

2022 Pilot Award – Request for Applications

Grants awarded through this RFA are intended to provide early support for exploratory ideas, particularly those with novel hypotheses for autism. Appropriate projects for this mechanism include those considered higher risk with less assurance of ultimate impact, but with the potential for transformative results.

Investigators new to the field of autism are encouraged to apply for these awards. The total budget of a Pilot Award is \$300,000 or less, including 20 percent indirect costs, over a period of up to two (2) years.

[Policies and Procedures](#)

Application Deadline
March 17, 2022

Maximum Budget

Over Two Years
\$300,000

Important Dates

Application Available
January 18, 2022

Application Deadline
March 17, 2022

Award Notification
July 18, 2022

Award Start Date

Awards may begin as early as September 1, 2022, but we encourage PIs to select a project start date that best accommodates the needs of their project. Funds are expected to be expended as requested during each annual budget period. Note: Projects must begin on the first of the month.

[RFA](#) [How To Apply](#) [FAQ](#) [Past Awards](#)



The Simons Foundation uses an electronic grants submission process. All interested grant applicants must submit their applications online through [proposalCENTRAL](#).

Accessing the Application in proposalCENTRAL:

Prospective applicants must submit an application via [proposalCENTRAL](#) (pC). To start an application in pC, users must first log in to their pC account.

If You Need to Create a New Account in pC

To create a new account, go to <https://proposalcentral.com/> (pC) and click “Need an Account?” Fill in the required fields, check the boxes to agree to pC’s “Terms of Service and Acceptable Use Policy” and then click “Save.” For the next steps, see the “If You Have an Existing Account in pC” section below.

If You Have an Existing Account in pC

For all users with a pC account, log in under “Application Login” at <https://proposalcentral.com/> and select “Create a New Proposal” or click on the “Grant Opportunities” tab. Scroll down to “Simons Foundation” and then click “Apply Now” for the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative-Pilot Award program in order to start the proposal and access the templates. After all sections are completed, you will be able to click on the “Submit” button.

Application Requirements and Submission Instructions

To submit an application, the following proposalCENTRAL sections must be completed:

1. **Title Page:** Please provide the following information
 - a. Project title
 - b. Indicate use of Simons Collections biospecimens, data or participant recruitment.
 - c. Select a primary category. Please note a secondary category is not required.
2. **Download Templates & Instructions:** The following templates are available for download:
 - a. 2022 Pilot RFA Application Instructions
 - b. Simons Foundation Policies and Procedures
 - c. 2022 Pilot RFA Request for Applications (RFA) Announcement
 - d. Methodological and Statistical Considerations for SFARI Grant Proposals
 - e. Induced Pluripotent Stem Cell Models of Autism: Experimental Design Considerations
 - f. Pilot RFA Specific Aims Page Template
 - g. Pilot RFA Proposal Narrative Template
 - h. Investigational Compound Information Sheet
 - i. Statement of Changes Template
 - j. Biosketch Template

k. Budget Justification Template

l. Current and Pending Support Template

m. Resources and Research Environment Template

n. Renewable Reagents and Data Sharing Plan Template

o. Detailed Budget Template for Subcontract

p. Progress Report Template

3. **Enable Other Users to Access This Proposal:** Complete this section to give administrators or collaborators access and to allow other users to submit the application on your behalf.
4. **Applicant/PI:** The Principal Investigator (PI) should be listed here. For grants with multiple PIs, the contact PI should be listed here.
5. **Organization/Institution:** Enter the lead institution. Contact information for the signing official and financial/fiscal officer from your institution is required; select the correct person or enter new names in this section.
6. **Key Personnel:** Indicate key personnel, including but not limited to: principal investigators (not including the contact PI), co-investigators, consultants, postdoctoral research associates and others. In rare circumstances, the applicant organization may designate multiple individuals as PIs who share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the project, intellectually and logistically. For more information on the responsibilities of PIs, please refer to the relevant questions in the [FAQ section](#).
7. **Abstract:** Enter as text in this section.
8. **Budget Period Detail:** The following information is required for the “Budget Period Detail” section.
 - a. **Award start date:** Awards may begin as early as September 1, 2022, but we encourage PIs to select a project start date that best accommodates the needs of their project. Funds are expected to be expended as requested during each annual budget period. Note: Projects must begin on the first of the month.
 - b. **Personnel:** Please provide the name, role, appointment type, percent effort, institutional base salary, requested salary, fringe rate and requested fringe for all personnel.
 - 1) Other considerations: Please note there is no salary cap for PIs or other faculty on a Simons Foundation grant; however, the compensation is prorated according to the individual’s percent effort on the grant. There is no minimum percent effort required for PIs or other personnel on any SFARI award type, but it is expected that the PI will commit sufficient effort to this project to provide a leading intellectual and guiding role on the project. PIs committing less than 15 percent effort to their project should justify their effort level in detail. SFARI funds may be used only for personnel considered employees of the grantee institution who are eligible for benefits. Funds may not be used for stipend or benefit supplementation unless specifically authorized under the terms of the program from which funds are derived. The Simons Foundation reserves the right to modify budgets when an application has been selected for an award ([see Simons Foundation policies](#)).
 - c. **Indirect Costs (IDC):** Indirect costs to the primary institution are limited to 20 percent of direct costs with the following exceptions: equipment, tuition and any portion of each subcontract in

excess of \$25,000. The primary institution may take indirect costs on the first \$25,000 modified total direct costs of each subcontract. Indirect costs paid to a subcontractor may not exceed 20 percent of the modified total direct costs paid to the subcontractor.

- d. **Equipment:** The Simons Foundation will own equipment purchased with foundation grant funds with a unit cost of \$50,000 or more. At the end of the grant-funding period or in case of grant termination for any reason, the foundation reserves the right to retain ownership or cede ownership to the PI's institution. Equipment with a unit cost of \$50,000 or less shall be the property of the institution.
- e. **Biospecimens:** If the proposal includes the use of Simons Collection biospecimens, i.e., from the [Simons Simplex Collection \(SSC\)](#) or [Simons Searchlight](#), the Simons Foundation will review the estimated cost based on the price list on our [website](#). Biospecimen costs will be considered separately from other project costs. Enter the projected figure in the field marked "Simons Collections Biospecimens (No IDC)" in the "Budget Period Detail" section, under "Other Expenses." A description of use, including the number and type of biospecimens, should be included in the proposal narrative and budget justification (see the "Proposal Attachments" section below). Biospecimen costs must be excluded from the IDC cost calculation.

- 1) Please do not use the field marked "For Internal Use Only-Estimated Cost for Simons Collections Biospecimens" below the "Indirect Costs" section in the "Budget Period Detail."
- 2) Investigators interested in recruiting human participants, including those from a Simons Collection must complete and submit a Human Participants Study Information Sheet.

f. **Multiple PIs:**

- 1) Please note that the applicant PI will be the designated contact PI for the project. The contact PI will be responsible for directing the project and will act as the main point of contact for the foundation by coordinating all administrative deliverables.
- 2) Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who would like to be paid separately must upload in the "Proposal Attachments" section:
 - i. Signed signature page for each PI (available for download in the "Proposal Attachments" and "Download Templates & Instructions" sections).
 - ii. Budget template for each non-applicant PI (available for download in the "Proposal Attachments" and "Download Templates & Instructions" sections).
 - iii. Direct costs for all non-applicant PIs, which must be given in section 8 ("Budget Period Detail") in the "Consortium & Contractual Direct" section. Indirect costs for all non-applicant PIs should be included in the "Indirect Costs" section. Please add a separate line for both direct costs and indirect costs for each non-applicant PI.
- 3) Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who will be paid directly by the contact PI's institution are considered subcontractors. Please refer to the instructions in the Subcontracts section below.
- 4) Applications with multiple PIs from the same institution do not need to submit additional materials. Additional non-applicant PIs should be listed as key personnel in section 6 ("Key Personnel") and in section 8 ("Budget Period Detail"), and only one signature page is needed.
- 5) Please see the chart below for a detailed breakdown of multiple PI requirements.

g. Subcontracts:

1) Applications with subcontracts (including PIs who will be paid directly by the contact PI's institution) must submit:

- i. Subcontract Detailed Budget (available for download in the "Proposal Attachments" and "Download Templates & Instructions" sections) for each subcontract.
- ii. Direct costs for all subcontract PIs, which must be given in section 8 ("Budget Period Detail") in the "Consortium & Contractual Direct" section. Indirect costs for all subcontract PIs should be included in the "Indirect Costs" section. Please add a separate line for both direct costs and indirect costs for each subcontract PI.

2) Please see the chart below for a detailed breakdown of subcontract requirements.

Requirements	Multiple PIs (at different institutions that want to be paid separately)	Subcontracts (including subcontract PI)
Signed signature page	Yes	No
Detailed budget template for additional PIs at different institutions	Yes	No
Detailed budget template for subcontracts	No	Yes
Direct costs entered into the "Consortium & Contractual Direct" section of the "Budget Period Detail"	Yes	Yes
Indirect costs entered into the "Indirect" section of the "Budget Period Detail"	Yes	Yes
Key personnel biosketches	Yes	Yes
Key personnel current and pending support	Yes	Yes
Renewable reagents and data-sharing plan	No (contact PI to submit one overall document)	No
Resources research and environment	No (contact PI to submit one overall document)	No
Budget justification	No (a justification should be included in the budget template)	No (a justification should be included in the budget template)

9. **Budget Summary:** The "Budget Summary" will populate from the saved "Budget Period Detail" section.

10. **Organization Assurances:** Indicate use of human participants or vertebrate animals in this section and status of approval from the Institutional Review Board or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Grants cannot activate without current human participant and/or animal research ethical approval.

11. **Proposal Attachments:** The following documents are to be uploaded in the "Proposal Attachments" section, where they are also available for download:

- a. **Specific Aims Page:** The Specific Aims Page should not exceed one (1) page and should be a summary of the proposed project focused on the research aims of the project, including a concise rationale for the hypothesis, description of preliminary data and experimental approach, and impact on autism research.
- b. **Proposal Narrative:** The Proposal Narrative should not exceed three (3) pages of single-spaced, size 11-point text, 0.5 margins. The Proposal Narrative should be considered an expanded version of the Specific Aims Page and used to provide more detail on the following:

- 1) Relevant scientific background and relevance to autism
- 2) Preliminary results when applicable
- 3) Specific aims
- 4) Experimental design
- 5) Pitfalls and alternative strategies
- 6) Future directions and implications for autism diagnosis, understanding or treatment
- 7) Timeline and milestones

Figures, figure legends and references should follow the narrative text and will **not** count towards the page limit. References should be in *Journal of Neuroscience* format, including full author list, title and a link to PubMed. Figures are limited to 10, each fitting on a single page. Please attach them at the end of the three-page narrative in the same PDF file.

- c. **Investigational Compound Information Sheet:** Required only for investigators proposing to use investigational compounds or chemicals for which public information is not yet available.
- d. **Statement of Changes Template:** Required only for investigators who are resubmitting an application previously submitted to SFARI.
- e. **Biographical Sketches of Key Personnel:** Please refer to NIH guidelines.
- f. **Budget Justification**
- g. **Budget Templates:**
- 1) **Multiple PIs:** Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions that would like to be paid separately must submit a signed budget template for each PI institution.
 - 2) **Subcontract:** Applications with subcontracts must submit a budget template.
- h. **Progress Report:** Investigators currently receiving SFARI funding on science relevant for the current proposal should include a progress report in two (2) pages or less.
- i. **Research Environment and Resources**
- j. **Renewable Reagents and Data-Sharing Plan**
- k. **Current and Pending Support:** Please upload current and pending support for all PIs and key personnel.

l. **501(c)(3) determination or equivalency letter (foreign institutions only):** Please upload, if available, a copy of your U.S. IRS 501(c)(3) determination or equivalency letter as part of the application. (See [Simons Foundation policies](#).)

m. **Signed Signature Page:** Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions that would like to be paid separately must submit a signed signature page from each PI institution.

12. **PI Data Sheet:** Your professional profile will populate this section of the application. If revisions are required, select “Edit Professional Profile” and go to the “Personal Data for Applications” section. Please note that the contact PI’s [ORCID identifier](#) (“iD”) is required. Once the PI’s ORCID iD is provided, you will be able to sync a limited amount of data from your ORCID account with your pC account.

13. **Validate:** You must click the “Validate” button below to check for any missing required information or files. All missing required information will be listed on the screen. Please correct any missing information before proceeding to the next step.

14. **Signature Page(s):** The signed signature page is available for download in this section and must be signed by the signing official, then re-uploaded in the “Proposal Attachments” Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions that would like to be paid separately must submit a signed signature page for each PI institution.

15. **Submit:** You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. Any missing information will be listed on the screen. If your submission is successful, you will receive a confirmation message on the screen and a confirmation email will be sent to the applicant.

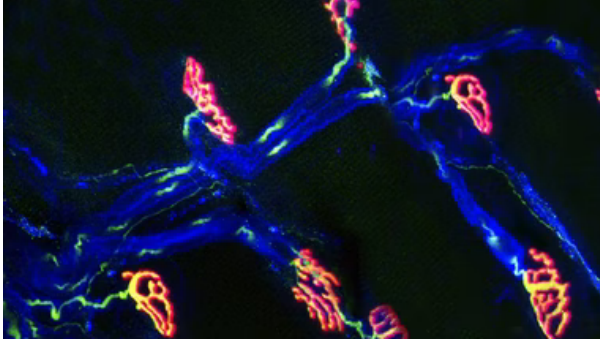
Please note that narratives exceeding the three (3)-page limit will not be reviewed. Figures (up to 10, fitting on one page each), figure legends and references (formatted in the *Journal of Neuroscience* style) are not included in the page limit.

Related Content



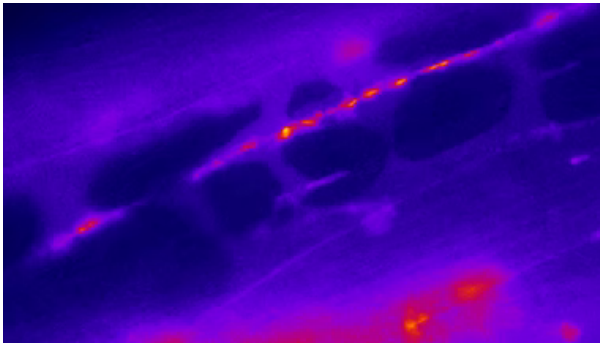
[Blog](#)

Updates to SFARI's 2022 requests for grant applications



[News](#)

SFARI 2021 Pilot awardees announced



[News](#)

SFARI Summer 2020 Pilot awardees announced



[News](#)

SFARI Winter 2020 Pilot awardees announced