Instructions for Applying for a Hearing Health Foundation Emerging Research Grant

Applications are due by 11:59PM ET on Thursday, Feb. 29, 2024.
Late applications will not be accepted. Applications that are incomplete or that have not been completed in accordance with the instructions outlined below or that are submitted by ineligible applicants will not be considered. Review these instructions **and** download required attachments to review additional instructions for each respective attachment type!

You must submit the LOI (eligibility check) before you may begin your application. The deadline for submitting the LOI is 11:59PM ET on Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2024. You will not be permitted to submit a full application if your LOI is not completed by this deadline.

You are **STRONGLY** encouraged to log into ProposalCentral well before the deadline to ensure that you are familiar with the application process and the required documentation. (These instructions are available on HHF's website and in ProposalCentral.)

!! Please note that an application must receive approval from an institutional signatory before it may be submitted. Ensure you allow sufficient time for this step.

Eligibility ("LOI")

Before you may begin an application, you must confirm your eligibility for the Emerging Research Grants program. You are encouraged to review the ERG Policy in full before beginning, available online and following these instructions. The eligibility check appears as the "LOI Section" in ProposalCentral.
HHF will in most cases confirm your eligibility to continue with your application within one business day of submitting the LOI, but it may take longer. Once approved to continue your application, you have until the full application submission deadline at the top of this page to complete and submit the full application. You are encouraged to complete the LOI Section early in case there is a delay in confirming your eligibility.

If you have questions about eligibility, please contact Christopher Geissler, Ph.D., Director of Program and Research Support, at grants@hhf.org.

You must answer all of the eligibility questions in the LOI section.

!! Please note that applications for the Elizabeth M. Keithley, Ph.D. Early Stage Investigator Awards (formerly "General Hearing Health") are open only to Early Stage Investigators (ESI) who:
- are no more than ten (10) years from their most recent terminal degree or the end of their medical residency (as at application deadline date);
- receive no more than $100,000 (direct costs) in **all** outside funding from any other combined sources;
- have not already been awarded a R00, R01, R03, R21, K award, VA Merit, DoD grant or similar major award with equivalent funding levels.

HHF Emerging Research Grants Application Instructions

If you experience difficulties:

For **questions about HHF/ERG policies or specific questions about application elements**, you may consult the ERG Policy or email HHF via the sidebar on the lower left-hand side of the ProposalCentral window.

For **technical issues or difficulties with the ProposalCentral website**, please contact ProposalCentral directly via the "Help" menu in the upper right-hand corner of the window.
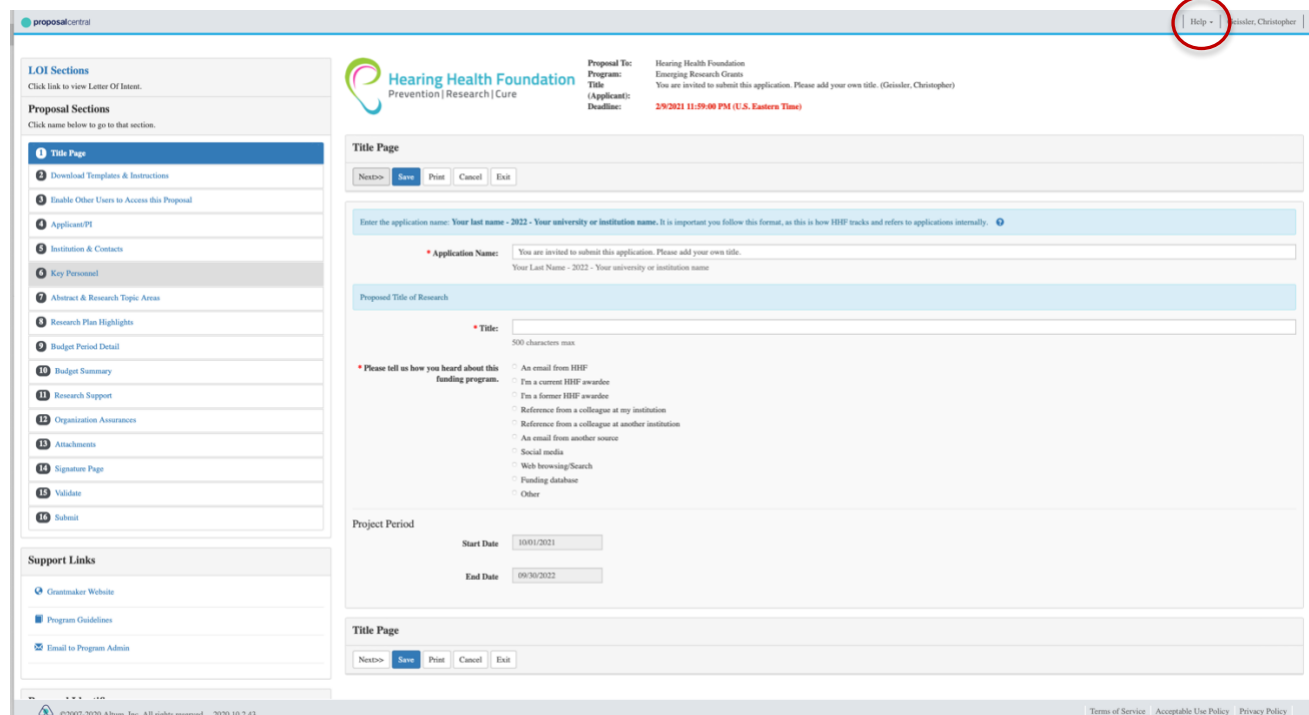
You may also:

- View the full ERG Policy statement online here

- Email HHF at grants@hhf.org

- Reach Christopher Geissler, Ph.D., Director of Program and Research Support at (212) 257-6145 (M-F, 9am to 5pm ET)

HHF Emerging Research Grants Application Instructions

HHF ERG Application by Page
Please note that character count limits for text fields include spaces. You are not able to format text in text boxes or use footnotes. See Page 8 of these instructions for guidelines on the research plan (to be uploaded as an attachment).

(1) Title Page

- Provide the proposed title of your research project (500 characters max.) and indicate how you heard about HHF and the ERG program.

  !! The Project Period cannot be changed. ERG grant years run Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 of the following calendar year. You are asked to submit a research plan and budget for two years, but the initial award will be made for Year 1 only (and then renewed for Year 2 if progress is sufficient).

(2) Download Templates & Instructions

(3) Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal

- You must add your institution's Signing Official here with permission to "Edit".
- You may add co-investigators here if you would like them to have access to the application. Co-investigators must be listed on Page 6 (Key Personnel), but only need to be added here if they require access to this proposal.
- Please click on the help icon to familiarize yourself with the levels of access available.

HHF Emerging Research Grants Application Instructions

(4) Applicant/PI

- HHF strongly encourages the use of an ORCID iD, but it is not required. ORCID iDs allow funders (and fellow researchers) to find and identify your outputs and awards more easily. For more information, see orcid.org.

- Please indicate whether you received your most recent terminal degree or completed your medical residency within the last ten years (dated back from the application deadline).

- Please provide total amounts of **all** current, pending or planned research support from outside sources separately for a) you, the PI and b) all co-investigators. You will provide details on this support on Page 11 of this application. Only include direct costs. You do not need to include internal institutional funding (e.g., start-up funds).

- Indicate if you have received any awards from Hearing Health Foundation (or Deafness Research Foundation, HHF's pre-2011 name) by listing years separated by semicolons. If none, please write "none" or "N/A".

- Attach your biosketch (the PI's) on this page. You may download the blank template on page 2 or page 13 of this application. You may also attach the biosketch on Page 13 along with other attachments.

(5) Institution & Contacts

- Your institution information is drawn automatically from your Profile.

- Provide email addresses for the Signing Official and Financial Official.
    - The Signing Official will be required to approve this application before you may submit it. **Ensure you provide sufficient time for the Signing Official to approve the application before the deadline for submission.**
    - The Financial Official will be contacted if you are awarded an Emerging Research Grant.

!! The Signing Official must be added here **AND** given permission to "Edit" on Page 3 (Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal) in order to sign and approve the application before submission.

(6) Key Personnel

- Please add co-investigators here, if applicable.
!! Any co-investigators' biosketches must be added on this page. You may upload the biosketch at the bottom of the "Contact Screen" pop-up when you add the co-investigator or later by clicking the edit button to the right of their name, as illustrated here:

Principal Investigator	Geissler, Christopher	Director of Program and Research Support	Hearing Health Foundation	cgeissler@hhf.org	212-257-6145
Role	**Name**	**Title**	**Institution**	**Email**	**Phone** **Effort** **Actions**
Co-Investigator	McGrath, Lauren	Director of Communications	Hearing Health Foundation	lmcgrath@hhf.org	

(7) Abstract & Research Topic Areas

Please provide:
- Abstract of the proposed research project (3,000 characters max.)

- Keywords: please list three keywords or phrases related to the project & separate with commas (260 characters max.)

- Methodology and analytic techniques used – keywords (500 characters max.): Please list keywords ONLY for the proposed methods and/or analytic techniques that will be used in this project. For example: confocal microscopy, immunofluorescence, electrophysiology, auditory brainstem responses, optogenetics, etc.

- Research Topic Area(s) – you may choose more than one if applicable. Remember: you may only choose Elizabeth M. Keithley, Ph.D. Early Stage Investigator Award (formerly "General Hearing Health") if you met the eligibility requirements outlined in the ERG Policy and summarized on page 1 of these instructions.

(8) Research Plan Highlights

Please provide:
- A summary of how this research is emerging, i.e. how it addresses a question/set of questions that are new or applies a new approach to an established question/set of questions. Discuss how this research is distinct from the mentor's (or co-investigators') lines of research. (5,000 characters max.)

- Describe the pathway to independence if you are an early stage investigator. If you are not an ESI, you may enter "N/A," though you are also invited to provide details here regarding the proposed project's place in or impact on career progression and/or your research program. (3,000 characters max.)

- Clinical application(s), including an outline of the steps of progression. (3,000 characters max.)

- Long-term goals related to this project. Please also highlight the project's impact on people with hearing loss. (5,000 characters max.)

- If this project focuses on the vestibular system, please describe how it will relate to hearing health and help improve our understanding the auditory system. If your project does not focus on the vestibular system, you may type N/A, though you are also welcome to use this space to further elaborate on how your project will help us to better understand the auditory system. (7,500 characters max.)

(9) Budget Period Detail

- HHF grants up to a maximum of $50,000 per year, including indirect costs, which must not exceed 10% of the total.

‼ **Refer to the [ERG Policy](#) (Section II.B) for details on allowable and unallowable costs.**

- Itemize within the broader categories provided, as reasonable. You may add lines as necessary.

- Please note: The PI and co-investigator(s) can receive no salary. No individual with an Au.D., Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent may receive salary from ERG funds. Salaries for other individuals include benefits, as applicable.

- You are asked to upload a Budget Justification on Page 13 (Attachments). You may format and organize this as makes sense for your project and its budget.

- Funds are not transferable without prior written approval. Unused funds are to be returned to HHF at the termination of the award or funding period (whichever occurs first).

(10) Budget Summary

- Please confirm the total amounts

(11) Research Support

- Please provide details of all current, pending and planned support here on Page 11. These details correspond to the total amounts (direct costs only) entered on Page 4.

- If you (and any co-investigators) receive no outside support, check "No Other Support to report."

- Click the + button to add support. Ensure you have chosen the appropriate individual.
    - ProposalCentral may be able to automatically populate information about support you or co-investigators receive based on information already in the system. If not, click "Create New Other Support" in the lower right-hand corner of the window and enter the appropriate details. Choose "Active" for confirmed support, even with a start date in the future and "Pending" for applications that are pending.
    - **NOTE**: You can only add support from any co-investigator's Profile if you have permission to "View" their profile, and you can only add new support for a co-investigator if you have permission to "Edit" their Profile. Instead, use the provided form (download on Page 2) to provide details of any current, pending or planned support for co-investigators. Complete this form, save as a PDF, and upload it on Page 13 (Attachments). Use this form **only** for co-investigators. PI support details must be entered online.

- You must submit letters confirming support received by the PI or any co-investigators. Please combine all letters into one PDF document and upload this on Page 13 (Attachments):

"Supporting Documentation for Current/Pending/Planned Research Support." Include any letters and abstracts for co-investigator support included on the downloaded form.

(12) Organization Assurances

- Please answer the questions regarding the use of vertebrate animals or human subjects and indicate the status of your IACUC or IRB approval, if relevant

- If you have received IACUC or IRB approval, you must upload the letters confirming approval on Page 13 (Attachments). If IACUC or IRB approval is pending, please submit the application and email the letters as soon as they are received to grants@hhf.org.

‼ **Do not** upload full animal protocols to your application.

(13) Attachments

- Upload attachments here
  - Reminder: Co-investigator biosketches <u>must be uploaded on Page 6</u>. If you upload these here (if you have co-investigators), you will not be able to submit the application.

☑ Attachments you have already uploaded appear here ⟵

⫿ Required attachments (without which you will not be able to submit your proposal) appear here

ⓘ Downloads—instructions, blank biosketch, and the **required** Performance Sites template—appear here

Click "Attach Files" (circled in red above) to upload an attachment.

HHF Emerging Research Grants Application Instructions

Attachment types—**REQUIRED**:

- PI Biosketch
- Specific Aims: 1 page maximum.
- Research Plan
    - Maximum length 6 pages. Formatting requirements: Font size 11, minimum margin with of 0.5 inches, maximum of 6 lines per vertical inch; images, tables, diagrams, etc., must be included in page maximum.
    - The research plan should include:
        - *Background & Significance*: Detail the project's background, including supporting data, previous work, and results obtained on this subject. Identify the gaps which the project is intended to fill. Link the specific aims to the long-term objectives.
        - *Preliminary Data*: Present preliminary studies pertinent to the application information; establish the experience and competence of the investigator.
        - *Research Design & Methods*: Describe the research design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the research during the project period.
        - References, Glossary and an appendix are not to be included in this Plan (see below).
    - If you intend to apply for the second year of funding, your research plan should include details about the second year's scope of work. You will of course have an opportunity to revise the research plan during the application for renewal (in the late spring of your first project year). Similarly, you should include a general budget for the second year on Page 9 of the ProposalCentral application, but you will update this as part of the renewal process.
- Cited References
- Glossary
    - Maximum 2 pages
    - Please define terms used in your application
- Performance Sites, Facilities, Equipment and Key Personnel
    - Download the form from the bottom of this page and completed according to the provided instructions. It must be saved as a single PDF along with a letter (or letters) detailing permission to access performance sites/facilities/major equipment (if applicable).
- Budget Justification
    - Please explain your budget in the amount of detail and format that makes most sense given your budget (entered on Page 9).
- Supporting Documentation for Current/Pending/Planned Research Support
    - Combine letters confirming support for the PI and any co-investigators into a single PDF for upload. Details about each source of outside support is entered online on Page 11. Please ensure that it is evident in each letter for whom the support has been awarded; please group all letters for the PI together, followed by letters for any co-investigators.

HHF Emerging Research Grants Application Instructions

Attachment types—**OPTIONAL:**
These attachments are not required in order to submit the application. Some may or may not be relevant to your application (e.g., co-investigator biosketches and outside funding, IRB/IACUC letters); others are not required but may be encouraged. Please review the list below.

- Co-investigator biosketch(es)
  - o **Note**: Co-investigator biosketches <u>must be uploaded on Page 6.</u>
- Appendix to the Research Plan
  - o The appendix may include surveys, questionnaires, and/or selected publications for PI, co-investigator and other key personnel. Please note: Only those publications accepted following peer review or in press <u>but NOT available online</u> will be accepted here.
  - o All appendix components must be combined into a single PDF before uploading.
- IRB or IACUC approval letter (if applicable and available at time of application)
  - o Please **do not** upload a full animal protocol.
  - o If the approval letter is not available at time of application, you must email this letter to grants@hhf.org as soon as it is available.
- Co-Investigator Current, Pending or Planned Research Support Detail
  - o Complete and upload this form if you are unable to add all of your co-investigators' research support on Page 11 (Research Support).
- Additional letters of support
  - o Please combine all such letters into a single PDF before uploading.
  - o Early stage investigators are <u>especially encouraged</u> to submit a letter of support from the mentor.

(14) Signature Page

- You may print the signature page alone or with all attachments, if you wish.
  - o You do not have to submit anything in hard copy to HHF.

- You must electronically "sign" the agreement on this page in order to submit the application.

- The Signing Official at your institution must also sign the agreement on this page in order for you to submit the application. They will be notified automatically by email once you have signed. It is your responsibility to ensure that they sign the application.

(15) Validate

Click "Validate" at the bottom of the screen (circled in the image below) to confirm that all required sections have been completed and attachments uploaded and/or to identify which components are missing.

(16) Submit

Click "Submit" to submit your completed application.

Once submitted, you may not add to or alter your application.

If your application is complete, you will receive a confirmation message on screen and a confirmation of submission via email. If you do not receive an email, check your "Spam" folder and/or add pcsupport@altum.com to your address book. If you still have problems receiving the confirmation email, contact ProposalCentral (Altum) directly at pcsupport@altum.com or via the telephone numbers available under "Contact Us" in the "Help" menu at the top right-hand corner of your screen.

If your application is incomplete, you will receive a message on screen informing you of such. Please complete the missing sections and/or upload the missing attachments before you attempt to submit again.

**Thank you for applying to Hearing Health Foundation's
Emerging Research Grants program!**

**You will be notified of the result of your application by early August.
For any questions, please contact grants@hhf.org.**