

Foundation for Angelman Syndrome Therapeutics (FAST) Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

PURPOSE

FAST's grants and fellowship programs aim to encourage therapeutic translational research agendas focusing on potential treatments, research, or biomarker and outcome measure development that will greatly enhance the progress of these platforms toward human benefit for Angelman syndrome (AS).

FAST is committed to supporting individuals living with Angelman syndrome, and their caretakers, to realize their full potential and bring scientific and therapeutic advancements that help to translate to the human condition.

The goal is to bring potential treatments to current medical practice as quickly and safely as possible; therefore, preference will be given to research projects that have a translational application to human benefit, and the results of all of FAST funded research will be shared with the community in a timely fashion through publications and presentations. If publication is with a journal that is not open access, we ask that the PI provide a detailed lay summary that can be posted on the FAST website. Additionally, FAST aims to fund research that can serve as a launching pad, or bridge, which can lead to further research support from other government agencies and funding sources.

FAST invites applications from postdoctoral fellows interested in pursuing careers in Angelman syndrome research. Fellowships provide the necessary resources to support and encourage the development of young scientists who benefit from the mentorship of prominent researchers. We believe the investment in Angelman syndrome research training will grow exponentially as our fellows later assume professorial roles in departments around the world, many of which currently have no representation in Angelman syndrome research.

Each grant application should have a defined project with objective and hypotheses that fit in the mission statement of FAST.

KEY DATES

All grant applications have a rolling deadline. Please contact: grants@cureangelman.org for more information and provide a letter of intent if you are considering applying for a grant.

ELIGIBILITY

Institutions receiving grants must be recognized as nonprofit. In the US, this means institutions that do not operate to make a profit. Individuals should have training and experience at least equal to the Ph.D. or M.D. level. Awardees are required to pursue their research and academic training on a full-time basis, or as specified by the sponsoring institution in accordance with its own policies. Research clinicians must devote fulltime to their proposed research training and must restrict clinical duties within their fulltime research training experience to activities that are directly related to the research training experience.

DURATION OF SUPPORT and ALLOWABLE COSTS

Fellowships are awarded for the period of one year and may be renewed for a second year, based on satisfactory progress. A financial report and progress report are required at the end of each award year. If requesting a grant renewal, a financial report and progress report are required at 10 months. A grant **renewal application** must be submitted at least 8 weeks before the subsequent year of funding is requested along with a progress and financial report. For more

information on renewal guidelines please [click here](#).

Potential allowable costs:

The Fellowship award provides the following provisions for its recipients:

- 1) **Stipend** - \$46,000 per year;
- 2) **Travel funds** - up to \$1,500 per year to attend a conference most helpful to the fellow's **Angelman syndrome**-related research; and
- 3) **Research expenses** - \$3,000 per year to be utilized for expenses related to completion of the research project. FAST is unable to pay for indirect costs under any circumstances.

APPLICATION and SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Write the research plan: Applicants should download the [grant application form](#) and prepare a Research Plan that emphasizes the methods and utilizes the following outline format:

- 1) **Hypotheses and specific Aims:** Include specific research questions, objectives and hypotheses. The focus of the applications should be aligned with the FAST mission.
- 2) **Background and Significance:** provide rationale for the research with emphasis on what is needed and **why this project would benefit a translational therapeutic research program for Angelman syndrome.**
- 3) **Preliminary studies:** Include any preliminary data you have gathered which supports the specific research question(s).
(Sections 1 through 3 may not exceed 2 pages)
- 4) **Research Design and Methods: (3 page maximum)**
 - i) Study design
 - ii) Analysis plan
 - iii) Expected results
 - iv) Limitations and alternative approaches-discuss potential difficulties and/or limitation in achieving aims and alternative approaches to achieving aims.
- 5) **Lay summary:** This should include your research objectives and your preliminary work that can be easily interpreted by a lay person. The focus should be on the translational component of your research objectives. **(1 page maximum).** We are committed to educating the public about the importance of this research, the this lay summary is an important part of the application process. This will be posted on the FAST website if the project is funded
- 6) **Biosketch:** The biosketch of the PI and any collaborative personnel for the project. Please use current NIH Biosketch Format.
- 7) **Formatting**
 - i) Proposal in Arial or Times New Roman size 11 point font, single or 1.15 spacing.
 - ii) Margins no less than 0.5"
 - iii) Include a header on each page indicating name of PI (Last, First), page number
 - iv) Figures and figure legends included within the 5 page limit.
 - v) Only PDF files accepted for review
- 8) **Secure a letter of recommendation from your Mentor.** The applicant's Mentor Letter(s) must describe in detail:
 - i) their commitments to and proposed roles in guiding the individual applicant during the research training experience;
 - ii) their assessment of the applicant's ability to conduct the proposed research; and
 - iii) the facilities and major equipment available the applicant that is relevant to the proposed research.
- 9) **Secure Letters of Recommendation.** Applicants are required to request two letters of recommendation in addition to the required Mentor Letter to be submitted on their behalf. Generally speaking, successful recommendations should provide testimony to the Fellow's aptitude and ability to execute the proposed research. In the event the Fellow is/will be employed by a foreign institution, the US Co-Mentor Letter may replace one of the additional two letters of recommendation.

Submit Application Materials.

Applications must be submitted electronically to grants@CureAngelman.org. Only PDF files will be accepted and reviewed. Letters of Recommendation must also be submitted as PDF files to grants@cureangelman.org. Recommendation letters will only be accepted from the recommender's email address.

Any questions about the application process should be directed to grants@cureangelman.org.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL SUBJECTS

Human subjects studied in the course of research conducted under a research award are under no circumstances the responsibility of FAST. Human subjects in a program supported by FAST shall be volunteers in any survey, study, or procedure. FAST requires recipients of any award using human subjects to demonstrate institutional review board (IRB) approval of the research project prior to dispersal of the awarded funds. If IRB approval cannot be obtained within 6 months of the award, the award may be rescinded by the Board of Directors.

If animals are used in the proposed study, written certification must be provided to FAST indicating that proper treatment, care, and humane conditions will be provided. FAST requires recipients to demonstrate Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval of the research project prior to dispersal of award funds.

FAST GRANT REVIEW PROCESS

The first stage of providing fair and expert review for research funding applications submitted to FAST consists of scientific peer review by a group of highly esteemed basic and clinical scientists and clinicians that form our **Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)**. The panel uses standard guidelines established by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for scoring applications with an emphasis on innovation, scientific rigor, and relevance to the mission of FAST. All reviewer conflicts of interest must be revealed prior to the review. All members of the SAB have signed a nondisclosure/confidentiality agreement. If the SAB Chair deems there to be a conflict of interest, the SAB member in conflict will be recused from the review process. Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, employment at the same sponsoring institution and collaboration on recent or current research projects, competing research proposal for the same request for proposal (RFP), and anything else that the chair of the SAB determines to be a conflict.

Applicants undergo scientific peer-review by the SAB and will receive scores based on scientific merit, innovation, translational impact and alignment with FAST's mission. Applications will also be reviewed based on the experimental design, methods, rationale, budget, and feasibility. Applicants should concisely and adequately detail how the hypotheses will be tested, demonstrating adequate power for testing the hypothesis, and clearly define all variables and aims. If SAB critiques have follow-up questions or recommendations, Applicant will provide a response to each question and/or recommendation. The SAB recommendations are then reviewed and compiled by the Scientific Director Panel. This panel consists of the Chair of the SAB, the CSO and the Science Director. All recommendations for funding are made by the panel to the FAST Board of Directors (BOD). Panel funding recommendations are based on scientific merit (as evaluated by the SAB), budgetary considerations and discussion of relevancy and priority to the mission of FAST. Final approval is required by the FAST BOD before funding may occur.

FAST strives to review and give a funding response to all submitted grants within six weeks of receiving the grant submission. This allows for the grants to be initially reviewed and for any concerns raised by the SAB to be properly addressed by the Applicant before final funding decisions are made.

No-Cost Extensions and Carryover Policy

A no-cost extension extends the project period beyond the original project end date. No additional funding will be allowed. A no-cost extension may be requested if there is a programmatic need to continue the research and there are sufficient funds. A no-cost extension request should be made at least 30 days prior to the end of the project period and must be requested by the PI detailing the amount being requested, the cause for such request and the date in which the extension would end.

A carryover allows unobligated funds remaining at the end of the budget period to be carried forward

to the next budget period. The carryover would allow the grantee to use the unused prior year funds in a following budget period. A carryover request should be made at least 30 days prior to the end of the project period and must be requested by the PI detailing the amount to be carried over, explanation of unobligated balance, detailed budget and scientific justification. A carryover request will only be allowed for grants longer than one year.

Prohibition of Discrimination

No person shall be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any program or activity receiving financial assistance from FAST because of race, ethnic origin, religion, age, sex or sexual orientation.

Amendment of Policies

FAST reserves the right to modify its policies governing research awards at any time. The recipient agrees to abide by any changes or to terminate the grant at the time when such changes become effective. Failure to abide by the policies governing awards shall be considered sufficient grounds for cancellation of an award or refusal to consider any pending application by the grantee.