate in 2022: ~23%



Glenn Foundation Discovery Awards

- Who is eligible: Full time Faculty at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher, especially those who have not previously worked in aging research
- Research Area: Biology of Aging
- Award: \$525,000 for 3 years
- Up to 2 awards
- Deadline LOI: January 15, 2024
- Funding Success Rate in 2023: ~ 2%



Glenn Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowships in Aging Research

- Who is eligible: Postdoctoral Fellows
- Research Area: Biology of Aging and translational aging research
- Award: \$75,000 for 1 year
- Up to 10 awards
- Deadline LOI: January 15, 2024
- Funding Success Rate in 2023: ~ 7%



Diana Jacobs Kalman/AFAR Scholarship for Research in the Biology of Aging

- Who is eligible: graduate students (MD, DO, PhD or combined degree) who have completed at least two years by the start date of the award
- Research Area: Biology of Aging
- Award: \$5,000 for 3- to 6-month research project
- Up to 10 awards
- Deadline LOI: April 14, 2024
- Funding Success Rate in 2023: 40%



NIA-funded Initiatives

- Clin-STAR Coordinating Center – pilot awards and travel awards
- Research Centers Collaborative Network – pilot awards and travel awards
- Nathan Shock Centers Coordinating Center – pilot awards offered directly by each of the Nathan Shock Centers



Travel and Conference Awards

- **Dorothy Dillon Eweson Lecture Series:** travel awards to present aging-related research at meetings where aging is not the primary focus. No deadline.
- **Hevolution Foundation Scientific Conferences Fund:** up to \$10,000 per meeting. Meetings and organizations must be in US, Canada or Mexico. Four deadlines per year (Jan 31, April 30, July 31 and October 31)



Check the AFAR website – www.afar.org regularly for updates.

- McKnight Brain Research Foundation Innovator Awards Program is under review



Before you apply

- Understand the mission of the organization and the goals of the program
- Eligibility Criteria
- Evaluation Criteria
- Not sure? Ask!

Some Tips

- **Plan ahead!** Leave yourself ample time to prepare.
- **Make a good first impression** in your abstract and specific aims.
- **Be ambitious, but realistic** - is your project feasible?
- **Write to be understood** - use clear language and avoid jargon.
- **Anticipate project setbacks** - what is your contingency plan?
- **Aging research** – pay attention to the model, sex and age groups you use. Also, studying something because it occurs in older adults is not sufficient.



Thank you!

Odette van der Willik

Odette@afar.org