2013/2014
Grant in Aid
Submission Guidelines
(Fall 2012 Competition)
25 June, 2012
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A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1) HSF Mission Statement

The Heart and Stroke Foundation, a volunteer-based health charity, leads in eliminating heart disease and stroke and reducing their impact through the advancement of research and its application, the promotion of healthy living, and advocacy. Healthy lives free of heart disease and stroke. Together we will make it happen.

2) Application Submission Deadline

Applications for Grants-in-Aid must be submitted online using the HSF’s online system (CIRCUlink) no later than 15:00 (EDT) 30 August 2012. -CIRCUlink will not accept additional submissions after this deadline.

3) Incomplete/Unacceptable Applications

All applicants are strongly cautioned to carefully read and follow the instructions and requirements outlined in this guideline document.

In order to maintain the principle of fairness to all applicants, regulations must be adhered to in the preparation of the Grant-in-Aid application. Any infraction of the rules will lead to the truncation or immediate rejection (without appeal) of the application.

HSF reserves the right to decline incomplete applications.

4) Competition Results

Applicants will be notified of the competition results by HSF’s online system, CIRCUlink by no later than 31 March 2013.

5) Non-Employee Status

The granting of an award is deemed to establish neither an employer-employee relationship nor a partnership between the grantor and the grantee.

6) Public Information

Successful applicants need to be aware that the title of their research project and the lay summary may be placed into the public domain or included in Foundation publications without notification. Applicants are cautioned not to disclose information that could endanger a proprietary position in these sections.

We would like to encourage applicants to help us communicate the importance of research to HSF donors and to the general public. In this increasingly difficult economic climate, raising funds to support research is becoming progressively more difficult. More than ever, we need to let our donors and the public know that their donations are being used to support world class research. You are one of the best representatives to explain to the public the role of research in increasing heart health and reducing the burden of heart disease and stroke.

7) Ethical Requirements

HSF requires a copy of all ethics/safety review board approval forms. In the CIRCUlink application, please indicate the status of such forms (i.e. “Included”, “Form to be Sent”, “Not applicable”, etc...) as they apply to the research proposal. If the application is accepted for funding, funds will be encumbered pending receipt of all required forms. Further, in applying applicant and institutional signatures to this application, applicants are confirming to HSF that the proposed research will not be undertaken until it has been endorsed as ethical and safe – initially and throughout the term of the project, as needed – by the appropriate review body(ies).
8) Patent Rights

In the event of any inventions, discoveries or improvements arising as a result of work conducted under an HSF award, which may be, or have been covered by patent applications or patents, HSF shall be deemed to have an interest in any patent rights covered by such patent applications or patents. For the purpose of continuing titular control and administration of any patent rights covering inventions, discoveries or improvements arising as mentioned previously (such patent rights shall be assigned to HSF), the parties comprising HSF, the inventors, and the institution, shall together determine the respective interest of the parties in said patent rights or in the net proceeds, if any, of exploitation of said patent rights.

9) Indirect Costs

The HSF supports only the direct costs of research. No funding is to be used for indirect costs of research. The definition of indirect costs of research for the purposes of this policy is, costs which cannot be directly associated with a particular research program or operating grant including costs associated with the general operation and maintenance of facilities (from laboratories to libraries); the management of the research process (from grant management to commercialization); and regulation and safety compliance (including human ethics, animal care and environmental assessment).

10) Open Access to Research Outputs policy

Please note that compliance with the Open Access to Research Outputs policy is a condition of acceptance of all HSF research funding. For more details on HSF’s Open Access policy please consult:

http://www.hsf.ca/research/en/hsf-open-access-research-outputs-policy-guidelines
11) Publications

GIA recipients must acknowledge the support of the HSF in all scientific communications and press releases related to their award. To facilitate the implementation of HSF’s program for knowledge transfer and exchange, we request that HSF be notified in advance of the publication date of any major publications and/or press releases arising from research funded by HSF. In addition, a list of publications is to be submitted with each progress and final technical reports.

12) Four Themes of Health Research

GIA applicants must estimate what proportion of the proposed research and proposed project budget falls under the four health research themes. This data is gathered for Foundation use only.

The four (4) themes of health research as defined by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research are:

**Basic Biomedical (I)**

Research with the goal of understanding normal and abnormal human function, at the molecular, cellular, organ system and whole body levels, including the development of tools and techniques to be applied for this purpose; developing new therapies or devices which improve health or the quality of life of individuals, up to the point where they are tested on human subjects. Studies on human subjects that do not have a diagnostic or therapeutic orientation.

**Clinical (II)**

Research with the goal of improving the diagnosis and treatment (including rehabilitation and palliation) of disease and injury; improving the health and quality of life of individuals as they pass through normal life stages. Research on, or for the treatment of, patients.

**Health Services/Systems (III)**

Research with the goal of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of health professionals and the health care system, through changes to practice and policy. Health services research is a multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviours affect access to health care, the quality and cost of health care, and ultimately Canadians’ health and well-being.

**Social, cultural, environmental and population health (IV)**

Research with the goal of improving the health of the Canadian population, or of defined sub-populations, through a better understanding of the ways in which social, cultural, environmental, occupational, and economic factors determine health status.

13) Lay Reviewers

The HSF incorporates lay reviewers on its Scientific Review Committee (SRC) panels in order to increase accountability and transparency of the HSF review process and to ensure the research is aligned with its goals and mission. The HSF places a high priority on ensuring appropriate lay summaries are submitted as part of each application.
14) Financial Gain

The HSF will not fund a GIA application which results in any form of direct financial profit to investigators or individuals related to that funded research project (e.g. related to commercial interests, or the development of commercial products as an output of the research). Please also refer to Guidelines Section A10 for the HSF’s IP/Patent Policy.

15) Multiple Submissions

GIA Principal Investigators are allowed to submit no more than two grant applications (new and/or renewals) per competition. Principal Investigators are allowed to hold no more than two HSF GIAs at any one time.

16) Applications for Renewal

A grantee wishing to renew an active grant makes application for the renewal during the final year of the active grant. If a grantee applies for a renewal earlier than this, he/she immediately forfeits all remaining years of the active grant, except the current year.

17) Status of Publications

Any manuscript, paper, etc. included with an application, but not yet published must be accompanied by documentation from the journal verifying whether it has been submitted, accepted for publication or is in press. HSF will not accept letters indicating confirmation of acceptance for publication of a paper after December 1, as peer review of applications occurs early in December.
B. RESEARCH INTEGRITY POLICY

The primary objective of the HSF’s Research Integrity Policy is to protect and defend the integrity of the research process and to deal with allegations of scientific misconduct in a timely and transparent fashion. The HSF agrees with and has adopted the basic policies and recommendations outlined in the Tri-council Policy Statement: *Integrity in Research and Scholarship*. As a condition of funding, all HSF grant and award recipients agree to comply with the Principles and Responsibilities set out in that policy, and the research misconduct provisions below.

The HSF defines research misconduct to include actions that are inconsistent with “integrity” as defined by the Tri-Council Policy Statement, and to include such actions as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reporting research, or in reporting research results.

HSF will deal with allegations of scientific misconduct in the following manner:

- Any allegation of scientific misconduct will be initially reviewed by HSF to determine whether an investigation is warranted. If it is felt that an investigation is required, HSF may request that this be conducted by the host institution of the individual considered to have performed the alleged misconduct. In allegations specifically related to the peer review process, the investigation may be conducted jointly by the institution and HSF.

- The HSF will not act on verbal allegations of misconduct. All allegations must be submitted in writing. Although the confidentiality of persons who submit an allegation of scientific misconduct will be protected as much as possible, it must be recognized that due process will often result in the identity of this person being released to the investigating institution.

- The institution will be required to submit a written report upon conclusion of the investigation. This report will summarize the findings of the investigation and any future actions that will be undertaken by the institute as a result of the findings.

- In cases where misconduct is concluded to have occurred, the HSF may apply sanctions against the individual(s) implicated. These sanctions will range from a reprimand letter to a ban from applying for or holding HSF funds for a set period of time.

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C. SPECIFIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

1) Description

The HSF offers support for projects in the area of cardiovascular or cerebrovascular research. This support may be provided for up to a maximum of three years.

All awards become tenable July 1 following announcement of the competition results.

GIA funds may only be used to support research conducted in Canada.

2) Clinical Trials

a. The HSF regards clinical trials as prospective controlled observations on an incompletely tested new diagnostic or therapeutic technique or device, often in comparison with an accepted one. Randomized interventions and those with clinical end-points would qualify. Applications will be examined for excellence in clinical questions and the appropriateness of the methodology. All clinical trials applications will be reviewed by the appropriate sub-Committee.

For other applications, including clinical studies with patients that seek to refine current characterizations of disease processes (or health) or to explore unresolved questions in human biology by controlled observations or manipulations (or both) of patients or volunteers and their environments (including extrinsic factors such as diet, exercise, stress, etc.); these will be reviewed by the appropriate sub-Committee using similar criteria used for the evaluation of other applications.

b. If surrogate outcomes are used in the trial, the applicant must be fully prepared to support their use.

c. The requested budget must conform to the funding restrictions as outlined in the guidelines. Applicants are requested to indicate if their application is a clinical trial. HSF reserves the right to re-classify applications submitted inappropriately.

Clinical trials funded by the HSF will be monitored on an on-going basis.

3) Partnered Funding

The applicant is required to declare proposed partnered funding prior to application in order for HSF to confirm the appropriateness of the proposed funding partner. There can be no overlap/duplication in expenses or activities and HSF’s peer review panel would provide the HSF with an opinion as to whether the HSF portion of the project could proceed independently of the partnered funding, if recommended. HSF-approved projects with partnered funding would be encumbered pending confirmation of sufficient funding to complete the project, if recommended by HSF’s peer review committee which would be provided in the funding Acceptance Form. Partnership with other funding organization(s) will be considered. A letter of intent will be required by July 15, 2012, for applicants seeking and/or receiving additional funds from other sources.

4) Other Funding: Top-up Funding

HSF will consider providing supplementary top-up funding to investigators who’s peer-reviewed (science and budget) HSF projects have been awarded concurrent but lower level funding from another granting agency. To obtain top-up funding the grant must fall within HSF’s cut-off funding range. In such cases, if an applicant chooses the funding from the other granting agency, HSF will consider topping-up the grant to the budget awarded in the HSF peer review process. Adjustments may be made to a variety of items as per HSF policy and/or best advice based on the HSF peer review process (science and budget). If the other granting agency has awarded a higher level of funding than is approved by the HSF peer review process, no top-up will be
available. Applications for top-up funding will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Please note the Clinical Trials guidelines is also in effect (see Section B2abc).

5) **Peer Review**

The HSF’s peer review process engages well over 1000 researchers nationally and internationally and includes over 125 members of the Scientific Review Committee (SRC). The SRC comprises at least 11 separate panels that ensure in-depth knowledge and expertise in all areas of heart disease and stroke.

Applications to the GIA program will be ranked by fixed percentile within each research committee by the SRC and these rankings will drive research funding allocations.

6) **Eligibility Criteria**

Principal Investigators will have a full-time academic or institutional appointment in Canada. However, under special circumstances, applications from other scientifically qualified individuals may be considered. In such circumstances, the research must be conducted at a Canadian institution and Principal Investigators must have an academic or institutional appointment as of July 1, the start date of the award. Any applicant in an adjunct position must submit a letter from their dean/chair/division director to clarify their specific appointment, i.e. amount of protected time available, local infrastructure in place.

Please contact HSF Research Department prior to application if you require clarification on eligibility.

7) **Application**

Applications will be completed online using HSF’s online system, CIRCUlink. Applicants must also send a copy of the signature page, with original signatures to HSFC. See contact information at the end of this document.

   a. **Research Proposal - Guidelines**

Applicants are required to attach a detailed research proposal. The research proposal must include the following:

- hypothesis to be tested,
- knowledge to date,
- methods to be used,
- anticipated results and conclusions,
- possible problems, and
- pertinent references.

Submissions must be prepared according to the following guidelines:

**Formatting**

- Text must be single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman or 11 point Arial (including labels and descriptions accompanying figures, tables, charts, photographs, etc.).
- Margin of 2 cm (3/4 inch) around the entire page.
- Header:
  - “Research Proposal” (left corner)
  - Applicant Name (right corner)
- Footer:
  - Number pages consecutively
  - Page numbers must be centred
Organization

- The Research Proposal should predominantly be text and is limited to 11 pages.
- To improve the clarity of the grant, figures, charts, tables, etc. may be included in the research proposal or appended after the references. Please note that embedded figures, charts, tables, etc. count toward the 11 page limit. *Pages beyond the 11 page limit will NOT be evaluated by the reviewers.*
- Figures, charts, tables, etc. appended after the references must not exceed 7 pages. *Pages beyond the 7 page limit will NOT be evaluated by the reviewers.*
- References should be placed at the end of the research proposal and will not count toward the 11 page limit.
- Additional supporting documentation such as questionnaires, RCT methods, consent forms, etc. may be attached as a separate document (no page restriction).

Failure to adhere to the guidelines above risks the application being deemed unacceptable and withdrawn from the competition.

b. Scientific, Methodological or Budgetary Overlap: Current Funding and Pending or Contemplated Grant Submissions

For each currently funded grant, grants under submission or in preparation, describe whether there is any scientific, methodological, or budgetary overlap with the current application. A percentage for the degree of overlap must be provided on the application, where requested, under each of the three (3) categories.

c. Budget Justification

Rigorous justification of proposed spending needs to be provided and will be rigorously reviewed by the HSF. The HSF does not guarantee funding requests substantially above the previous year’s median of $330,000 over three years.

Rigorous justification of the budget requires an explanation and justification for each budget item. Sufficient information must be included to allow reviewers to assess whether the resources requested are appropriate. Failure to provide detailed information and appropriate justification may result in budget cuts that could adversely affect the final budget awarded for the project. Please provide rationale (why) for the quantities, attributes and requirements for the particular people and items requested.

i. Salaries and Benefits:

Provide names (if known), categories of employment and proposed salaries (including non-discretionary benefits) of all personnel identified in the budget. Attach a copy of the institutional guidelines relating to requested benefit levels. Briefly describe the responsibilities for each position for which support is requested and attach a brief CV as an appendix for those positions for which an individual has been identified.

Salaries for unnamed research assistants, technicians and research associates should also conform to those of the institution in which the individual is carrying out the research, subject to the approval of the HSF.
ii. **Summer Students/Graduate Students:**

Stipend levels must be aligned with institutional guidelines. However, the HSF does not provide support for benefits towards summer students, undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or post-doctoral fellows.

iii. **Research Equipment (including maintenance and facility):**

Research equipment is defined as any item (or interrelated collection of items comprising a system) that meets these three conditions:

- Non-expendable tangible property;
- Useful life of more than one year; and
- A cost of $2,000 or more.

**For example:** A laptop computer that costs less than $2,000 would be considered as materials or supplies even though it is a non-expendable tangible item with a useful life of more than one year.

A cost quotation must be provided for equipment or service contracts greater than $10,000. Two competitive quotes as well as letters from an appropriate institutional official documenting the availability and status of similar equipment are required for items costing more than $25,000.

Provide a breakdown and justification of the items requested. Give details of models, manufacturers, prices and applicable taxes. In addition, for maintenance and/or equipment items listed, indicate:

- The availability and status of similar equipment.
- The anticipated extent of utilization.
- The reasons for choice of specific type, model or service contract, in relation to alternatives.
- Where applicable, the necessity for upgrading existing equipment or service contracts. For equipment or service contracts costing more than $5,000, attach at least one (1) quotation for cost. For items costing more than $25,000, attach a letter from the Department Head(s) and/or Research Institute Director(s), documenting availability etc., plus at least two (2) competitive quotes.

iv. **Experimental Animals:**

Include species to be used and sample size justification along with calculations, if applicable.

Provide a breakdown for procurement, breeding, boarding, feeding and wherever possible include a copy of the Institution’s standardized costs for these tasks as they vary from Institution to Institution.

v. **Materials and Supplies:**

Provide details and justify / explain major items. Do not simply list items.

vi. **Payments to Study Subjects:**

The HSF allows well justified and reasonable reimbursements for required travel, parking, childcare, honoraria, or other items that would reduce barriers to participation.

vii. **Others:**
Provide justification / explanation for each item listed.

viii. **Service Contracts:**
    Provide justification / explanation for each item listed.

ix. **Travel:**
    Provide justification and a brief explanation of how each activity relates to the proposed research. The purpose and estimated cost of such travel must be given.

x. **Financial Contributions from Other Sources (if applicable):**
    Provide a brief explanation of any financial (not in-kind) contribution from other sources (if applicable).

8) **Multi-Centre/Site Application**

Where a research project involves multiple centres/sites by reason of location of activity and/or investigators. Multi-Centre/Site GIA applications must demonstrate benefit to all centres/sites involved. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that applications demonstrate the following:

- A high probability of informing policies, practice, programs and/or science.
- Significant “value-added” to perform a particular project across centres/sites.
- A research design reflecting work done in each centre/site
- Roles and responsibilities of each team member located in each site/centre.
- Budget required for these projects may be higher than single-site/centre GIAs and MUST be well justified.

9) **Contact Information:**

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