2017/2018

HSF, Ontario

Mid-Career Investigator Award Submission Guidelines

(Fall 2016 Competition)

30 June 2016
Summary

Purpose:
To strengthen health research capacity in Ontario, in order to advance knowledge and innovation aimed at preventing cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease (CCVD), reducing recurrence and complications, improving health outcomes (including quality of life), and decreasing the burden of CCVD-related illness and disability on individuals and society.

Funding Mechanism:
Salary support to highly qualified mid-career scientists who are within 8 – 18 years of their first full-time academic appointment, to protect professional time to build influential programs of CCVD research with the goal of productively impacting the health of individuals and society.

Key Criteria: Mid-Career Investigator Award
i. Applicants must demonstrate a track record of research excellence and productivity as a Principal Investigator in a research discipline relevant to the Foundation’s mission
ii. Applicants must have completed a PhD and/or MD degree in a relevant discipline
iii. Applicants must conduct their professional research activities in Ontario while holding the award
iv. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to CCVD research and that their body of research is well recognized, frequently cited and considered by peers to be influential and of excellent quality
v. Applicants must demonstrate that their proposed research program has the potential to impact one or more of the following aims:
   • prevention of cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease
   • reduction of cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease recurrence and complications
   • improvement in cardiovascular/cerebrovascular health outcomes (including quality of life) through better diagnosis, treatment or rehabilitation
   • reduction in the cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease-related burden of illness and disability on individuals and society
vi. Applicants must demonstrate capacity and expertise to conduct the program of research being proposed for the term of the award
vii. Host institution must demonstrate specific support to facilitate the candidate’s success
viii. No fewer than eight, and no more than eighteen years may have elapsed since the date of the applicant’s first academic appointment and the start date of the award

Application Submission Deadline:
Applications for the Mid-Career Investigator Award must be post-marked/courier-stamped no later than September 12, 2016.

Applications post-marked/courier-stamped after the deadline will be considered late. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that application packages and items arriving separately are delivered to HSF before the deadline.

HSF reserves the right to decline late or incomplete applications.
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The Heart and Stroke Foundation is committed to funding research excellence. Over the past 60 years, this investment has totaled more than $1.45 billion in research support, placing our organization at the forefront of advances in CCVD prevention, treatment and recovery.

The Foundation invests in research through both national and provincial funding programs. The Ontario provincial office is strategically targeting its investments to build and sustain essential research capacity in Ontario by investing in the best early-career Clinician-Scientists, and Mid-Career Investigators – enhancing their ability to build influential and impactful programs of CCVD research, with the goal of productively impacting the health of individuals and society.

Detailed Guidelines and Criteria

A. Program Objectives

To strengthen health research capacity in Ontario, in order to advance knowledge and innovation aimed at preventing cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease (CCVD), reducing recurrence and complications, improving health outcomes (including quality of life), and decreasing the burden of CCVD-related illness and disability on individuals and society.

To attain this objective the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Ontario offers the Mid-Career Investigator Award.

The goal of the Mid-Career Investigator Award is to provide salary support to promising mid-career scientists to facilitate and build upon their track record of research excellence, productivity and influence. Individuals are considered to be at the mid-career stage if they have been awarded independent peer reviewed research funding support in the field of cardiovascular/cerebrovascular diseases, and are within eight to eighteen years of their first full-time academic appointment.

B. Eligibility Criteria

Applicant must:

1. Hold a PhD and/or MD degree in a relevant discipline or specialty;

2. Have a full-time appointment, or be under consideration for a full-time appointment by their institution that will be effective by the start of the award, at the Associate Professor level or above;

3. Demonstrate that no fewer than eight years, and no more than eighteen years have elapsed since the applicant’s first full-time academic appointment at an Assistant Professor level (or equivalent) and the start date of the award. Interruption in a candidate’s research career will be taken into account in determining eligibility;

4. Hold active, independently peer reviewed operating funding as PI or co-PI that extends through at least the first two years of the Mid-Career Investigator Award by the start of the award; supporting the proposed program of research, and maintaining funding throughout;

5. Demonstrate that their proposed program of research has the potential to impact one or more of the following funding program aims:
   - Prevention of cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease
   - Reduction in cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease recurrence or complications
   - Improvement in cardiovascular/cerebrovascular health outcomes (including quality of life) through better diagnosis, treatment or rehabilitation
   - Reduction in the cardiovascular/cerebrovascular disease-related burden of illness and disability on individuals and society
6. Award recipients must not have received financial support from the tobacco industry (in the form of research grants, personnel award stipends or honoraria from a tobacco manufacturer or producer) in the previous five years, and must not do so for the duration of this award.

Individuals who are uncertain about their eligibility for this award should contact the HSF Ottawa Office prior to submitting an application at: research@hsf.ca.

Applications for funding must be complete with all requested information and attachments, and meet formatting criteria in all respects. In fairness to all applicants, applications that are received after the deadline, are incomplete, do not meet formatting guidelines, or otherwise do not meet eligibility criteria, will not be considered for funding.

C. Assessment Criteria

All applications will be assessed through a rigorous peer-review process by the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Peer reviewers will be asked to comment on and rate applications in the following areas:

Applicant
- Academic record and accomplishments
- Demonstrated commitment to CCVD research
- Evidence of national and/or international stature and expertise in the area of specialty
- Research productivity; citations and quantity, quality and impact of peer reviewed publications appropriate to career level and standards within the discipline or area of research
- Demonstration that the candidate’s body of research is well recognized and considered by his/her peers to be influential and of excellent quality
- Demonstrated capacity and expertise to conduct the research program being proposed
- Demonstrated accomplishments as a principal investigator, including number and value of grants held

Research Program/Focus
- Quality, feasibility and focus of the applicant’s proposed program of research
- Inclusion of inter-disciplinary elements, collaborations and plans for KTE (KTE includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange, and/or ethically sound application of knowledge)
- Relevance and potential impact in relation to the HSF funding program objectives (see page 4)

Institution/Environment
- Demonstrated commitment by the host institution of specific supports to facilitate the applicant’s success for the duration of the award
- Assurances from the host institution that the applicant will have 75% of his/her time allocated to research. Details on how this 75% allocation of research time will be spent must be provided, as well as commitments for the remaining 25%. The latter may be devoted to teaching, clinical duties or other activities, but it must be clearly demonstrated that these activities will not impinge upon time allocated for research

Trainees
- Past, present and planned leadership (as evidenced by the description of the program of research) in the supervision and mentorship of trainees in CCVD research
- Demonstrated skills and expertise and a commitment to supervising and mentoring research trainees

D. General Information

1. HSF Mid-Career Investigator awards are tenable in Ontario universities, hospitals and research institutes.

2. In order to allow as many researchers as possible to benefit from HSF Ontario funding, recipients must not concurrently hold an HSF Mid-Career Investigator award and any other HSF salary
award, or another peer reviewed salary award(s) of equal or greater value from another independent funding agency (including Canada Research Chairs). Compliance is subject to auditing.

3. Inter-disciplinary research, collaborations and knowledge translation and exchange (KTE) activities (synthesis, dissemination, exchange, and/or ethically sound application of knowledge) are strongly encouraged by the Foundation.

4. The awardee will be considered an employee of his/her university or institution and monies granted will be paid to the institution for payment to the awardee. He/she will enjoy all the benefits of a full-time member of the staff for pension, insurance and other plans. The awardee will be permitted to augment the salary from other professional sources. The HSF imposes no restriction on the additional income that the awardee may earn, provided it is within the guidelines of the sponsoring university or institution and that such activity does not impinge upon the time dedicated to the proposed research.

5. Applicants must indicate operating funding (source, term, amount), currently held and/or to be applied for, which supports the research program proposed in the HSF award application.

E. Term

The Mid-Career Investigator award can be held for a maximum of 4 years. It is non-renewable.

The award will normally commence July 1 and can start no later than September 1 of the same year.

F. Stipend and Allowances

The stipend for the Mid-Career Investigator award is $80,000 per annum, including applicable benefits.

G. Institutional Commitment

Applications for this award must be supported by the host institution at which the Mid-Career investigator will conduct the proposed program of research. The host institution must guarantee adequate space and facilities for the investigator’s research, commensurate with the requirements of the proposed program of research. In addition, other details outlining specifically how the institution will support the investigator to be successful must be provided and will be part of the peer review. This may include, but is not limited to, additional stipend support, research operational support, travel allowances and/or in-kind support.

H. Award Notifications

Official letters will be sent to the applicants by April 2017.

I. Application

Applicants who are unsuccessful in two Mid-Career Investigator award competitions are allowed only one additional application in a subsequent year, for a total of three unsuccessful applications.

Applicants who are re-submitting an application to the Mid-Career Investigator competition must respond to peer review feedback, as applicable, received on the prior application submission(s) in the appropriate section of the Application Form.

Submitted applications must be complete in every respect and adhere fully to application package specifications.

The complete application must include:
1. A description of the applicant’s research history and future plans for their research career.
3. An Institutional Statement from the Dean and Department Head (or institutional equivalents) of the sponsoring institution providing:
   a) a critical appraisal of the applicant and the proposed program of research;
   b) details on how the 75% allocation of research time will be spent, as well as the commitments for the remaining 25%. Activities included in the latter cannot impinge on the time protected for research;
   c) details on the specific commitments – financial and/or in-kind - of the host institution in support of the applicant.

A single statement from by the Dean and Department Head (or institutional equivalents) will suffice.

4. A one-page executive summary of the applicant’s proposed overall program of research.

5. A detailed description of the applicant’s proposed research program and related research activities, not to exceed eight pages.

6. A complete structured lay summary and impact statement with a clear explanation of how the proposed program of research is relevant to the mission of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the objectives of this funding program. The lay summary must be written in everyday language (for a general audience).

7. Three letters of reference attesting to the influence, quality and scholarly recognition of the applicant’s body of research. Letters must be in sealed envelopes with the signature of the referee across the seal and submitted with the application, or submitted directly by the referee to the HSF National Office via mail or courier. **In either case, letters must arrive to the HSF Research Department in Ottawa, Ontario by the application deadline. Late letters will not be included in peer review.** Referees may not be associated with the applicant, nor work in the same department.

8. The applicant’s Common CV form (HSF version). This is a web-based form, which allows CV information to be entered online. Please refer to [CommonCV.net](http://CommonCV.net) for further instructions.

**J. Submission of Application**

The applicant must submit 1 PDF copy of the full application on a memory stick and a printed copy of the last page of the application form with either original signatures, a scan of original signatures, or electronic signatures (note: the expectation is that an electronic signature will hold the same weight as an original (wet) signature). The PDF file name should be in the following format: MC Last name First name (e.g. MC SmithJane). The memory stick label should contain the following information:

- Name:
- Program Type: MC 2017/2018
- Short title:
- Date:

The PDF should be organized in the following order, with **bookmarks** placed marking each section:

- Completed application form
- Research history and career goals
- Executive summary of the proposed program of research
- Details of proposed program of research
- First page of each published paper or galley proof, within the last 5 years
- For each manuscript in press, a copy of the letter from the editor and the title/abstract page
- Applicant’s Common CV
- Appendices

HSF will attach copies of the reference letters received by the application deadline to the PDF prior to sending the application to reviewers.
Please forward a complete copy of the application on memory stick and the printed copy of the last page of the application form with either original signatures, a scan of original signatures, or electronic signatures (see note above) to:

Research Department  
Heart and Stroke Foundation  
1402-222 Queen Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1P 5V9  
Attention: Mid-Career Scientist Award

K. **Contact the Heart and Stroke Foundation at:**

Research Department  
Heart and Stroke Foundation  
Tel: (613) 691-4050  
Fax: (613) 569-3278  
Email: research@hsf.ca  
Website: [www.hsf.ca/research](http://www.hsf.ca/research)