

# FOUNDATION FOR ANGELMAN SYNDROME THERAPEUTICS (FAST)

## NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARD

### **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 as 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 lead to further research support from other government agencies and funding sources.

FAST is also focused on readying any potential therapeutic for a clinical trial through support of biomarker and outcome measure development, specific to the needs of AS. This includes readying clinical sites for the collection of natural history data, collecting novel data on AS specific assessments, and evaluating biomarkers on those living with AS.

**FAST New Investigator Award**—This award will be granted to a promising new scientist that is looking to start a significant research program focusing on translational research in Angelman syndrome, or on technologies specifically relevant to advancing Angelman Syndrome treatment modalities. This award is geared toward financially supporting the start-up needs for this investigator for 2 years, with the potential of a one-year extension, with the one-year extension at an additional \$125,000. This award will be a two-year grant, in the amount of \$250,000/year. Potential allowable costs are the same as that for a FAST-TRAC award. While this is a two-year grant, each year of funding will be based on review of the prior year's progress report. A progress report to include a financial report is required at the 11<sup>th</sup> month from award activation date. A final report, including financials, will be required at the end of the two-year award period.

The applicants for the New Investigator Awards should be new Primary Investigators, within their first five years of an academic position at an institution/university. This award is not intended for those entering industry. The Applicant should have either accepted an offer or already been appointed to an academic position at a university/institute and have a history of research in a

relevant field consistent with FASTs goals. It is expected that the Applicant will use this funding to generate data that can be utilized for future grants and publications, and that the Applicant will attend and present their data at the FAST annual Scientific Summit/Symposium. Additionally, the recipient of the New Investigator Award will agree to be considered as a possible scientific advisor in their area of AS research and available for input and review of research proposals to the FAST SAB and BOD.

**Key dates:**

All grant applications have a rolling deadline. Please contact: [grants@cureangelman.org](mailto: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 academia on a full-time basis, or as specified by the sponsoring institution in accordance with its own policies.

**Duration of support and allowable costs:**

FAST grants are allocated based on the proposed needs of the project. Expedited timelines are encouraged, which will be made in either one- or two-year allocations, pending on the scope of work. Each year of funding will be based on review of the prior year's progress report. For a oneyear grant, a progress report is required within 6 months and a final report at the 1 year of work commencement, also, a financial report is required within 1 year of the award activation date. For grants longer than 1 year, 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](#).

Applicants are encouraged to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to FAST at [grants@cureangelman.org](mailto:grants@cureangelman.org) to determine the feasibility of a potential request prior to applying. LOI's must be submitted as on PDF file containing the following information:

- 1) A brief description of the project including objectives and rationale;
- 2) An estimate of the proposed budget and duration of the project;
- 3) Preliminary data to support the project; and
- 4) A CV/Biosketch of the PI.

**Potential allowable costs:**

**Reagents and Materials:** These may include but are not limited to: gene chips, chemical libraries, acquisition of cell lines, acquisition of animal model lines.

**Services:** These may include, but are not limited to: genetic sequencing, proteomics, metabolomics, mass spectrometry, antibody production, and drug/chemical manufacturing.

**Equipment:** FAST will consider the purchase of specialized pieces of equipment or software purchases for specific projects when necessary.

**Personnel:** Including salary and fringe benefits. Additionally, FAST will fund postdoctoral and graduate students at a salary equivalent to the current NIH guidelines.

**Indirect costs:** FAST allows up to 5% indirect cost rate to the budget's modified total direct costs (less those costs specifically excluded) to be included in the total cost of the project. FAST will not pay any indirects on tuition, equipment, software or software licenses. Example: modified total direct costs of \$100, 5% indirects would be \$5; total cost of project is \$105.

**Travel costs:** Each award will include a \$3,000 travel stipend to allow for the PI and one trainee, when applicable, to travel to the annual FAST scientific symposium, where they may be required to present their current research progress.

#### **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).
- 4) **Research Design and Methods:**
  - i) Study design
  - ii) Analysis plan
  - iii) Expected results
  - iv) Limitations and alternative approaches
- 5) **Limitations and Potential Pitfalls:** Discuss potential difficulties and/or limitation in achieving aims and alternative approaches to achieving aims.
- 6) **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.

- 7) **Timeline:** A research timeline will be provided with milestone goals to be reached during the funding period.
- 8) **Biosketch:** The biosketch of the PI and any collaborative personnel for the project. Please use current NIH Biosketch Format.
- 9) **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
- 10) **Budget**
  - i) One page budget with justification is required.
  - ii) Applicants must use budget sheet provided in application materials. iii) If proposal is multi-year, Applicant must use separate budget sheets per year, fill in the start and end date and applicable amounts for each year of support separately, summing for total amount requested.

### **Submit application materials**

Applications should be submitted electronically to [grants@cureangelman.org](mailto:grants@cureangelman.org) Only PDF files will be accepted and reviewed. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Any questions about the application process should be directed to [grants@cureangelman.org](mailto: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.