



GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The Dr Jeffrey Thomas Stroke Shield Foundation (JTSSF) is unique in that it only funds stroke research. From our perspective within clinical stroke treatment and research, we understand the importance of directing targeted research funds to the scientists and investigators who can move the best ideas in stroke research prevention and treatment forward. We believe that stroke is preventable, however, scientists who seek National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding for cardiovascular disease and/or stroke research receive a disproportionately small amount of NIH dollars. The NIH invests only 4% of its budget on heart research and a mere 1% on stroke research.

The JTSSF research funding program is the heart of our commitment to preventing stroke and improving stroke treatment. We fund a wide range of the most promising projects, from basic biological science to studies addressing social and behavioral aspects of stroke prevention. JTSSF provides seed money grants for projects that are important, feasible, and innovative that will ultimately lead to stroke prevention and a better treatment and quality of life for stroke sufferers.

Generally, we support stroke research in three key areas:

- Prevention
- Treatment and Recovery
- Awareness

ELIGIBILITY

Principal investigators who hold appointments/positions in accredited hospitals and clinics, healthcare institutions, academic medical centers, professional associations, member societies and other not-for-profit entities in the U.S. are welcome to apply.

DURATION

The grant duration can be up to 36 months, while projects of shorter duration are preferred.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

JTSSF uses a two-step application process, which starts with a letter of intent (LOI) to describe the nature and methodology of the project. In the second step, the most promising LOIs will be invited to submit a full grant application. All applications are subjected to a rigorous peer-reviewed evaluation process by our Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and other subject matter experts. The SAB makes a recommendation to the JTSSF Board of Directors (BOD), who ultimately approves all grant funding. Grant awards will be based on the outcome of scientific review, overall funder priorities and available funds.

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First Step: Applicants submit a brief letter of intent (LOI) limited to three pages, single-spaced, with no smaller than 11-point font and 1-inch margins. Supporting documentation, such as a budget and biosketch may be added as an addendum. The LOI should be sent by email as a single PDF file to eveline@strokeshieldfoundation.org and include the following:

General Information

- I. The title of project.
- II. The names, titles, and professional addresses (including telephone numbers and email addresses) of each investigator (note: please also specify the Principal Investigator as the main point of contact).
- III. The proposed dates for start and completion of the project.
- IV. An estimated budget and disclosure of other funding sources (pending and awarded).

Project Description

- V. Project Objectives: State the purpose of the project, and list specific objectives.
- VI. Project Background: Provide context for the project and the rationale for proposing the project. The rationale may include the problem or the need that the project addresses, including the magnitude of the problem, urgency or timeliness, current conditions, etc. If this is a renewal of a previously funded project, please describe the outcome.
- VII. Activities, Approaches: Describe the project approach and list planned activities. Identify the research questions or hypotheses; describe the intervention, study design, or evaluation; and define the data source(s) and analysis plan. If you are proposing a pilot or demonstration project, please list the activities that will take place, distinguish between planning and implementation activities, and describe the key partners and their involvement.
- VIII. Target Population, Stakeholders: Describe the intended target population for this project. If applicable, answer the following questions: Has the project been discussed with the intended target population or other stakeholders? Are there other audiences that might be interested in the results? Which stakeholders need be involved for the project to be effective?
- IX. High Level Workplan and Timeline: Provide a list of anticipated project deliverables and milestones with planned completion dates or date ranges.

Project Impact

- X. Desired Outcome: If the project is successful, what will change? How will the project impact the target population and how quickly will it occur? How will you proceed if the research hypothesis is confirmed or rejected?
- XI. Evaluation/Measurement: Describe how you plan to measure the success of this project. Include the indicators that will be used, and indicate who has responsibility for tracking and reporting on results. Results should be available by the end date of the project.

Second Step: Based on the recommendations of our SAB, the most promising LOIs will be

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invited to submit a full grant application. The selected applicants will receive additional instructions and information for the submission. The full application should include and elaborate on all information contained in the LOI, including more in-depth discussion of the proposed research, relevant preliminary data, study plan and methodology, a clearly defined target population and list any collaboration partners or subcontractors.

SUBMISSION:

We encourage applicants to initiate discussions about project ideas well ahead of potential deadlines. Letters of intent and budget should be submitted to Eveline Mumenthaler at eveline@strokeshieldfoundation.org. For questions, visit the Grant Program page on <https://www.strokeshieldfoundation.org> or contact Eveline directly.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Grants are made on the basis of merit and commitment to study research questions that advance JTSSF's mission. Other important criteria include:

- Scientific rationale - Proposed projects should address an area of critical unmet need for stroke patients.
- Overall experimental design – The hypothesis and/or objective should be clearly articulated and proposed methods should be appropriate and sufficient to achieve these goals. Details of key measures and success criteria should be described.
- Budget - The proposed budget should be reasonable and justified for the research proposed. Details of personnel (including non-paid collaborators), study reagents and supplies and all other costs should be clearly indicated and justified.
- Timeline - Timelines for completing each study should be clearly defined and include relevant milestones. Project goals must be achievable within the award period.
- Strength of the investigator and research environment - The investigative team should be appropriately trained and well suited to carrying out the proposed work.
- Institutional support - Mentors must be faculty at the instructor level or higher. Public and private institutions such as hospitals, universities, colleges, and laboratories may submit applications. The grant will be awarded to the institution from which the applicant has an affiliation, not to the individual.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Grants will be awarded each year in varying amounts depending on available funds and nature of proposed research. Funds may be used for start up projects or supplementary funding. Salaries, including graduate student or postdoctoral fellows, may be requested at the principal investigator's discretion.

It is JTSSF's policy not to pay indirect costs on any proposal. Budgets must be appropriate and justifiable for the work described. No equipment-only grants will be considered. Each item and its cost must be clearly detailed in the budget and justified within the project description.

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JTSSF encourages applicants to seek and secure additional funding sources (co-funded projects are welcome). For projects where the true cost may exceed the overall program budget limitations, JTSSF is open to explore creative strategies for leveraging other funding sources applicants may have. For example, applicants may request JTSSF funding to supplement an existing project in order to maximize the use of collected data. Applicants should provide clear and detailed justification for how supplemental funding would enhance a project with respect to the ability to make critical decisions about study results.

Applicants should propose timeline and milestones to ensure completion of study objectives. Continuation of funding will be dependent upon successful completion of these milestones. Examples of key milestones include: IRB/IACUC approval, regulatory approvals, subject recruitment/assessment progress and completion points, patient assessment points, "go- no go" decision points, development of necessary research reagents and tools, etc. In cases where ethical/regulatory approval is required to perform the work, such approvals may be required before initial payments are made, or in the cases of clinical trials within six months of award start date. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in termination of the award.

JTSSF grants are conditioned on meeting certain milestones and deliverables including submission of expense and progress reports and participation in JTSSF sponsored assessment meetings. Multi-year support is not automatic for any JTSSF award and is contingent upon the grantee's submitted progress reports being favorably reviewed by an appointed JTSSF Scientific Advisory Board. This assessment is predicated on JTSSF's review of progress to date, its determination of the quality of the scientific research performed, and its continued high relevance to stroke prevention and JTSSF priorities.

A statement from the PI's grants office attesting to the receipt and use of the funds (required by the IRS) must be submitted at the end of the fiscal year.

Funding Limitations

The Foundation does not generally provide support for:

- Grants to individuals or loans
- Organizations in support of activities to influence legislation

Grant awards and payments are made at the sole discretion of JTSSF. We do not assume an obligation for permanent support of any activity. However, it will consider grants for two to three years when the goals of a project require further financial support.

INQUIRIES

JTSSF welcomes the opportunity to clarify any issues or questions from potential applicants regarding any JTSSF funding program. To avoid submission complications, JTSSF encourages questions well in advance of the submission deadlines. Please direct inquiries regarding programmatic, fiscal and administrative issues to eveline@strokeshieldfoundation.org.