



**Request for Applications:
2017 Undergraduate Summer Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders**

**RFA Released: January 11, 2017
Applications Due: February 13, 2017
Notification of Awards: March, 2017**

Introduction

The Autism Science Foundation invites applications for summer fellowships from highly qualified undergraduates interested in pursuing basic and clinical research relevant to autism spectrum disorders.

The proposed research must be scientifically linked to autism or a closely related field. Autism Science Foundation will consider all areas of related basic and clinical research including but not limited to: human behavior across the lifespan (language, learning, communication, social function, epilepsy, sleep, self-injurious behavior, catatonia), neurobiology (anatomy, development, neuro-imaging), pharmacology, neuropathology, human genetics, genomics, epigenetics, epigenomics, immunology, molecular and cellular mechanisms and studies employing model organisms and systems. We also encourage scientific research studies on treatments, interventions, service delivery, employment and housing issues and policy development.

Awards

Autism Science Foundation will make a number of Awards determined by its available financial resources. Research must be conducted in a university-based laboratory or in the field under the supervision of a highly qualified mentor for a period of no less than 8 weeks.

Awards of \$3000 will be made directly to the university sponsoring the research. Of this, the university must pay \$2500 directly to the student as a stipend; \$500 shall be used for lab expenses and indirect university costs. This award cannot be used to directly cover tuition payments. The sponsoring university is responsible for withholding any taxes required by law.

Priority will be given to student/mentor teams that can partner with existing undergraduate research programs on campus so that the undergraduate can have a cohort of peers over the summer, even if it's not autism specific cohort.

Eligibility

Applicants for summer undergraduate research awards must be currently enrolled undergraduates in good standing in a program in the United States leading to a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. The summer research may take place at a university other than the one where the student is enrolled as an undergraduate. The mentor should be faculty at the university where the research will take place. The research itself may take place on or off campus (i.e. in a school, at a job site employing individuals with autism, at a summer camp, etc.) as long as it is supervised by an experienced mentor.

The proposed mentor must hold a tenured or tenure-track faculty appointment (or equivalent) at an accredited institution of higher education or health/medical/research institution in the United States or Canada, and must be an established and active investigator in some aspect of autism research. Each mentor may support only one candidate per summer.

Proposals Using Post Mortem Tissue

Proposals using post mortem tissue for research must provide documentation that the necessary tissue is or will be available at the research site at the time of the award. Proposals without proper documentation will be returned without review.

Proposal Preparation

A proposal must include the following sections:

- **Cover page(s) which must include:**
 1. Name and current and permanent email addresses of applicant
 2. Name and full contact information for the mentor
 3. Project title
 4. Description of research to be conducted over the summer.
 5. Summary of activities and opportunities that applicant will engage in (for example, weekly lab meetings, home visits, etc.).

- **Applicant personal statement**

- **Applicant Resume & Transcript**

- **CV of Mentor** (NIH format)

- **Letter of Recommendation from Mentor:** A letter of recommendation should be provided by the proposed mentor evaluating the applicant's qualifications. The mentor should describe the lab environment and resources available to the student over the summer, including opportunities for the student to meet and work with other summer student researchers, even if outside the field of autism.

- **IRB and IACUC certifications are NOT required to submit an application, but are required before an award will be made.** This includes an official letter of approval which identifies the student and mentor by name, project title and date of project approval or exemption, and is signed by the Review Committee Chair or equivalent responsible institutional/government official.

Submission of Proposals

- All documents should be submitted as a single PDF document with all materials, except the letter(s) of recommendation, bundled together. Submit this pdf by email to grants@autismsciencefoundation.org with the subject line (Last Name/Sponsoring University/Summer Research)

Example: Martin/Tulane/Summer Research.

Letters of recommendation should be sent by the recommender directly to ASF by email to grants@autismsciencefoundation.org. Please ask your recommender to use the subject line (Applicant last name/Summer Research/Letter of Recommendation)

Example: Martin/Summer Research/Letter of Recommendation.

- Successful electronic submission will be confirmed by email notification to the sender.
- **All materials, except the letter(s) of recommendation, must be included in a single PDF bundle. Please collect all materials and send one PDF!**
- **Proposals are due on or before Feb 13, 2017.**

Proposals will not be accepted after the due date. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the proposal complies with the conditions prescribed in this RFA. Autism Science Foundation reserves the right to return without review any proposal found not to be in compliance with the conditions prescribed on the RFA, or any proposal that is not responsive to its research goals or exceeds its funding limits or available resources, at any time during the application and review process.

Autism Science Foundation reserves the right to make changes to this RFA at any time. Changes will be posted at www.autismsciencefoundation.org/ApplyForaGrant.html. We advise applicants to check this website frequently.

Award notifications will be made in March of 2017. Awards must start between May 1, 2017 and August 1, 2017. A no-cost 6 month extension will be granted upon request for students who have completed 8 weeks of work and want to continue work during the fall semester.

Payment of Awards

Awards will be paid directly to the university sponsoring the research at the start of the award period. Payment will be contingent upon acceptance (by an official authorized to act for the institution receiving the award) of the Autism Science Foundation award terms and conditions without amendment (provided at the time of the award) and receipt by ASF of all required certifications. An award cannot be transferred to another investigator, laboratory or sponsoring institution without prior written approval from Autism Science Foundation, even if the new investigator is working with the same mentor. Similarly, awardees cannot change mentors without prior written approval from Autism Science Foundation.

Students must submit an outcomes report at the end of the summer research period. A template will be provided by the Autism Science Foundation for this purpose.

Review Process and Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by members of Autism Science Foundation Scientific Advisory Board as well as active and experienced investigators recruited from the scientific community for their expertise in the research areas of the proposals.

Questions about proposal submission, proposal content and review, or applicant eligibility should be addressed to Casey Gold, Director of Operations, Autism Science Foundation. (cgold@autismsciencefoundation.org)

This request for proposals may be changed by the Autism Science Foundation at any time. Check our website frequently for updates.