Request for Applications:
2020 Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowship
in Autism Spectrum Disorders

RFA Released: January 6, 2020
Applications Due: February 19, 2020 5:00 PM EST
Notification of Awards: mid-March 2020

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

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, studies employing model organisms and systems, and studies of treatment, service delivery, policy and employment.

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 is not an autism specific cohort.

**Eligibility**
Applicants for summer undergraduate research awards must be currently enrolled undergraduates in good standing in a program 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, however, has to 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. Any questions about eligibility should be emailed to ahalladay@autismsciencefoundation.org.

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, 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**
Proposals should be written in Times New Roman, size 12 font, with regular margins and 1.5 spacing. A proposal must include the following sections:

- **Cover pages (3 pages maximum) which must include:**
1. Name and current and permanent email addresses of applicant. The permanent email address may be from a yahoo, gmail or another account that can be accessed after the student has matriculated from the current institution.
2. Name and full contact information for the mentor
3. Project title
4. Description of research to be conducted over the summer (approximately two paragraphs, no references are required)
5. Summary of activities and opportunities that applicant will engage in (for example, weekly lab meetings, home visits, etc.).

- Applicant Personal Statement (2 pages maximum)
- Applicant Resume, SAT or ACT scores & Transcript (unofficial transcripts are acceptable)
- CV of Mentor (NIH format)
- Letter of Recommendation from Mentor: A letter of recommendation must 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 and in the autism community, even if outside the field of autism.
- If Necessary, Human Subjects and Animal Welfare Certifications: IRB and IACUC certifications are NOT required to submit an application, but are required if necessary before an award will be made. Please begin considerations of IRB documentation. ASF must have a copy of an official letter of approval which identifies the student and mentor by name, project title and date of project approval, 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 of recommendation, bundled together. Submit this pdf by email to grants@autismsciencefoundation.org with the subject line (Last Name/Sponsoring Institution/Summer Fellowship)

Example: Martin/NYU/Summer Fellowship
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 Fellowship/Letter of Recommendation.

Successful electronic submission will be confirmed by email notification to the sender.

*All materials, except the letter of recommendation, must be included in a single PDF bundle. Please collect all materials and send one PDF!*

*Proposals are due on or before February 19, 2020*

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 any proposal without review.

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 2020. Awards must start between May 1, 2020 and August 1, 2020.

**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. 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-Casey, Director of Operations, Autism Science Foundation ([cgold@autismsciencefoundation.org](mailto:cgold@autismsciencefoundation.org)).