

## Hevolution Foundation Postdoctoral Training in Geroscience (HF-PTG) Program

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### General

**1. Q: What is HF-PTG?**

**A:** Hevolution Foundation Postdoctoral Training in Geroscience (HF-PTG) Program is an initiative that will provide funds for PhD and MD/PhD students transitioning into their postdoctoral training positions in research laboratories in the field of Aging Biology and Geroscience in the United States, Canada, UK, and Europe. Hevolution Foundation does not fund grants outside our published funding priorities.

**2. Q: How can I apply?**

**A:** Please review the [instructions](#) for the HF-PTG program to learn how to apply.

**3. Q: What is the review and selection process?**

**A:** The full proposal including all required documents (see link to instructions above) will be reviewed by external experts in Aging Biology and Geroscience.

**4. Q: I am not familiar with a biosketch, is there a template I can use?**

**A:** The template for the biosketch can be found in the instructions (please see link above). Please refer to the instructions for further information of the biosketch.

**5. Q: Can I get an extension on the deadline?**

**A:** No, we will not accept late submissions. Please plan accordingly.

**6. Q: How will I know that my application was received?**

**A:** After submitting your full application through Proposal Central, you will receive an automatically generated confirmation email. Please keep this email for your records. If you do not receive this email within 48 hours of submitting your application, please check your spam/junk folder. If you do not receive the confirmation email, contact Hevolution Foundation at [hevolutiongrants@afar.org](mailto:hevolutiongrants@afar.org)

**7. Q: Can figures and graphs be included in the application?**

**A:** If you need to include figures, please do so within the research plan. Also, keep them legible and include a legend that allows reviewers to understand the figures. However, preliminary data is not necessary.

**8. Q: Do I need to include Human Subjects Research (IRB)/Animal Use Committee (AICUC) approval with my application?**

**A:** Not with the submission of your application, but you/your mentor must provide full documentation after the application is recommended for funding (at the pre-award phase).

**9. Q: What are the selection criteria for the applications?**

**A:** The HF-PTG program supports outstanding PhD and MD/PhD students or recent PhD and MD/PhD graduates proposing to conduct postdoctoral research in Aging Biology or Geroscience (advances in basic research from the laboratory towards the clinic, or “translational research”).

The selection criteria to evaluate the application are the following, as stated in the RFA guidelines:

- Qualifications of the applicant based on academic excellence (peer-reviewed publications, conference posters and abstracts, awards, courses taken, etc.).
- Quality of the proposed research plan outlining the research to be conducted, its rationale as well as innovation and creativity of the approach.
- Strong letter of support from the prospective mentor/s who need to outline an overview of the mentorship plan offering the applicant both educational and scientific guidance.
- A strong personal statement from the applicant, highlighting his/her motivation to work in the field of aging biology or geroscience and stating the short-term and long-term objectives of career development.
- Strong endorsement/recommendation letter from the current advisor summarizing the applicant's accomplishments.
- Alignment of the research topic with Hevolution's mission and goals
- Excellence of the research environment; including the availability of all tools and platforms needed to perform the work proposed.

**10. Q: I have a project that deals with dementia in human subjects, does it qualify for this call?**

**A:** No, HF-PTG does not fund projects that strictly focus on clinical questions without including comprehensive research on the underlying biology of aging. Other non-responsive criteria are the following, as stated in the RFA guidelines:

- Projects that deal strictly with clinical topics such as the diagnosis and/or treatment of disease and health outcomes.
- Projects that focus on the behavioural social determinants of aging, without addressing the underlying biology.
- Projects that include clinical trials.
- Investigators who are conducting research at a for-profit institution.

**11. Q: Is there a limit on the number of projects that can be submitted?**

**A:** Each applicant is allowed to submit only one application to the HF-PTG grant program.

**12. Q: Can I apply if I already submitted a similar proposal to another institution?**

**A:** Yes, it is allowed to apply for the fellowship while other applications are pending review. However, once a positive funding decision has been made by another institution, the applicant is required to immediately withdraw the application at Hevolution Foundation. Applicants may not hold any other concurrent fellowships.

**13. Q: When is the start date of the award?**

**A:** We expect awards to start no later than April 2025.

## Eligibility

**14. Q: What countries are eligible for this program?**

**A:** HF-PTG is an initiative open to prospective postdoctoral researchers residing in the United States, Canada, UK, or Europe and intend to work at institutions in any of these countries. Please contact [hevolutiongrants@afar.org](mailto:hevolutiongrants@afar.org) for any further questions on location eligibility.

**15. Q: I recently graduated from a medical school in Canada, hold an MD/PhD and started working as a postdoc but would like to switch labs and to re-focus my research to aging biology. Am I eligible to apply?**

**A:** Yes, you are still eligible to apply if you graduated in or after May 2024 (the earliest acceptable graduation date) and the proposed research on aging biology or geroscience will be conducted in the new laboratory.

**16. Q: I am an Indian citizen on an F1 student visa in the US and plan to complete my PhD by the end of the year. I am currently interviewing for a postdoctoral position with professors in aging biology in Europe. Am I eligible to apply for the HF-PTG fellowship?**

**A:** Yes, since you are a current resident in the US, a prospective PhD graduate and plan to conduct your postdoctoral research in Europe, you are eligible to apply. Please consider that commitments by you and the mentor/s need to be made, written as a personal statement (by you) as well as letters of support (by your prospective mentor/s), and all documentation need to be submitted (please see Instructions for more information). Hevolution does not cover any moving or visa-related expenses (also refer to question 18).

**17. Q: I successfully defended my thesis in Italy in May 2024 but did not yet receive my PhD certificate. I am planning to conduct my postdoctoral research on aging biology in the US in November 2024. Do I qualify for the HF-PTG program?**

**A:** Yes, recent or prospective PhD and MD/PhD graduates who start a postdoctoral position in the field of aging biology and geroscience from and in eligible countries (please see below for suitable dates of graduation and begin of postdoc positions), are eligible to apply for the HF-PTG award. Other eligibility criteria are mentioned in the announcement and include:

- The proposed research project must be in the basic biology of aging or geroscience.
- Applicants must be current residents of the United States, Canada, UK, or Europe.
- Applicants must conduct their postdoctoral research at host institutions in any of the allowed countries (US, Canada, UK, or Europe)
- Host institutions must be government-funded or be a non-profit institution with appropriate oversight.
- Applicants must be doctoral students who will complete their doctorate degree (PhD or MD/PhD) prior to the award start date no later than April 2025 or being recent PhD or MD/PhD graduates (earliest graduation date: May 2024).
- Each applicant is allowed to submit only one application to the HF-PTG program.
- Applicants must start their postdoctoral training appointment by March 2025.
- Applicants may not hold any other fellowships.
- Mentors and co-mentors need to be current residents of and be located in the US, Canada, UK or Europe.
- Mentors are allowed to supervise multiple fellows funded by this program or be funded by other programs of the Hevolution Foundation.

**18. Q: I am a US citizen but would like to conduct research in the UK. Am I eligible for this scholarship?**

**A:** Yes, if you are a current resident of the USA, Canada, UK or Europe and the research is conducted in any of these countries, you are eligible to apply for this fellowship. The applicants and mentors are responsible for all legal paperwork related to visas and work permits prior to the anticipated start of the fellowship no later than April 2025.

**19. Q: My project focuses on age-related diseases; does it qualify for this call?**

**A:** This program will only consider disease-specific research if the project focuses on understanding how basic aging processes may lead to disease outcomes, or how addressing the

basic biology of aging might delay the onset or improve the prognosis or treatment of an age-related disease. For example, if your research is focused on determining how Ab mutations influence Alzheimer's onset and prognosis, that is disease-specific research. However, if your research is focused on understanding how the loss of proteostasis with aging affects the toxic formation of Ab in Alzheimer's onset and prognosis, then this is "aging-focused" research. If you are uncertain, please contact us at [hevolutiongrants@afar.org](mailto:hevolutiongrants@afar.org) prior to submitting your application.

**20. Q: What is the difference between Aging Biology and Geroscience?**

**A:** Aging Biology includes basic research on the hallmarks/pillars of aging, as well as topics such as fibrosis, organelle dysfunction, the microbiome, and other areas identified as drivers of the aging process. Geroscience research or translational research can be defined as a systematic effort to convert basic research knowledge into practical applications to improve human health and well-being, i.e., if a project has a clearly articulated pathway towards clinical relevance to the health and well-being of older adults then it is Geroscience research because it aims at applying those basic biology principles towards a translational goal. These may include work on pre-clinical animal models (mice or other mammals), as well as proof of concept or small-scale studies in human cells and tissues. Work on human subjects must be limited to observational studies where no interventions are involved.

## Budget

**21. Q: How do I apply for childcare support?**

**A:** Childcare support is offered to fellows with child/ren and is to be included and justified in the budget section. In this section of the application, the applicant must mention if the (youngest) child is under the age of 6, as well as the name and address of the childcare facility. Additional documentation, such as a childcare certification and confirmation of child attendance (with a copy of the current contract) is required and needs to be submitted once the application has been selected for funding, during the so-called pre-award phase. This documentation does not need to be submitted with the application. As mentioned in the announcement, partial support (\$6,000 per year) might be provided.

**22. Q: How do I apply for research supply funds?**

**A:** Funds for research supplies are included as additional training-related expenses and need to be included and justified in the budget section of the proposal. As part of the research supply funds, the Foundation supports its fellows with funds covering travel to conferences and meetings, research supplies and service of core facilities, etc. Please see the RFA for more information.

**23. Q: Does the salary include fringe benefits?**

**A:** The Foundation neither provides additional funds to cover health insurance, fringe benefits, or other contributions, nor visa applications or moving expenses. The host institution and the fellow are obligated to deduct any fees related to health insurance and benefits from the salary allowance and/or the overhead/F&A funds provided by the Foundation.

**24. Q: Does HF-PTG provide indirect costs or Facility and Administrative (F&A) costs?**

**A:** Yes, indirect costs (or F&A) of up to 8% of the total salary, supplies and travel are allowable. The indirect cost is in addition to the direct cost. Therefore, the total allowable award equals direct costs (salary allowance, childcare support, training-related expenses) plus indirect cost

(8% of direct cost excluding childcare support). Please exclude total cost of childcare support while calculating the F&A.

For example,

<i>Total salary allowance</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>
<i>Total childcare support</i>	<i>\$ 6,000</i>
<i>Total training-related expenses</i>	<i>\$ 7,000</i>
<i>Maximum allowed indirect costs</i>	
<i>8% on salary, supplies and travel</i>	
<i>(excluding childcare support)</i>	<i>\$ 6,560 (8% of \$82,000)</i>
<i>Total funds allowed to be requested</i>	<i>\$ 94,560</i>

Any unspent funds will be returned to Hevolution at the end of the award period or after completion of the postdoctoral training, whichever occurs first.

For any further questions please contact [hevolutiongrants@afar.org](mailto:hevolutiongrants@afar.org).