



# **2026 Research Award Program Applicant Instructions**

- Career Development Awards**
- Fellowships**
- Grants**

5750 Old Orchard Rd, Suite 450  
Skokie, IL 60077  
(847) 328-2256 voice  
(847) 328-0509 fax  
[dfrap@dermatologyfoundation.org](mailto:dfrap@dermatologyfoundation.org)  
[dermatologyfoundation.org](http://dermatologyfoundation.org)

**July 2025**

# Table of Contents

	Page
I. Introduction	3
Important Dates	
II. Research Award Program Overview	5
III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements	
A. Career Development Awards	9
B. Fellowship	16
C. Research Grants	17
IV. Preparing and Submitting Application Materials	18
V. Application Review	23
VII. Dermatology Foundation Forms	
Exhibits:	
A. NIH Biosketch	27
B. Chair's Comments of Support	28
VIII. Frequently Asked Questions	31

# I. Introduction

The Dermatology Foundation was founded 60 years ago to provide research funding that promotes advancements in patient care by supporting the development and retention of talented new physician-scientists and investigators. Today, the Foundation continues to dedicate itself to advancing the specialty of dermatology by offering various funding opportunities through its Research Award Program. In 2025, \$3.33 million in research funds were awarded to fifty-one (51) individuals.

All research funded by the DF must be carried out in the U.S. under the sponsorship of a dermatology department or division that is ACGME-accredited for dermatology training. Applicants must meet the DF's general eligibility criteria, as well as any award-specific requirements, by July 1, 2026. Applicants from minority populations are encouraged to apply.

The Dermatology Foundation encourages applications concerning health issues impacting minority groups, including, but not limited to, racial minorities, sexual-gender minorities, and underserved/disadvantaged populations.

## Key Program Updates

- As of 2025, our research awards have increased. New applications for career development awards are now at the \$75,000 level, with the option to renew for one additional year. The fellowship awards have increased to \$35,000, and our research awards have increased to \$25,000.
- All applications for a DF career development award, fellowship, or research grant must be submitted via the [CDAFG Research Award Portal](#). Further details are provided in section D of the Research Award Program Overview. A CDAFG Award Portal Instructions document has been created to outline the steps required to apply online and is available on [our website](#).
- The Medical Student Research Supplement Award (MSRSA), available to former DF career development award recipients, has two application deadlines each year—May 1 and November 1. Watch for separate MSRSA information, including a unique application portal, on the DF website.

## 2026 Research Award Applications

The following pages provide essential information potential applicants need to know to evaluate the various award opportunities and develop a successful application and research proposal. Interested individuals are strongly encouraged to read sections II and III before preparing their submission. The Dermatology Foundation must receive applications for the 2026 award year by the date noted below. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered for funding. The DF will confirm receipt via email (candidates not receiving confirmation are encouraged to contact the office). Questions regarding the application process may be directed to DF staff at [dfrap@dermatologyfoundation.org](mailto:dfrap@dermatologyfoundation.org) or (847) 328-2256.

## I. Introduction

### **Important Dates**

*New CDA, Fellowship, and Grant Application Deadline: **October 15, 2025***

*CDA Renewal Deadline: **December 1, 2025***

*Applications are due by midnight Central Time*

*Announcement of 2026 Award Recipients: **March 28, 2026***

## II. Research Awards Program Overview

### A. Foundation Awards

The Dermatology Foundation offers early research support through career development awards (CDAs), a fellowship award, and grants. The CDAs provide the potential for two years of salary support for junior faculty in the early stages of their career (i.e., through the level of Assistant Professor). The Foundation fellowship provides an annual salary stipend and is not intended for faculty. Research grants provide seed money for a variety of dermatologic research projects.

The detailed description, applicant eligibility criteria, and value of each award vary and are presented in section III. Applicants should carefully review this information to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria before preparing any application materials.

### B. General Eligibility Requirements

All DF-funded research must be conducted in the U.S. under the sponsorship of a department/division of dermatology that is ACGME-approved for training in dermatology.

A project to be performed as a part of the U.S. government research program (except Veterans Administration) or to be performed at a private foundation without an academic affiliation to dermatology is not eligible for funding.

A project involving human subjects must have IRB approval at the time funding commences, i.e., July 1, and throughout the term of the award.

An individual who is a prior or current principal investigator (PI) on a federal grant is not eligible to receive a DF career development award, fellowship, or grant. The following two exceptions apply:

1) CDA awardees may have effort on an NIH grant as long as they are **not the senior PI** who initiated the application, and they **do not have direct reporting responsibilities** for this or prior federal awards. Total support from all federal grants must be **less than 20% of their total effort** during the term of the DF award.

OR

2) The individual receiving a DF CDA/ fellowship or grant is the recipient of an NIH training grant or an equivalent grant from another granting agency.

Upon receipt as the PI of a federal grant, a DF CDA or grant will be withdrawn. Note, an individual who receives a federal grant that eliminates their status as a "new investigator" is not eligible to maintain/receive a DF CDA.

Fellowship recipients may receive NIH training grants or an equivalent grant from another granting agency.

**Important Note:** The Foundation utilizes the NIH definitions of "principal investigator" and "co-investigator" to administer this policy, as found in the Glossary of NIH Terms.

## II. Research Awards Program Overview (cont.)

### C. Institutional Quotas for New Applications

The Foundation accepts a maximum of the following number of award applications from a single academic program, including all affiliated institutions. The following quotas apply to new applications and do not include renewal requests for career development awards. The department or division chair is responsible for ensuring that the institution does not exceed the quotas.

<b>Dermatology Foundation Award</b>	<b># of New Applications</b>
1. Physician Scientist Career Development Award	One
2. Public Health Career Development Award	One
3. Dermatologic Surgery Career Development Award	One
4. Dermatopathology Research Career Development Award	One
5. Medical Dermatology Career Development Award	One
6. Pediatric Dermatology Career Development Award	One
7. Science of Human Appearance Career Development Award	One
8. Women's Health Career Development Award	One
9. Research Career Development Award	One
10. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Career Development Award	One
11. Dermatologist Investigator Research Fellowship	Up to two
12. Patient Directed Investigation Grant	One
13. Research Grant	One

### D. Application Process

Candidates are expected to prepare and submit their application materials to the Foundation personally. These materials must be submitted via the [CDAFG Research Award Portal](#) for CDAs, fellowships, and grants. Section IV provides detailed instructions for preparing a research proposal and application package. The DF has also prepared a CDAFG Award Portal Reference Instructions Document for first-time users of the new application portal, which can be found on the DF website. Extra care should be taken to follow the detailed format and content instructions for an award. Applicants should submit only the information required by the Foundation. Supplemental information of any kind will not be accepted. **If an application submission does not meet Foundation requirements or is incomplete, it may be returned without further consideration.**

### E. Department Chair and Mentor Comments of Support

Chairs are required to submit their comments of support using the Dermatology Foundation form for all career development awards and fellowships. For grant applications, a chair is to provide a letter of support if the applicant is not submitting a career development award. Mentors are to provide a formal letter of support. Applicants should be certain that all attachments and letters cover the necessary topics before they are submitted online. Once an application has been submitted, it cannot be altered or modified.

## **II. Research Awards Program Overview (cont.)**

### **F. Application Deadline**

Applicants must submit their applications and supporting materials on or before the application deadline via the [CDAFG Research Award Portal](#). Upon receipt of a new submission, the Foundation will confirm receipt via email. Candidates who do not receive a confirmation email are encouraged to contact the DF office.

### **G. Award Review and Selection Process**

All complete applications received by the due date will be prepared for peer review by the Dermatology Foundation's Medical and Scientific Committee. Members of the committee serve pro bono, and do not participate in the evaluation of applications from institutions with which they have a real or apparent conflict of interest. All committee members utilize a weighted value scoring methodology to guide their evaluation of applications for Foundation awards. This scoring method weighs the importance of an applicant's background, potential, research proposal, mentor, and environment. The score sheets used by the committee are presented in section V and may help create an application package.

Recipients of the 2026 awards will be presented on the DF [website](#).

### **H. Award Terms, Conditions, and Funds Distribution**

The Foundation's research award funding period starts on July 1. Award funds are to be used solely for the designated recipient and project specified in the application and cannot be used for indirect costs of the institution. The DF follows the National Institutes of Health definition of direct costs.

The Foundation will disburse award money for career development awards and fellowships on a quarterly basis beginning on the project initiation date of July 1. Funds for grants are provided in two payments: 90% at the start of the award term and 10% in October following the conclusion of the award term. All recipients with projects requiring IRB review must submit proof of IRB approval to the Foundation before the first payment. For all awards, final payments are distributed only following receipt of the final financial and research reports. Additionally, no funds will be distributed beyond one year after the award termination date.

DF awards are assigned to individuals. However, award checks are made payable to institutions and are sent to the payment address provided on the application for administration. Award recipients are responsible for ensuring that the final research and financial reports are submitted within 60 days following the end of the funding period.

## II. Research Awards Program Overview (cont.)

### I. Renewal of Career Development Awards

Our 2026 renewal cycle will differ from prior years.

Current career development awardees who were first-time CDA recipients in 2025 may be renewed on a non-competitive basis for the second and final year of funding for the award level of \$75,000.

Career award recipients who received their initial CDA award in 2024 and had selected to renew their award in 2025, according to the old award level of \$55,000, may apply for the second renewal (3<sup>rd</sup> year) for a \$55,000 award level.

Career award recipients who received their initial CDA award in 2024 and chose to renew it in 2025, based on the new award level of \$75,000, may not apply for a second renewal.

The renewal process for all career development awards is handled separately from the review of new award applications. A CDA recipient applying for renewal of an award must submit a renewal application online and an interim research report by **December 1, 2025**. CDA recipients applying for a second or third year of funding are not eligible to apply for a DF grant.

CDA renewals will be rigorously reviewed for significant progress, demonstrated institutional commitment to career development over the past year, and efforts to obtain additional funding. When evaluating the progress candidates have made in their research, the period during which the projects have been underway will be considered. The Foundation will announce the renewed Career Development Awards on the DF website in March 2026. Refer to Section VI for detailed instructions on the renewal procedure for career development awards.

### J. Applicant Questions

Questions concerning the application process or the Research Award Program can be directed to the Dermatology Foundation staff at (847) 328-2256 or [dfrap@dermatologyfoundation.org](mailto:dfrap@dermatologyfoundation.org). Applicants who have questions concerning the appropriateness of a particular award for their career path should consult their mentor and/or department chair.



### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements

The description and specific eligibility requirements for each Dermatology Foundation research award are outlined in this section. All Foundation awards are also subject to the general eligibility requirements described in section II. **Candidates' application materials must clearly demonstrate that they meet all eligibility requirements by the start of the award funding (on or before July 1).**

An applicant must apply for a specific award. The following pages provide a detailed description of the Dermatology Foundation's early career funding opportunities:

- A. Career Development Awards
- B. Fellowship
- C. Research Grants

**Important Note:** The DF reserves the right to consider and fund an application in an award category that differs from the applicant's original submission.

#### A. Career Development Awards

The Foundation offers ten categories of highly competitive career development awards (CDAs). **Career development awards may be renewed annually for up to a total of two years of funding.** Strong institutional commitment to an individual's career development is essential for a recipient of any career development award and must be clearly explained in the Department Chair's document of support. Renewal of a career development award will depend on a recipient's ability to provide evidence of significant progress on the research project, demonstrated institutional commitment to career development, and progress toward obtaining other funding.

**All CDAs offer an annual salary stipend of \$75,000 that can be supplemented from institutional sources so that the salary received is commensurate with peers within the institution.** A CDA recipient may seek simultaneous grant support from other agencies to provide for the non-salary components of the research being performed under the auspices of an award.

Please note the following important eligibility requirements for **all** DF Career Development Awards, which must be met at the time of funding (July 1) as noted below:

- 1.** Candidates with an M.D., M.D./ Ph.D., or D.O. must be no greater than 12 years beyond their terminal degree, **as of January 1, 2026.**
- 2.** Candidates with a Ph.D. **must be no greater than 8 years beyond their terminal degree, as of January 1, 2026.**
- 3.** Junior faculty member with a primary appointment in a department or division of dermatology with an ACGME- approved dermatology residency program, through Assistant Professor level.

### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### A. Career Development Awards (cont.)

4. Anyone who is a prior or current principal investigator (PI) on a federal grant is not eligible to receive a DF career development award. The following two exceptions apply:

- CDA awardees may have effort on an NIH grant as long as he/she is not the senior PI who initiated the application, and he/she does not have direct reporting responsibilities for this or prior federal awards. Total support from all federal grants must be less than 20% of their total effort during the term of the DF award.

OR

- The individual is the recipient of an NIH training grant or an equivalent grant from another granting agency.

Important Notes: An individual who receives a federal grant that eliminates their status as a “new investigator” is not eligible to maintain/receive a CDA. The Foundation utilizes the NIH definitions of “principal investigator” and “co- investigator” to administer this policy, as found in the Glossary of NIH Terms.

5. Research award recipients may not simultaneously hold a DF career development award and a grant. As a result, applicants applying for a new career development award may also apply for a grant, though they cannot receive funding for both. Current CDA recipients applying for a renewal of funding **are not eligible to** apply for a DF grant.

6. Strong institutional commitment to the individual’s career development.

The award-specific eligibility requirements for each DF career development award are presented below.

#### 1. Physician Scientist Career Development Award

**The Physician Scientist CDA supports the academic career of a physician-scientist devoted to clinical dermatology and assists in the transition from fellowship to an established investigator.** This award is intended for the academic investigator demonstrating significant creativity in clinically relevant research.

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a U.S. dermatology residency program
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Appropriate initial training in relevant research (i.e., a two to three-year research fellowship or postdoctoral training)
- Clinically oriented investigator in the early stages of academic career
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to skin research

### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### A. Career Development Awards (cont.)

##### 2. Public Health Career Development Award

**The Public Health CDA supports the establishment and/or development of careers in public health.** Research proposals may concern healthcare policy, epidemiological research, outcome studies, comparative effectiveness research, information system development, teledermatology, or other topics related to public health.

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- MD applicants must have completed training in a U.S. dermatology residency program
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Applicant has a formal relationship with a mentor who possesses recognized expertise in health policy or public health research
- Clinically oriented investigator in the early stages of academic career

##### 3. Dermatologic Surgery Career Development Award

**This award supports a broad range of research projects that further the practice of dermatologic surgery and develop the teaching, research, and/or leadership abilities of dermatologic surgeons.** Projects may include but are not limited to the study of skin cancers, treatment outcomes, surgical management, Mohs micrographic surgery, Mohs laboratory techniques, reconstruction, wound healing, surgical complications, patient-reported outcomes, laser surgery, and non-invasive imaging.

Priority will be given to new applications from institutions that do not currently have a recipient of this award. The mentor and environment are critical ingredients of successful applications.

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a U.S. dermatology residency program
- Completed at least one year of post-residency surgical training in the U.S. at the time of funding
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Under the mentorship of an experienced faculty member (e.g., a dermatologic surgeon, a dermatologist, or a basic or clinical investigator) with experience and expertise of relevance to the proposed project

### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### A. Career Development Awards (cont.)

##### 4. Dermatopathology Research Career Development Award

**The Dermatopathology CDA supports the academic career development of future intellectual leaders who demonstrate a strong commitment to advancing the fields of dermatopathology and dermatology through research and/or education.**

###### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a U.S. dermatology or pathology residency program and a U.S. fellowship program in dermatopathology
- Under the mentorship of an experienced investigator(s)
- Mentor must have a primary academic appointment in dermatology or another program at the sponsoring institution that is approved by the dermatology chair
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to skin research that can advance the field of dermatopathology

##### 5. Medical Dermatology Career Development Award

**The Medical Dermatology CDA provides funding for future intellectual leaders, educators, and clinical scholars in that aspect of the specialty that addresses severe dermatologic disease.** The award fosters the careers of young dermatologists who will become the future role models and mentors for physicians diagnosing and treating complex skin disease.

The Medical Dermatology CDA was designed for an individual who desires patient-oriented research in their academic career, but whose interests are not a good fit within the NIH K-23/24 or K08 grant mechanism. Such a person will select a focus of interest in which they intend to become an expert. The career plans required in the research proposal will detail the ways in which the applicant, aided by the mentor, will acquire expertise in an area of focus. The proposed career plans may be hypothesis-driven research, or may systematically analyze natural history, response to therapies, or outcomes of a complex, severe disease. The applicant's mentor and mentorship program are important selection criteria.

###### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a U.S. dermatology residency program
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Under the mentorship of an experienced medical dermatologist

### **III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)**

#### **A. Career Development Awards (cont.)**

##### **6. Pediatric Dermatology Career Development Award**

**The Pediatric Dermatology Career Development Award supports future intellectual leaders, educators, clinical scholars, and/or translational investigators in aspects of the specialty that relate to dermatologic diseases in infants and children.**

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a U.S. dermatology residency program and a U.S. fellowship program in pediatric dermatology
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to skin research that can advance the field of pediatric dermatology
- Under the mentorship of an experienced educator, clinician, or laboratory- based investigator
- Mentor must have an academic appointment in dermatology or another program that is approved by the dermatology chair

##### **7. Women's Health Career Development Award**

**This Women's Health CDA is intended to focus on women's health issues where further research is needed.** Funding is available for research in the areas of women's health issues, which range from disorders that affect primarily women, such as lupus and scleroderma, to the effects of hormones and environmental factors on the skin and cutaneous aging.

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Appropriate initial training in biomedical research (i.e., two to three-year fellowship or postdoctoral training)
- Applicants must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Proposed research focuses on women's health issues (see above)
- Junior investigator in the early stages of academic career
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to skin research

### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### A. Career Development Awards (cont.)

##### 8. Science of Human Appearance Career Development Award

**This Science of Human Appearance CDA provides annual salary support for the career development of individuals who wish to understand the cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying altered human appearance or of therapeutic interventions.** This CDA acknowledges the specialty's significant increase in focus on human appearance and the scarcity of high-quality research in this area. This award is intended to support research addressing human appearance issues caused by aging and/or environmental factors.

Funding is available for research involving the cellular and molecular mechanisms of human appearance including those mechanisms involved in hyper or hypopigmentation, aging, photoaging, or dry skin NOT related to disease or congenital defects. Funding can also be used to study cell and molecular mechanisms involved in therapeutic interventions such as non/minimally invasive devices, peels, fillers, antioxidants, retinoids, and other topical and systemic agents. Research focusing on skin cancer or actinic keratosis is not suitable for this award category.

The research proposal is expected to be hypothesis-driven. The successful applicant will likely make cell and molecular or biophysical measurements on altered human skin in relation to normal skin. This CDA will not support clinical trials. However, it will support the mechanism of action research on devices and agents such as those mentioned above.

**The applicant is required to spend sufficient time to complete the project. The career plans, required in the research proposal, will detail the ways in which the applicant, aided by one or more mentors, will acquire expertise in the science of human skin appearance.** The applicant's mentor and mentorship program are very important selection criteria.

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- M.D. applicant must have completed a U.S. dermatology residency program
- Ph.D. applicant must have completed at least 2 years post-doctoral training
- M.D. applicant must have a strong laboratory collaborator. Ph.D. must have a strong connection with an M.D. conducting appearance work
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- High level of interest in the science of human skin appearance

### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### A. Career Development Awards (cont.)

##### 9. Research Career Development Award

**The Research CDA assists an individual in the transition from fellowship to established investigator.** It provides career development support in skin research for a junior investigator.

**Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Appropriate initial training in biomedical research (i.e., two to three-year fellowship or postdoctoral training)
- Junior investigator in the early stages of his/her career
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to skin research

##### 10. Medical Frontiers Career Development Award

**The Dermatology Foundation is pleased to offer a career development award developed to support research addressing dermatologic issues impacting groups *underrepresented or underserved in medicine*, including, *but not limited to*:**

Racial and ethnic minorities,  
sexual and gender minorities,  
and underserved/disadvantaged populations (as defined by the NIH)

**Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Appropriate initial training in biomedical research (i.e., two to three-year fellowship or postdoctoral training)
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Proposed research must address an issue impacting groups underrepresented or underserved in medicine
- Junior investigator in the early stages of his/her career
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to skin research

### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### B. Fellowship

The Dermatology Foundation offers a fellowship designed to advance the research careers of individuals in the early stages of their career development. **Each awarded fellowship, for \$35,000, provides an annual salary stipend and is not intended for faculty.** The award may only be supplemented by department funds, NIH training grants, mentors' R01/P01 grants, and other granting agencies providing support equivalent to a training grant. Award funds cannot be used to pay indirect costs.

In some instances (i.e., importance of project or unusual merit in execution), consideration may be given for one additional year of support. To apply for a second year of support, the applicant must submit a new application package for competitive renewal. A second-year application should clearly set forth any changes in experimental direction or methods and include a detailed progress report covering work already accomplished. A request for a second year of funding is unusual and will be judged scientifically on an equal basis with requests for new support. In addition, the second-year application will be subject to the institution's quota for new fellowship applications.

#### **Dermatologist Investigator Research Fellowship**

**This fellowship supports dermatologists who desire research training and are committed to an academic career in medical and surgical dermatology.**

Consideration will also be given to individuals with substantial training in other areas who are entering the field of skin research. Applicants may NOT apply simultaneously for this award and a Foundation grant.

#### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a 3-year U.S dermatology residency program OR completed one year of a 4-year U.S. dermatology residency program and will be in the lab or research year during the award period
- Assistant Professor or above is not eligible
- Must devote 50% of time to cutaneous research
- Mentor has an academic appointment in dermatology or another program at the sponsoring institution that is approved by the dermatology chair
- May only receive simultaneous salary support from department funds, NIH training grants, mentors' R01/P01 grants, and other granting agencies providing support equivalent to a training grant



### III. Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements (cont.)

#### C. Research Grants

**Dermatology Foundation grants are annual awards of \$25,000.** They provide funding that enables recipients to initiate a research project. All grants require the submission of a budget that details the planned use of award funds, as well as a research/development proposal. Award funds may not be used to cover indirect costs, salaries, or travel expenses for the principal investigator. ***M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; and D.O. applicants must be no greater than 12 years beyond their terminal degree, and Ph.D. candidates must be no greater than 8 years beyond their terminal degree, as of January 1, 2026.***

##### 1. Patient-Directed Investigation Grant

**The Patient-Directed Investigation Grant is designed to support translational studies that have the potential to benefit patients directly.** Such studies may concern medical dermatology, dermatologic surgery, procedural dermatology, pediatric dermatology, or other aspects of the specialty that impact patient care. Funding is intended to enhance the career development of patient-oriented clinical investigators in the early stages of their careers. Applications will be judged by the Medical and Scientific Committee's panel of recognized experts in applied medical, surgical, procedural, and pediatric dermatology. It is expected that the recipients of this award will become future clinical leaders in dermatology, helping to shape the specialty's future. Recipients may apply for a second year of funding on a competitive basis.

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Completed training in a U.S. dermatology residency program
- Clinical investigator in the early stages of academic career
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Project not funded from other sources

##### 2. Research Grant

**The Research Grants provide financial support for research projects in dermatology and cutaneous biology that benefit the dermatology community at large.**

##### **Applicant Eligibility:**

- M.D.; M.D., Ph.D.; Ph.D.; or D.O. degree
- Investigator in the early stages of academic career
- Applicant must have a primary appointment in dermatology
- Project not funded from other sources
- NOT available to residents unless in a research year of a 4-year program, defined by no more than 20% of time devoted to clinical responsibilities

## IV. Preparing and Submitting Application Materials

### A. Completing an application

Your CDA, fellowship or grant application must be submitted via the DF's [CDAFG Research Award Portal](#). To begin, view the list of items below and determine those that you need to assemble to apply, since requirements vary by award type. All required documents must be uploaded in a PDF.

Application Information	Required Award Application Materials (x)		
	CDA	Fellowship	Grant
1. NIH Biosketch ( <i>include past, current, pending funding</i> )	x	x	x
2. Mentor's Biosketch	x	x	
3. Summary of Career Goals	x	x	
4. Detailed Budget (for grants only)			x
5. Research Proposal	x	x	x
6. Department Chair's Comments of Support ( <i>Form on DF website</i> )	x	x	
7. Department Chair Letter of Support			x
8. Letter of Support from Mentor	x	x	
9. Letter of Support from Supervisor			x
10. Two to three additional Letters of Support	x	x	optional
11. Short Project Summary	x	x	x
12. Long Project Summary	x	x	x
13. Black & White photo (jpg)	x	x	x
14. Original figures (from research proposal only, no additional figures are accepted)	optional	optional	optional

The following pages outline the required content for each item. Please note that the table below lists all possible award items and exceptions. Do not attach any additional items (e.g., articles, cover letters, etc.). All required documents must be uploaded in separate PDFs.

## IV. Preparing and Submitting Application Materials

Application Materials	Completion Instructions
1. <b>NIH Biographical Sketch PDF</b>	Download and complete the NIH's biographical sketch form. <u>Be sure to provide complete ongoing and completed research support information in Section D.</u> The DF asks that you include past, current, and pending research on the final page. <b>Your biographical sketch should be no greater than five (5) pages in length.</b> Ensure the pages are numbered correctly.
2. <b>Mentor's Biographical Sketch PDF</b>	For all CDA and Fellowship Applicants – Attach your mentor's biographical sketch in the standard NIH format. It must not exceed five (5) pages. Be sure to enter appropriate page numbers at the bottom.
3. <b>Summary of Career Goals PDF</b>	On a single page, briefly sketch your future goals in dermatology. Describe concisely your research project, and document clearly and specifically the importance of this award for your career plans. Limit your summary to one (1) page with 1" margins and at least 12 pt. font and 6 lines per vertical inch. Label this item "Summary of Career Goals." Place your name, institution, and award in the top right corner This item is not required for Derm. Surg. CDA, Med. Derm. CDA, or Grant applicants.
4. <b>Detailed Budget PDF</b>	<b>For ALL Grant Applicants</b> – Provide a detailed budget on a separate page. Label it "Budget" and <b>limit it to one page.</b> Be sure to provide a header with your name, award and institution, and a page number at the bottom. Include a concise statement of how you propose to allocate funds (i.e., amount and purpose). Additional instructions: List each item of equipment with a unit acquisition cost of \$500 or more. Itemize supplies such as glassware, chemicals, and animals in separate categories. For animals, specify the number to be used and the unit purchase/care costs. Remember that salary, benefits, or travel for the applicant are not to be included.
5. <b>Research Proposal PDF</b>	The DF utilizes two research proposal formats that are presented below. Be sure to select the format required for the award for which you are applying. Projects for career development awards should be two years in duration.  Your research proposals must describe a proposed project in sufficient detail for adequate evaluation by the Medical and Scientific Committee. Make every effort to be succinct. Use figures or tables that are clear and summarize your plans. Place your name, institution, and award in the top right corner of every page and number the pages appropriately. <b>Font size must be at least 12 pt,</b> no more than 15 characters per inch, and no more than six lines within a vertical inch. Citations may be in a smaller font but must be written out and not be a hyperlink. <b>Leave one-inch margins</b> on all sides of the proposal text. <b>Do not append any material to your research proposal, including submitted or published manuscripts. Adhere to the noted page limitations. Applications exceeding the maximum number of allowable pages will not be considered.</b>  <i>Please note: the PDF of your research proposal must be live, not scanned.</i>

## IV. Preparing and Submitting Application Materials

Application Materials	Completion Instructions
<p><b>Research Proposal Format #1</b></p>	<p><b>Use Research Proposal Format #1 to prepare a proposal for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Physician Scientist, Public Health, Dermatopathology Research, Science of Human Appearance, Women's Health, Pediatric Dermatology, Medical Frontiers, and Research Career Development Awards</b></li> <li>• <b>Dermatologist Investigator Research Fellowship</b></li> <li>• <b>Patient-Directed Investigation and Research Grants</b></li> </ul> <p>Organize the document into the six sections below. <b>For CDA applications, items 1-6 must not exceed ten (10) pages in total, including figures, tables, and literature cited. For Fellowship and Grant applications, items 1-6 must not exceed a total of six (6) pages.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific Aims – Identify what you intend to accomplish and the hypothesis that is to be tested.</li> <li>2. Background and Significance – Describe why the research is important</li> <li>3. Preliminary Studies – Detail what you have already accomplished on the project.</li> <li>4. Experimental Design/Training – Identify how you are going to accomplish the research. Describe in detail the experimental design, the process to be used, and the manner in which the data will be analyzed. Do not include details of established laboratory procedures. Define the circumstances under which the training is to be received.</li> <li>5. Organizational Structure – Describe in detail your organizational structure vis-à-vis dermatology and your mentor/supervisor (for grants). Include where the work will be performed, who will pay for the supplies, animals, and what your clinical and/or teaching duties will be during the period of the award. (Be sure your supporting letter from the chair/supervisor describes the nature of the linkage to a department/division of dermatology.)</li> <li>6. Literature cited.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Research Proposal Format #2</b></p>	<p><b>Use the following instructions to prepare a research proposal for the Dermatologic Surgery and Medical Dermatology Career Development Awards.</b></p> <p><b>Items 1-2 below cannot exceed ten (10) pages, including figures and tables.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project – The research proposal must be focused with clear aims which, upon successful completion, will add to the knowledge base of dermatologic surgery (for the Dermatologic Surgery CDA) or non-procedural dermatology (for the Medical Dermatology CDA).</li> </ol>

## IV. Preparing and Submitting Application Materials

Application Materials	Completion Instructions
<b>Research Proposal Format #2 (cont.)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant shall describe (<b>in no more than five pages</b>) a project that develops new information in the field. The project outline should include the area of interest, details of the project, a two-year project timeline, a discussion of how the project will add to the knowledge base of the field (i.e., dermatologic surgery or non-procedural dermatology), and a description of the applicant's time commitment to the project.</li> <li>Keeping in mind that this section accounts for 80% of the application evaluation, the applicant shall describe (<b>in no more than three pages</b>) his/her strengths, career development plans, mentorship, and environment.</li> </ol> <p>2. Literature Cited – This information is limited to <b>two pages</b> of the proposal.</p>
<b>6. Department Chair's Comments of Support PDF</b>	<p><b>For All Career Development Award and Fellowship Applicants</b> – This form is a critical element in your application package. The Chair's Comments of Support Form can be downloaded from the DF website and is to be completed by the chair of the department or division of dermatology at your institution, and covers the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An outline of a plan defining the department's commitment to the applicant, including a description of the training environment, the supervision that will be provided, the qualifications of the mentor for development of the applicant's career, and departmental commitments/resources devoted to support the applicant, including salary and space allocations. The plan must encompass 2 years for CDA applicants.</li> <li>Plans for future funding of the applicant</li> <li>The importance of the award and the project to the applicant and the institution</li> <li>The department's track record in obtaining NIH funding</li> <li>Certification that the applicant will devote the time required to the proposed project</li> </ul>
<b>7. Department Chair Letter of Support PDF</b>	<p><b>For all Grant Applicants</b> – This letter of support from the department chair is required for grant applications <u>only</u> if the applicant <u>is not</u> submitting a career development award application.</p>
<b>8. Letter of Support from Mentor PDF</b>	<p><b>For all CDA and Fellowship Applicants</b> – The letter of support from your mentor must cover the description of the training environment and supervision that will be provided.</p>
<b>9. Letter of Support from Immediate Supervisor</b>	<p><b>For all Grant Applicants</b> – Provide an original letter of support from your supervisor.</p>
<b>10. Two to Three Additional Letters of Support PDF</b>	<p><b>For all CDA and Fellowship Applicants</b> – You must submit two to three additional letters that support your selection for an award. These letters must be on letterhead and submitted as part of your application package. These letters are optional for Grant Applicants</p>

\*See General Eligibility Requirements.

## IV. Preparing and Submitting Application Materials

Application Materials	Completion Instructions
<b>11. Short Project Summary PDF</b>	In a separate document, briefly describe your research proposal for use in the DF's printed or digital award announcements. Be sure to summarize its relevance to the advancement of dermatology and patient care. Use language directed to a practicing dermatologist or sophisticated lay audience. <b>Do not exceed 65 words.</b> Keep in mind that a description of commonly treated conditions, such as psoriasis, acne, and melanoma, is not needed. Label the page "Short Project Summary." Place your name, institution, and award name in the top right corner of the document. Be sure your margins are set at 1" and your font is no smaller than 12 pt.
<b>12. Long Project Summary PDF</b>	On a separate sheet of paper, describe in greater detail your proposal and its significance. <b>Do not exceed one page.</b> Be sure to set your margins to 1" and use a font no smaller than 12 pt. Label the page "Long Project Summary" and place your name, institution, and award name in the top right corner of the document.
<b>13. Color Photo (headshot) jpg</b>	<b>For all CDA, Fellowship, and Grant Applicants</b> – Provide a file containing a color photo of yourself dressed professionally (vertical orientation, headshot only). The photo file must be at least 300 dpi at 8x10. A jpg file is preferred
<b>14. Original Figures PDF</b>	For additional clarity, you may submit a separate PDF of your original figures that are included in your research proposal. Additional figures will not be accepted.

### B. Submitting Your Application

Assemble all the items identified under Required Application Materials. All required documents and letters should be in individual PDF files. Ensure that the pages of your package are numbered according to the instructions and that your name, institution, and award are included in the header of your proposal document. Visit the DF's [CDAFG Research Award Portal](#) to submit your application. You will be asked to complete a profile before entering your application. The profile and password are linked to all DF award portals, enabling you to apply for a Diversity Research Supplement Award or Mid-Career Award in the future.

The DF has prepared a CDAFG Research Award Portal Instructions, which is available on our website.

**Once you submit your application, the DF will confirm receipt of your application. Candidates who do not receive confirmation within five (5) business days of submission are encouraged to contact the DF office.**

If you have any questions, contact the Foundation staff at (847) 328-2256 or [DFRAP@dermatologyfoundation.org](mailto:DFRAP@dermatologyfoundation.org).

## V. Application Review

The Foundation's Medical and Scientific Committee uses a weighted-value methodology to critique and rank award applications. Committee members evaluate each application using the criteria outlined in the following table and assign a score for each category (Candidate, Mentor, etc.) using the scale presented below. The committee uses two separate scoring methodologies – one version for Career Development Awards and Fellowships, and a second for Grants. An application's overall score is the sum of the weighted values for all categories. Applicants are encouraged to consider the committee's scoring process when developing their application materials.

### A. Score Sheet for Career Development Awards and Fellowships

1 – Outstanding      2 – Excellent      3 – Good      4 – Fair      5 – Poor

Award Application Criteria	(A) Weighted Value	(B) Reviewer's Score	(C) = Weighted Score
<b>Candidate – <i>Potential to become one who advances the science and practice</i></b> Potential for an independent research career in dermatology* Track record in research (publications, other grants) Adequate training for the project	45%		
<b>Mentor and Environment – <i>Mentor, quality of the department or plans, and environment</i></b> Able to mentor on the project Track record of developing trainees Other resources (e.g., grants for supplies, etc.) Adequate space and resources for the project Strong environment for collaboration and mentoring Department with a track record of developing trainees Plan for career development Commitment of the chair of the Department of Dermatology	25%		
<b>Project – <i>Description and significance</i></b> Relevance to dermatology Quality of written application Likelihood of success Novel, innovative research NIH-fundable work Possibility of future work independent of mentor	30%		

**Overall Preliminary Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Does not apply to Med Derm and Derm Surg CDAs*

## V. Application Review (cont.)

### B. Score Sheet for Grants

1 – Outstanding      2 – Excellent      3 – Good      4 – Fair      5 – Poor

Award Application Criteria	(A) Weighted Value X	(B) Reviewer's Score	(C) = Weighted Score
<b>Candidate</b> Potential for independent research career in dermatology Track record in research (publications, other grants) Adequate training for the project	40%		
<b>Environment</b> Adequate space and resources for project Strong environment for collaboration and mentoring Department with track record of developing trainees Plan for career development Commitment of chair of Department of Dermatology	20%		
<b>Project</b> Relevance to dermatology Quality of written application Likelihood of success Novel, innovative research NIH-fundable work Possibility of future work independent of mentor	40%		

Overall Preliminary Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Common Proposal Omissions

The Medical & Scientific Committee reviews many proposals each year. Committee members have found that research award applicants sometimes omit information that is important to their review. As a result, the committee suggests applicants include the following items in their DF award application materials:

- (1) If appropriate, include power calculations in the project description.
- (2) If preliminary data is available, be sure to provide this information in the proposal.
- (3) Letters of support from anyone who will play a significant or collaborative role in the proposed project should also be included in the final package.

Applicants are encouraged to consider these items and to consult with their mentor and/or department chair in developing their final research/project proposal. Additional helpful hints are provided in Section VIII, Frequently Asked Questions.



## **VI. Renewing a Career Development Award**

Career development awards may be renewed annually. To be considered for a renewal, you must complete and submit a renewal application via the DF's CDAFG Research Award Application Portal. All CDA recipients eligible for renewal will receive an email in September requesting completion of a renewal application, along with a link to the portal. Renewal applications must be completed online by December 1, 2025.

Due to our changes in award allocations, the following will apply:

Current career development awardees who were first-time CDA recipients in 2025 may be renewed on a non-competitive basis for the second and final year of funding for the award level of \$75,000.

Career award recipients who received their initial CDA award in 2024 and had selected to renew their award in 2025, according to the old award level of \$55,000, may apply for the second renewal (3<sup>rd</sup> year) for a \$55,000 award level.

Career award recipients who received their initial CDA award in 2024 and chose to renew it in 2025, based on the new award level of \$75,000, may not apply for a second renewal.

Approval of your renewal application depends upon the availability of funds, evidence of significant progress on the research project, continued commitment to career development, and the pursuit of additional funding. Please note that research award recipients are not eligible to hold both a DF career development award and a grant simultaneously. As a result, current CDA recipients who apply for a renewal of funding cannot also apply for a DF grant.

### **A. Preparing Your Renewal Request**

Assemble the following items to request renewal of your career development award for year 2 or 3.

1. Updated NIH Biosketch (please add past, current, and pending research)
2. Letter of Support completed by Dermatology Department Chair or Division Chief
3. Research Progress Report
4. Articles, Chapters and Abstracts

Follow the detailed instructions provided below. For items 1-4, apply continuous page numbers at the bottom (centered, in the format "Page x").

## VI. Renewing A Career Development Award (cont.)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Important Date</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">CDA Renewal Application Deadline: December 1, 2025</p>	
<b>Renewal Application Materials</b>	<b>Completion Instructions</b>
<b>1. NIH Biosketch* PDF</b>	Provide an updated NIH biosketch. Be sure to include updates to funding you have received since your original application or last renewal request.
<b>2. Department Chair's Letter of Support PDF</b>	The Chair's letter of support should provide comments of support that you believe the committee needs to consider in evaluating the applicant's CDA renewal. It should include a description of the institutional support the CDA recipient received in the last year. It should also include any changes in the departmental commitment to the applicant including training environment, additional funding—including NIH, department resources, and mentorship
<b>3. Research Progress Report PDF</b>	State your original specific aims and summarize your results and conclusions thus far. Indicate the present and potential significance to the field of dermatology. Use language directed to a sophisticated lay or clinical dermatologic audience. Restate your project goals and specific aims for the coming year. <b>Do not exceed two pages.</b> Use a 12 pt font with margins of 1". Place your name, institution, and award in the right header of this document.
<b>4. List of Articles, Chapters and Abstracts PDF</b>	Prepare a list of your articles, chapters and abstracts that have resulted from your project. Please separate abstracts, peer-reviewed manuscripts, reviews, and presentations. Indicate "published, in press, submitted, or presented" for each item and <i>enclose one copy</i> . Place your name, institution, and award in the right header of this document.
<b>5. Additional Attachments PDF</b>	Combine in a single PDF any abstracts, presentations, reviews, and peer-reviewed articles.

### B. Submitting Your Renewal Request

Once all components of your package are complete, make sure each document is in a separate PDF as noted in the table above. The DF office will send you a unique link via email to a renewal record that has been created for you to update in the CDAFG Research Award Portal. Award renewal instructions are also provided in the CDAFG Research Award Portal Instructions. Alternatively, you can contact the DF staff at [dfap@dermatologyfoundation.org](mailto:dfap@dermatologyfoundation.org) or call (847) 328-2256 if you have questions.

Please remember to complete your submission by **11:59 p.m. on December 1, 2025.**

OMB No. 0925-0001 and 0925-0002 (Rev. 11/16 Approved Through 10/31/2018)

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors.  
Follow this format for each person. **DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES.**

NAME:

eRA COMMONS USERNAME (credential, e.g., agency login):

POSITION TITLE:

EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY

**A. Personal Statement****B. Positions and Honors****C. Contributions to Science****D. Additional Information: Research Support and/or Scholastic Performance**

**Note:** The DF asks that you provide past, current, and pending research on the last page of your biosketch.



## Department Chair's Comments of Support

Exhibit VII-B

**Date:** [insert date]  
**To:** Medical and Scientific Committee  
**From:** [insert your name]  
**Re:** [insert applicant's name]  
**Award:** [insert award category]

**Instructions:** *This form must be completed by the Dermatology Department/Division Chair/Chief for all career development award and fellowship applicants.* Please be sure to respond to each question **thoroughly**. Keep in mind, the applicant's potential to contribute to dermatology, mentor, training environment, and the institution's support of the applicant are key criteria in the DF's application review process.

1. Provide an outline of a plan\* defining the department's commitment to the applicant including:
  - a. a description of the training environment and the supervision that will be provided,
  - b. additional funds that are committed to support the applicant and their research,
  - c. other departmental commitments and resources that will be devoted to support the applicant including, but not limited to, salary, protected time, personnel, and space allocations, and
  - d. the qualifications of the mentor for development of the applicant's career.

*\*For Career Development Award applications, plan should cover a 3-year time period*



2. Describe future funding plans for the applicant.
  3. Identify the importance of the project and the award to the applicant and the institution, including how this project will lead to future research proposals and the professional development of the applicant.
  4. Describe the dermatology department/division's track record in obtaining NIH funding including number of award recipients and awards received.
  5. Describe any additional plans for the candidate's career development that are not identified in prior sections (e.g., applicant's likelihood for success).
  6. *If the applicant is requesting renewal of a career development award for a second or third year, describe the institutional support the individual has received in the last year.*
  7. Provide other comments of support below that you believe the committee needs to consider in evaluating this applicant's research proposal.
  8. The applicant's position at the time of funding (i.e., July 1) will be:
-



## Department Chair's Comments of Support (cont.)

### 9. Please complete all certifications that apply.

#### **a. For all CDA and Fellowship Applications and Renewals:**

I certify \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of applicant)

will have the protected time to complete the proposed project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Chair/Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

#### **b. For Fellowship Applicants in a 4-year Residency Program:**

I certify \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of applicant)

will utilize DF funding during the lab/research year of his/her residency.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Chair/Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

#### **c. For all CDA Applicants:**

Please certify that the applicant meets the DF's eligibility requirement regarding federal funding by selecting one of the three (3) options below.

I certify \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of applicant)

is a "new investigator" as defined by the NIH, and . . .

a. \_\_\_\_ **IS NOT** a prior or current PI on a federal grant.

b. \_\_\_\_ **HAS effort on an NIH grant but:** 1. is **NOT the senior PI** who initiated the application, 2. **DOES NOT HAVE** reporting responsibilities for this or other federal awards, and 3. has total support from all federal grants that is **less than 20% of their effort** during the term of the DF award.

c. \_\_\_\_ **IS** the recipient of an NIH training grant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Chair/Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## VIII. Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. If I receive a research award, is it possible to transfer it to another institution?

Award transfer requests- While not currently accepted, given the extraordinary challenges facing institutions, transfers will be reviewed and considered by the DF. Official letters of request from the new chair and mentor are required.

### 2. If I receive a research award, is it possible to defer it to a later date?

DF awards cannot be deferred. Individuals are encouraged to apply for DF awards when they are ready/able to accept an award for the defined funding year.

### 3. Can I apply for a career development award and a grant?

If you are applying for a **new** career development award, you may submit a separate application for a grant. However, please be aware that you are only able to receive funding for one award.

Current CDA recipients applying for a second or third year of funding cannot also apply for a grant.

### 4. Can I apply for a fellowship and a grant?

If you are applying for a DF fellowship, you are not eligible to apply for a grant.

### 5. Can I apply for a third-year CDA renewal?

No. Our new CDA award levels are for two years. Only those CDA recipients who received a new CDA in 2024 and received a renewal at the old award level of \$55,000, are allowed to renew for a third year at the old award level of \$55,000.

### 6. I renewed my 2024 award in 2025 for the new award level of \$75,000. Can I apply for a third year of CDA at the \$55,000 level?

No, because you chose to apply for the second award year at the new award level of \$75,000, you are no longer eligible to apply for a third year of funding.

### 7. Must I have IRB approval for my research project at the time I apply for an award?

*No.* If your project involves human subjects, select “Yes” in your online application. If you are chosen to receive the award, you must obtain and provide proof of IRB approval **before the start of the award period**, July 1. Award funds cannot be disbursed without formal documentation that identifies the beginning and end date of the approval period.

### 8. What happens if my IRB approval lapses during the project.

It is your responsibility to maintain your IRB approval throughout the project and award period. Please obtain and provide proof of continued IRB approval. Award funds will be held temporarily until updated IRB approval has been received.

**9. I would like to apply for a career development award, and it requires that I have a faculty position. My faculty position will not be effective until July 1; can I still apply for the award?**

Yes. All award eligibility requirements must be met at or before the time of funding, i.e., July 1. Your application materials should document that you will meet the faculty eligibility requirement by July 1. Specifically, your form of support from your Dermatology Department Chief or Chair should clearly state the faculty position you will have and the effective date. In addition, you will need to confirm your appointment just prior to the start of the award period.

**10. I wish to apply for a CDA, but I have a Junior Faculty Position; can I apply for the award?**

In exceptional circumstances, a candidate's status that is at least equivalent to that of an instructor/faculty position may be reviewed and considered eligible by the DF. For the 2026 awards, the candidate must have a clear plan to obtain faculty status within one year of the start of the CDA.

**11. I am applying for a career development award (CDA) and have an NIH R01 application pending. If I receive the R01, what will happen to my DF CDA?**

The DF requires all CDA award recipients to relinquish the CDA upon receipt of a federally funded award for which they are a PI. Therefore, if you were awarded a DF CDA and received the R01, the DF award would terminate on the effective date of the R01 grant. See section II-B for further information on NIH grants and DF eligibility.

**12. I was awarded an NIH award, but the funds were rescinded**

The DF will consider reinstating a CDA upon formal request from the recipient, chair, and mentor.

**13. How many awards are funded in each award category?**

The Foundation does not fund awards based on a quota. Instead, the number of awards funded each year is based on the number of meritorious applications submitted and available funds.

**14. Can my letters of support be submitted separately?**

No. Your letters of support must be uploaded to the Application portal at the time of your application.

**15. When will the award recipients be announced?**

The list of 2026 award recipients will be available on the DF website at noon on Saturday, March 28, 2026.



**16. I have a DF Career Development Award (CDA) that is in year 2 of funding and just received a promotion to Associate Professor. Am I still eligible for my CDA?**

Yes. New (i.e., Year 1) CDA recipients may be no greater than an Assistant Professor at the time of funding (July 1).

**17. Do you have any suggestions for strengthening my application?**

Every applicant is strongly encouraged to seek guidance from their mentor and chair in developing their research proposal and application materials. The following is a list of helpful hints offered for consideration:

***Ensure your materials are complete and address all requested topics and areas,*** especially the letter of support from your mentor and the Comments of Support Form completed by your chair. This information is extremely important and enables the Medical and Scientific Committee to evaluate your application thoroughly. Have one (or more) established investigators review a draft of the proposal, allowing sufficient time for revision and timely submission.

- a. Attempt to make applications specific. For example, if a proposal concerns a particular disease, specify inclusion and exclusion criteria; if several subtypes of the disease of interest exist, specifically state which subtypes will be studied.
- b. Consider including a power analysis demonstrating the minimum number of subjects (i.e., animals or humans) needed for experiments to be informative.
- c. In studies involving multiple aims, note the peril of having second- and third order aims dependent upon an initial aim that may or may not be attained
- d. If the project is highly dependent upon the participation and/or expertise of a key collaborator, consider obtaining a letter of support from this individual that acknowledges his/her commitment to the project.
- e. Include, where possible and appropriate, preliminary data in support of the proposed aims of the application.