



**American  
Foundation  
*for* Suicide  
Prevention**

**GENERAL POLICIES GOVERNING**  
**ALL AFSP RESEARCH GRANTS**

July 1, 2024

**PLEASE ALSO REVIEW THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT  
FOR POLICY DETAILS FOR THE SPECIFIC GRANT TYPE FOR WHICH  
YOU ARE APPLYING, AS SOME GRANT MECHANISMS  
HAVE SPECIAL ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**



American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention

July 2024

Dear AFSP Scientific Community,

Thank you for your interest in our research grants. AFSP was founded as a research organization dedicated to exploring how to save lives. Now 35 years later, we remain the largest private funder of suicide prevention research, shaping suicide prevention strategies around the world. We do so by working diligently to fund the most innovative, impactful and methodologically sound research. Each year, we welcome a broad range of applications from a diverse group of researchers.

This Policy Document outlines all of the policies related to applying for and receiving an AFSP research grant. While we have tried to address all issues, please understand this **is not** meant to be a legally-binding document. Please make sure to read the entire document, and pay special attention to any category-specific requirements as noted at the END of this document.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [grantsmanager@afsp.org](mailto:grantsmanager@afsp.org)

Best of luck and productivity in your research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Harkavy-Friedman PhD".

Jill Harkavy-Friedman, PhD  
AFSP SVP of Research

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carl Niedzielski".

Carl Niedzielski, MA  
AFSP Director, Grants and Researcher Development

## **1. APPLICATION REVIEW SUMMARY**

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Applications are evaluated on the basis of (a) the potential of the research to contribute to the understanding and ultimate prevention of suicide, or to the treatment of suicidal individuals; (b) innovation of the study; (c) the methodology and demonstrated availability of a sufficient number of patients or subjects to carry out the research; (d) the qualifications, experience and productivity of the applicant; and (e) the facilities available to the applicant for the purpose of the study.

All AFSP grant funding decisions are final. Applicants may submit up to two resubmissions in subsequent funding cycles, using feedback provided by AFSP. All applications submitted and reviewed will receive a detailed feedback letter that summarizes all of the reviews for the application. A detailed response to this feedback letter must be uploaded to any application resubmission.

For details of the review process, visit here: <https://afsp.org/research-grant-application-review-process>

## **2. SOURCE OF FUNDS**

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Funds used for all AFSP research grants and fellowships are obtained from private donations to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

## **3. ELIGIBILITY AND CONDITIONS**

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**a.** AFSP research grants and fellowships are awarded to individuals affiliated with not-for-profit research institutions or organizations in the U.S. and abroad. Grant applications are not accepted from for-profit organizations, or from federal or state government agencies; applications from the Veterans Administration and NIH/NIMH are eligible. Applications from both private and public colleges and universities

are eligible as long as the institution is not-for-profit. Check with your institution's financial department if you are not certain about the status of your institution. Grant payments are made to the grantee's institution for the individual investigator.

**b.** Individuals may be the Principal Investigator (PI), or Site PI, on only one AFSP grant at a time, and may not simultaneously be the PI on any other type of AFSP research grant. This does not preclude serving as a mentor on a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship or an Early Career Research Grant (formerly known as Young Investigator Grant) while being the Principal Investigator on another AFSP grant, or serving as a Co-I or consultant on another grant. A mentor may not serve on more than two current funded AFSP grants.

During the final year of funding, an individual holding an AFSP research grant may apply for another AFSP grant in the same or another category which, if approved, would start after the end date of the first grant. The second grant cannot begin until the final progress report and financial statement for the current grant are received and approved by AFSP and the Initiation papers for the second grant are approved.

**c.** AFSP research grants and fellowships are awarded with the understanding that the recipient individual and institution will not accept funds from any other granting agency for research that substantially overlaps with what was approved by AFSP. Supplemental funding from AFSP grants can use the infrastructure of an already funded grant, but AFSP data must be separable from the larger grant.

**d.** Personnel compensated in whole or in part through an AFSP research grant are not considered employees of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, but of the grantee institution. AFSP does not assume any

responsibility for the conduct of the research or other acts of the investigators. AFSP grantees are subject to the ethical and scientific policies of the grantee institution.

#### **4. DESCRIPTION OF AFSP RESEARCH GRANTS (Also review specific policies for specific grants at end of this document)**

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##### **Purpose**

All AFSP research grants are designed to support research on suicide from a variety of disciplines including psychiatry, medicine, psychology, genetics, epidemiology, neurobiology, sociology, nursing, health services administration, social work, and many others. Grants are not intended to support the development or implementation of organization-specific prevention programs, educational programs, treatments, or other interventions unless they have a significant research component. In that case a study would be welcome, but it must have generalizability beyond the specific institution or program.

##### **Term of Grant**

Grants are made for a period of one to three years (depending on mechanism), with final year funding contingent upon the previous year's performance. The study must begin within six months of the award date, but by January 1<sup>st</sup>.

If, during the course of the study, a grant recipient experiences significant delays, a written request for an extension of the grant may be made by the Principal Investigator. These No Cost Extensions can be requested only after the final grant payment has been made. The NCE request will be evaluated in the final quarter of the grant. If approved, the maximum term for such an extension is one year. In addition, grantees must commit to completing all planned and approved Aims and meet all proposed recruitment targets. Please note that grant extensions will not normally be granted in cases where the problems or delays being experienced make it unlikely that the project will be successfully completed.

Documents required for request of a No Cost Extension:

- Letter explaining the cause of the delay and rationale for the extension.
- NCE Budget form and a budget justification for use of the remaining funds.
- New timeline outlining projected progress through the end of the new closing date.

##### **Payments**

At the time the award is made, grantees will be informed of the specific schedule of grant payments. Payments will be made to the investigator's institution in equal amounts, with the first payment made after all required Initiation information has been provided to AFSP, including IRB approval and final budget, and the Principal Investigator has indicated that the grant project is ready to begin. Payments will proceed on schedule as long as the project is not experiencing significant delays, and required semi-annual reports have been received and approved. Payments may be delayed for projects that are not making adequate progress in completing scheduled activities, including reporting. Grantees should understand that the payments to the institution are suspended until reporting or proof of progress is made. The PI should inform the institution's financial officer of the delay, so that the officer also understands that funding will be delayed.

##### **Applicant Requirements**

Although prior research on suicide is not required, applicants are expected to show evidence of prior research or research training in a related field. These grants are intended to fund new directions and initiatives in suicide research rather than to support the applicant's existing research. Supplemental grants to larger grant are encouraged if they add a unique study area that can utilize the structure of any existing grant. For example, adding a group with suicidal ideation/behavior, or adding a longitudinal assessment to a funded study.

### Allowable Costs

Grant Type	Compensation for Investigators or Personnel	Mentor Fee (\$7,000/yr nontransferable)	Indirect Costs @ up to 8% of total budget	Consultant Fees	Consumable Research Supplies	Costs for Measures, Tests, or Procedures	Travel (Required to Achieve Research)	Participant Fees	Leasing of Software, Computers, Cell Phones, Audio
DIG	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PDF	✓*		✗**	✓**	✓**	✓**	✓**	✓**	✓**
PRG	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SRG	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LSRG	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ECR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Non-Allowable Costs

Grant Type	Building Costs	Office Equipment or Furniture	Durable Equipment	Conferences & Presentations	Books, Periodicals, Publications, Publishing Costs	Personnel Recruiting	Per Diem Charges for Hospital Beds	Institutional Charges for Tuition, IRB fees, General IT Costs	Purchase of Computers, Cell Phones, Software, Audio
DIG	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
PDF	✗	✗	✗	✓**	✗	✗	✗	✓**	✗
PRG	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
SRG	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
LSRG	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
YIG	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Focus	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

\*Compensation limited to PI only (Postdoctoral Fellow)

\*\*All costs under "Institutional Allowance" only. BUT, no indirects for PDF grants

## Allowable and Non-Allowable Costs

Budgets submitted must be realistic estimates of the funds required for the proposed research, and all items included in the budget must be fully justified. The Principal Investigator may make minor alterations *within* the approved budget, except where such expenditures conflict with the policies of AFSP. Substantial revisions in the approved budget must be specifically approved by AFSP.

Note: AFSP research grants and fellowships are not designed to cover the total cost of the research proposed. The grantee institution is expected to provide the required physical facilities and administrative services normally available in an institution. The table included in this document is a summary of allowable and non-allowable costs for AFSP research grants.

**As of the Fall 2021 grant application cycle, AFSP will allow budgets to include up to 8% of the total budget as indirect costs (except for Postdoctoral Fellowships).** This is an OPTIONAL use of grant funds, to discuss and negotiate with your institution. Note: this will not impact total awards made. *EXAMPLE:* If you elect to include 8% of a \$100,000 budget as indirect costs, the budget total remains \$100,000.

## 5. APPLICATION

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Applications are considered once each year and must be submitted by the deadline. Please refer to the website for the dates, which will be in November for Innovation Grants and in December for Focus Grants. Final award letters are issued following review and approval by the Scientific Council, and in turn by the Board of Directors, at their May meeting. These grants, if approved, may begin after July 1<sup>st</sup>, but no later than January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Please note that the Linked Standard Research Grant and Focus Grants require LOIs:

- Focus Grant LOIs due August 1
- LSRG LOIs due September 15

Applications must be submitted via our online grant application/management system, accessible via our website: <https://afsp.org/our-work/research/apply-for-a-grant/>. Questions concerning application requirements should be addressed to [grantsmanager@afsp.org](mailto:grantsmanager@afsp.org).

Care should be taken to comply with the word or page restrictions noted for each section of the application on the Application forms. Material submitted that exceeds the specified maximum number of pages/words (as applicable), or that is not specifically requested, may not be considered by the reviewers. Furthermore, applicants should not try to circumvent the restrictions by including crucial application information in an appendix. All substantive information must be in the application itself. The entire application should be typed using a font size no smaller than 11 point.

The application must include the following sections:

**a. Basic Information.** All requested information about the proposed project, applicant and institution must be provided, along with an upload of the signatures of the applicant and the head of the applicant's department. Please note: the log-in and primary contact email should be the applicant's institutional email address, not a personal one (e.g., an .edu or .org address, NOT a gmail address).

**b. Financial/Administrative Contact Information.** Provide complete financial payment and grant administrative contact information. Additional site information must also be included (see application form.)

**c. Abstract.** The aims, methods and expected outcomes of the proposed research project should be clearly stated in lay language.

**d. Key Personnel.** In this section, indicate for each person participating on the project: name, position. Note that the use of "to be named" should be used

*only* for support or clerical personnel. All key personnel who will be playing a substantial role in the project should be specifically listed in the Key Personnel table of the application, and their biographical information provided on the appropriate forms. All consultants to the project who will receive grant funds must also be specifically identified, and a letter of agreement to collaborate from each consultant should be uploaded with the application. Please list all Key Personnel in the application form and on the Budget. List these Key Personnel even if they will not receive grant funds (salary line can be \$0).

**e. Budget.** All requested information must be provided on the AFSP Budget form, and the total amount requested for the first and subsequent (if applicable) year(s) of the project should be indicated. PI effort must be 10% or more for all mechanisms, except the Postdoctoral Fellowship, which requires 100% effort. Salary amounts for PIs can be less than effort.

On the Budget Form, indicate for each person participating on the project: name, position, percentage of time to be dedicated to the project, and the amount of funds requested. Note that the use of "to be named" should be used *only* for support or clerical personnel. All personnel who will be playing a substantial role in the project should be specifically listed in the Key Personnel table of the application, and their biographical information provided on the appropriate forms. All consultants to the project who will receive grant funds must also be specifically identified, and a letter of agreement to collaborate from each consultant should be uploaded with the application. Please list all Key Personnel in the application form and on the Budget. List these Key Personnel even if they will not receive grant funds (salary line can be \$0).

Identify all other direct cost items for which funds are requested, and the amount requested in each budget year for each item.

**As of the Fall 2021 grant application cycle, AFSP will allow budgets to include up to 8% of the total budget as indirect costs (except for Postdoctoral**

**Fellowships).** This is an OPTIONAL use of grant funds, to discuss and negotiate with your institution. Note: this will not impact total awards made. E.g., if you elect to include 8% of a \$100,000 budget as indirect costs, the budget total remains \$100,000.

**f. Research Environment.** Describe how the scientific environment(s) in which the research will be done contributes to the probability of success (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport). In describing the scientific environment in which the work will be done, discuss ways in which the proposed studies will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment or subject populations or will employ useful collaborative arrangements.

**g. Budget Justification.** The duties and responsibilities of all key personnel and consultants should be described. All other expenses included in the budget should be explained and justified in accordance with the research aims, methods and activities. Additional site information must also be included (see application form.) PI effort must be 10% or more (or 100% for Postdoctoral Fellowships). Salary amounts for PIs can be less than effort.

**As of the Fall 2021 grant application cycle, AFSP will allow budgets to include up to 8% of the total budget as indirect costs (except for Postdoctoral Fellowships).** This is an OPTIONAL use of grant funds, to discuss and negotiate with your institution. Note: this will not impact total awards made. E.g., if you elect to include 8% of a \$100,000 budget as indirect costs, the budget total remains \$100,000. If included, this should be noted in the Justification, but descriptive details are not needed.

**h. Biographical Sketches.** The information requested should be provided for all persons playing a substantial role in the project. Use only the format provided via the link in the application; the size is up to five pages. All sketches should be combined and uploaded as one document. For consultants, sketches are not required; instead,

upload letters of agreement (again as one document). Do not provide full CVs.

#### **i. Project Description (excluding references).**

Please limit this attachment upload to the allowable page number: For Innovation Grants this is 7 pages; for Focus Grants it is 12 pages. This section of the application should provide sufficient detail to allow reviewers to evaluate the proposed methods and procedures. It must include a statement of the specific aims and hypotheses; a description of prior related work and the significance of the proposed study for the field; a description of sample, measures, the data collection and analysis methods to be employed; and a discussion of the study's strengths and weaknesses. We strongly suggest you provide a conceptual framework for your study.

Please note:

- There must be a suicide outcome measure included in the study. This may be a measure of suicidal ideation or behavior, or a comparison of one group with a suicide-related group. Studies focused on suicide training or education also meet this requirement.
- The number of subjects and the power of the study should be indicated. Explicit details need to be given substantiating the availability of the proposed number of patients or research participants within the amount of time allocated for subject recruitment and enrollment.
- If the study does not have sufficient power, include a description of how you will determine whether or not an effect is worth pursuing.
- Additionally, if this proposal is an analysis of data previously collected, details regarding the data and ability to access the data need to be provided in the application, including a support letter from the data source documenting the agreement to provide the data. We do not fund secondary data analytic studies unless a new previously unavailable set will be created by linking data sets.

#### **j. Covid-19 Contingency Plan**

Please provide a brief work plan modification that reflects any changes you might need to make to your study in the event it must be conducted virtually (contactless). Keep in mind that the changes must be scientifically sound and not significantly alter your your ability to achieve your stated aims. This section is optional, though recommended, and will NOT be scored, evaluated or influence any funding decision. Via the link you can find the questions for research participant developed by the COVID-19 International Suicide Prevention Research Collaboration to assist the research community in including questions about COVID-19 and its impact. Both the disease itself and individual and community responses to the disease are influencing mental health, and more information is needed. While NOT required, we think it is important for researchers in suicide prevention to consider adding these questions to your studies, as feasible and appropriate.

[https://www.iasp.info/pdf/ICSPRC\\_COVID\\_advice\\_on\\_questions.pdf](https://www.iasp.info/pdf/ICSPRC_COVID_advice_on_questions.pdf)

#### **k. Subject Demographic Information**

##### **Including LGBTQ Data in Project Description**

Survey data suggests that individuals who are LGBT are at greater risk for suicide attempts (Haas, Eliason et al. 2011). However, confirmation of this finding is needed across a wider range of samples and using a wider range of data collection methods. In an effort to learn more about this issue we **require** AFSP-funded researchers who are collecting original data to systematically assess research participants for sexual orientation and gender identity, or provide an explanation as to the reason such data cannot be collected.

For self-report assessments, please consider using the following questions, which have been recommended for inclusion in federal health surveys:

##### **Gender identity: Which of the following best describes your gender? (check one)**

- Woman
- Man



- Nonbinary, genderfluid, or gender non-conforming
- Prefer not to answer

**Are you transgender?**

- No, I am not transgender
- Yes, I am transgender
- I am not sure what this is asking
- Prefer not to answer

**Sexual orientation: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? (check one)**

- Heterosexual/straight
- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay or lesbian
- Queer
- Do not identify as any of these options
- Prefer not to answer

**Including Military Status Data in Project Description**

Research suggests that individuals who are in the military, or who have served in the military, may be at greater risk for suicide attempts and death. However, the research is not conclusive, in part because death certificates do not contain this information, and we also do not yet know much about differences across types of service in the military (Stanley et al, 2018). If you will be collecting demographic information on study subjects, you are strongly encouraged to collect data on military service to contribute to the field of knowledge in this area. For self-report assessments, please consider using the following:

Please indicate your military status, if any:

- Military reserves
- National Guard
- Active duty: Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Space Force, or Coast Guard
- Veteran: Served but not currently serving in Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Space Force, or Coast Guard
- N/A
- Prefer not to answer

If possible, it would be beneficial to collect more detailed information on the specific branches of the

military as well, and we encourage researchers to consider that.

**Measures of Social Determinants of Health**

*We encourage the measurement of social determinants of health.* If you are looking for research tools and measures for your study, visit <https://www.phenxtoolkit.org/domains> The PhenX Toolkit (consensus measures for **Phenotypes** and **eXposures**) provides recommended standard data collection protocols for conducting biomedical research. The protocols are selected by Working Groups of domain experts using a consensus process, which includes the scientific community. The Toolkit provides detailed protocols for collecting data and tools to help investigators incorporate these protocols into their studies. Using protocols from the PhenX Toolkit facilitates cross-study analysis, potentially increasing the scientific impact of individual studies. Of particular interest to AFSP researchers are their social determinants area, which addresses a variety of factors and characteristics, including race and ethnicity, at a granular level that can enrich our work. Their frameworks are available as you develop studies, though this is not required.

**I. Certification for Protection of Human and Animal Subjects.**

Human Subjects: The proposed research should be submitted to the sponsoring institution’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) no later than the date the application is submitted to AFSP. On the certification form in the application, the applicant must indicate the current status of the IRB review. If the proposed research has already been approved by the IRB, the form should be signed by the appropriate official and submitted to AFSP. If the research has not been approved by the IRB at the time the application is submitted, this should be indicated by checking the appropriate statement on the form, and a copy of the signed form should be submitted following IRB approval. If a grant award is made by AFSP, no funds will be released until proof of IRB approval is received. The IRB approval **must** list the AFSP-funded PI as the study PI and **must** list the title of the funded study exactly as it appears in the grant application.

**Animal Subjects:** Institutions must implement the PHS Policy for all AFSP-supported activities involving animals and must ensure that any standards that might not be consistent with PHS Policy do not affect or pose risks to AFSP supported activities. A certification of approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) is required to be submitted prior to the funding of an application.

**Assurances:** In the box provided, describe assurances regarding the risks to human and animal subjects and the adequacy of protection against possible risk.

**m. Project Timeline.** Download the timeline template, then complete the table to identify key project activities and the anticipated dates for their completion; upload to application.

**n. References.** Provide complete citations in this box for all literature cited in the Project Description. There is no page limit for references.

**o. Appendices.** Appendices should be limited to copies of unpublished instruments, manuals or other materials directly related to the proposed research. Do not include previous publications. Do not include information that is substantively part of other application sections.

**p. Data Sharing.** We encourage data sharing. If you are able to share your data, please submit a data sharing plan and describe your plan. Refer to <https://grants.nih.gov/policy/sharing.htm> for more information.

**q. Inclusion of Persons with Lived Experience (LE).** AFSP encourages the engagement of persons with LE in every aspect of the study. If you include people with LE, please include their roles on all sections of the application as appropriate: Budget, Budget Justification, and Methods. Include letters of support to document, and note means of recruitment and training. Discuss how these individuals will contribute to the study.

## **6. FINANCIAL RECORDS (For Awarded Grants)**

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**a.** A separate institutional financial account must be maintained for each grant, and the institution must be able to confirm that 10% effort or more is reserved for the study, regardless of the amount of funds allocated to PI salary. The account, with substantiating invoices and payrolls, should be available at all times for audit by representatives of AFSP. All financial reports must be completed on the AFSP Finance Report Form, and must be signed by the Principal Investigator and the responsible Financial Officer of the institution. Reports that are not signed will not be accepted. Payment of grant funds is contingent upon timely receipt of financial and progress reports. Please be advised that the grant end date will change if payments are delayed for any reason.

**b.** AFSP is not responsible for the over-expenditure of grant funds, for commitments against a grant not paid within sixty days after its termination or renewal, or for expenditures made before the approved starting date of a grant. Budgets are reviewed at Initiation and at each reporting period for allowable costs. Any unallowable costs will need to be re-allocated to allowable items.

**c.** Reports of expenditures must be submitted semi-annually and approved before the following payment. A final report of expenditures must be submitted within 60 days after termination of the grant, together with the refund of any unexpended balance. Unexpended funds from an existing grant cannot be transferred to any other project or grant. Financial Reports are submitted online as an upload to the online Research Progress Report.

## **7. PROGRESS AND FINAL REPORTS (For Awarded Grants)**

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Every six months, grantees will use the application portal to **SUBMIT A REQUIRED** brief interim progress report on work completed and expenditures to date. Continuing payment of grant funds is contingent upon timely receipt and approval of progress and financial reports.

All grantees must also submit a Final Report within 60 days of the end date of the grant period. Reports of research findings that have not yet been published are considered confidential and this information will not be disseminated without the express consent of the Principal Investigator. All Research Progress Reports are submitted online via our grants management portal: <https://afsp.org/apply-for-or-manage-your-research-grant> The log-in will be the same as that used for the application process.

## **8. CHANGES OR CANCELLATION OF GRANT**

If any significant departures are made from the original, approved grant application, AFSP must be notified in writing of the changes and be provided with adequate justification before the change is made; all changes must first be approved by AFSP. Based on this information, AFSP reserves the right to terminate the grant if the changes are deemed inappropriate. All budget changes must be requested in writing and signed by the PI and the Financial Officer.

If the grantee changes institutions during the grant period, permission to transfer the grant to the new institution must be obtained from AFSP prior to the move. The written request by the grantee to transfer the grant should discuss the impact of the move on sample recruitment and other aspects of study design, the grantee's relationship with co-investigators, as well as the new institution's IRB approval and budget, and the timeline for the study. Based on the information provided, AFSP will decide whether to approve the transfer or terminate the grant.

In the event that a grantee changes institutions and does not transfer the grant, the grant will be terminated. The grantee must take responsibility for informing AFSP of his/her departure from the institution where the grant is housed. The letter must be signed by the Principal Investigator and the Financial Officer at the sponsoring institution. A final report of expenditures and research accomplishments must be provided within 30 days of the effective date of cancellation. This letter must be accompanied by the return of all unexpended funds.

### References

Haas, A. P., M. Eliason, et al. (2011). "Suicide and suicide risk in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations: review and recommendations." *Journal of Homosexuality* **58**(1): 10-51.

Stanley, I. H., Buchman-Schmitt, J. M., Chu, C., Rogers, M. L., Gai, A. R., Wagner, R. K., ... Joiner, T. E. (2019). The Military Suicide Research Consortium Common Data Elements: An Examination of Measurement Invariance Across Current Service Members and Veterans. *Assessment*, *26*(6), 963–975. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191118777635>

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# SPECIAL POLICIES GOVERNING SPECIFIC GRANT CATEGORIES

## Please review before beginning ANY application

### SPECIAL POLICES FOR LINKED STANDARD RESEARCH GRANTS

This grant mechanism is designed to encourage implementation of a common grant protocol at two or more sites. The idea of the linked grant is that multiple sites are partners and the study could not be done without expertise from both sites working together on many if not all aspects of the study, above and beyond just doing the same study at both sites or having a study at one site with experts serving as consultants.

Each Site PI must provide unique expertise necessary to the study. Applicants must provide a compelling rationale for the linked grant (more than availability of a larger sample size), designate who will be responsible for the overall conduct and quality control of the study, designate who will be responsible for the data analyses, and discuss how the work at the various sites will be coordinated.

Prior to submitting an application, applicants must submit a **Letter of Intent to [research@afsp.org](mailto:research@afsp.org)**. The Letter of Intent must be received by September 15<sup>th</sup>, and must include:

- Title page with:
  - Descriptive title of proposal.
  - Name, title, institutional affiliation, and address and telephone number of the PI(s).
  - Names, titles, and institutional affiliations and roles of other key personnel.
  - List of participating institutions.
- A brief two-page project description that includes:
  - Objectives
  - Sample
  - Outcome measures

- Procedures (including approach to data analysis)
- Details on what each site AND each Site PI uniquely and specifically contribute with respect to expertise
- References may be included on a separate page

If standards are met, the PI will receive an invitation to submit a full application. In the application, **each site participating in the Linked Standard Research Grant must submit its own site information as part of one online application**. Contact information for Investigator and Finance and Administrative Departments, Budget, Budget Justification, Personnel, and Biographical Information must be unique to the site, and the application must include additional, detailed information about the unique role that each separate site will play in the project.

Linked Standard Research Grants for a two-year period are awarded to investigators at any academic rank. Although prior research on suicide is not required, applicants are expected to show evidence of prior research or research training in a related field. These grants are intended to fund new directions and initiatives in suicide research rather than to supplement the applicant's existing research and junior investigators.

### **Application Dates and Notifications**

Applications for Linked Grants are considered once each year and must be submitted by the deadline. Letters of Intent (LOI) are required, and only invited investigators will be eligible to apply. Please visit our website for each year's

dates. Final award letters are issued following review and approval by the Scientific Council, and in turn by the Board of Directors, at their

May meeting. These grants, if approved, may begin after July 1<sup>st</sup> but before January 1<sup>st</sup>.

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### **SPECIAL POLICIES FOR DISTINGUISHED INVESTIGATOR GRANTS**

Distinguished Investigator Grants are awarded for a two-year period to investigators who hold an academic rank of associate or full professor and an established record of research and publication in the area of suicide, or who

are an established investigator newly entering the field of suicide prevention. Individuals may be awarded up to two DIGs during their lifetime. Those having had two DIGs remain eligible for LSRG, SRG, Focus Grants, and Pilot Grants.

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### **SPECIAL POLICIES FOR STANDARD RESEARCH GRANTS**

Standard Research Grants are for a two-year period, for investigators at any academic rank. Although prior research on suicide is not required, applicants are expected to show evidence of prior research or research training

in a related field. These grants are intended to fund new directions and initiatives in suicide research rather than to supplement the applicant's existing research and junior investigators.

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### **SPECIAL POLICIES FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCH GRANTS**

In addition to general review of the study, the evaluation of Early Career Research Grant (formerly known as Young Investigator Grant) applications will include consideration of the mentoring plan and the opportunities provided for the applicant to receive meaningful guidance in carrying out the proposed research.

grant is designed for investigators who have completed doctoral studies, although high quality applications from pre-doctoral applicants will be considered. The Early Career Research Grant provides an annual nontransferable fee of \$7,000 to the mentor, who serves as an advisor to the applicant.

Applicants for an Early Career Research Grant cannot have had an NIMH or federal R01 grant or its equivalent. Federal funding such as K awards (i.e. mentored grants) are allowed.

*NB: The mentor fee can not be reallocated to any other part of the grant. If the mentor intends to waive the fee, the \$7,000 per year for the fee will be forfeited.*

#### **Purpose**

The Early Career Research Grant is designed to assist new researchers to obtain the advice, guidance and supervision of an established mentor in a selected area of suicide research. These grants are awarded for a two-year period are awarded to investigators with an academic rank no higher than assistant professor. This

The mentor must have an academic rank of associate or full professor and an established record of suicide research and publication relevant to the researcher's proposed study. Individuals may serve as mentors for no more than two AFSP grantees at a time, whether Early Career Research Grants or Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

## **SPECIAL POLICIES FOR POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS**

The evaluation of Postdoctoral Research Fellowship applications will include consideration of the research training plan and the opportunities provided for the applicant to receive meaningful guidance in carrying out the proposed study and preparing for a career in suicide research.

**a.** Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are awarded to individuals who will be receiving training and conducting research at universities and other training institutions in the U.S. and abroad.

**b.** Fellowship applicants must have completed all requirements for a Ph.D., M.D., or other doctoral degree prior to the start date of the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. Individuals who have three or more academic years of postdoctoral fellowship research experience prior to the time the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship would begin are not eligible for this award.

**c.** An AFSP Postdoctoral Research Fellowship may not be held concurrently with any other postdoctoral fellowship. Additional funds may be secured by the Fellow to support costs associated with the research project.

**d.** Although it is the general policy of AFSP that individuals may be the Principal Investigator on only one AFSP grant at a time, individuals holding an AFSP Postdoctoral Research Fellowship are eligible to receive additional funds through an AFSP Pilot Research Grant to support costs associated with the research project (as distinct from salary support or the Institutional Allowance, as described below). Fellows may apply for a Pilot Research Grant at any point during the Fellowship period (See *AFSP Policies for Pilot Research Grants*).

**e.** Recipients of the AFSP Postdoctoral Research Fellowship may not reapply for this award.

### **Purpose**

Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are training grants designed to enable early career researchers at this level to qualify for independent careers in suicide research. The training can be in either basic or clinical research and must be full-time (100% FTE effort); that is, Fellows are expected to devote at least 40 hours per week to the training program and may not have any significant clinical or other responsibilities during the funding period.

### **Mentoring**

The application for a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship must be endorsed by the applicant's proposed mentor and by the head of the department in which the training will be received. Both a research proposal and a plan of training must be formulated and agreed upon by the mentor and the applicant and described in detail in the application.

The mentor must have an academic rank of Associate or Full Professor and an established record of suicide research and publication relevant to the applicant's proposed study. Individuals may serve as mentors for no more than two AFSP grantees at a time, whether Early Career Research Grants or Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

### **Training**

Postdoctoral Fellowship applicants should include a training program that demonstrates increasing capacity in research related to their AFSP study.

### **Requirements**

The Postdoctoral Research Fellowship provides an annual stipend for a two-year period plus an Institutional Allowance. The annual stipend may be used *only* for compensation of the Fellow. Stipend payments for Postdoctoral Research Fellowships are made directly to the recipient institution. The institution may supplement the

stipend to offset the cost of living, or may provide compensation in the form of salary or tuition reimbursement for such services as teaching or serving as a laboratory assistant. The conditions of stipend supplementation or compensation may not interfere with or detract from the Fellow's training program.

The Institutional Allowance may be used to defray such expenses as research supplies or equipment, health insurance for the Fellow, and travel to scientific meetings. **POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SEPARATE INDIRECT COSTS.**

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### **SPECIAL POLICIES FOR PILOT RESEARCH GRANTS**

The specific purpose of the Pilot Research Grant is to provide seed money for projects that show promise in opening up new areas of suicide prevention research. Pilot Research Grants provide funding for one or two years. Standard Research Grants are for a two-year period, for

investigators at any academic rank. Although prior research on suicide is not required, applicants are expected to show evidence of prior research or research training in a related field.

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***See next page for information on Focus Grants***

# Policies for Focus Grants

## SPECIAL POLICIES FOR ALL FOCUS GRANT MECHANISMS

Focus Grants are unique grants that are awarded through a special RFA (Request for Applications) process. They are designed to advance innovative, potentially high-yield projects that focus on a specific area of suicide prevention. These areas have been determined by AFSP and its Scientific Council, and are reviewed and updated annually on the AFSP website.

**Applications for Focus Grants are considered once each year and must be submitted by the deadline. A letter of Intent (LOI) is required, and only invited investigators will be eligible to apply.** Letters of Intent should be emailed to [research@afsp.org](mailto:research@afsp.org). The Letter of Intent must be received by the posted date and must include:

- Title page including:
  - Specification of which Focus Grant category is being proposed (see website)
  - Descriptive title of proposal
  - Name, title, institutional affiliations, and address and telephone number of the PI(s).
  - Names, titles, and institutional affiliations and roles of other key personnel.
  - List of participating institutions.
- A brief 2-page project description with:
  - Objectives
  - Sample
  - Outcome measures
  - Procedures (including approach to data analysis)
- References may be on a separate page

For full, invited applications, those that include more than one funded site, a primary PI who is responsible for oversight and correspondence must be designated and listed as the Primary Site PI. Each site must submit its own site information as part of the online application (IF invited to apply). Contact information for

Investigator and Finance and Administrative Departments, Budget, Budget Justification, Personnel, and Biographical Information must be unique to the site, and the application must include additional, detailed information about the unique role that each separate site will play in the project. An overall multi-site project budget should be completed summarizing all of the budget information for the application.

### **Purpose**

Focus Grants are designed to advance innovative, potentially high-yield projects that focus on a specific area of suicide prevention. These areas have been determined by AFSP and its Scientific Council, and are reviewed and updated annually.

### **Requirements**

Focus Grants are generally made for a period of three years, with continuing funding contingent upon the prior year's performance.

Focus Grants are awarded for a three-year period to experienced investigators. Although prior research on suicide is not required, applicants are expected to show evidence of prior research or research training in a related field. It is strongly recommended that a suicide researcher is a member of the research team.

### **Application Dates and Notifications**

Applications for Focus Grants are considered once each year and must be submitted by the deadline. Letters of Intent (LOI) are required, and only invited investigators will be eligible to apply. Please visit our website for each year's date. Final award letters are issued following review and approval by the Scientific Council, and in turn by the Board of Directors, at their May meeting. These grants, if approved, may begin after July 1<sup>st</sup> but before January 1<sup>st</sup>.