



2026 NAAF Early Career Award Request for Proposals and Instructions

The National Alopecia Areata Foundation (NAAF) drives research to find a cure and accessible treatments for alopecia areata, supports those impacted, and educates the public about the disease. Alopecia areata is a common autoimmune disease affecting as many as 160 million people worldwide. NAAF offers competitive awards and grants to the research and medical communities working to advance alopecia areata research and care.

NAAF Early Career Award

NAAF's Early Career Award seeks to support junior investigators entering the alopecia areata research space with funds to support critical research questions. The goals of the program are to support individuals early in their career, to encourage interest and commitment to alopecia areata as a research focus, and to bring new voices and ideas to the alopecia areata research community. Applications related to all aspects of alopecia areata are strongly encouraged, including basic science, translational research, technology, epidemiology, health services, and clinical research.

Investigators with innovative research ideas are encouraged to apply. Priority consideration will be given to individuals who have not received NAAF grant funding in the past and to proposals that address one or more of the following areas of interest:

- Development of patient-reported outcome measures specific to AA
- Basic science research to advance understanding of the pathophysiology of AA, including investigations of pathways/ targets that could lead to new therapies, and development/ characterization of new animal models
- Secondary analysis of NIH's All of Us data set
- Comorbid diseases: Impact and treatment considerations/ strategies
- Investigations to improve understanding of disease triggers
- Advances in treatment or tools for treatment decision-making by patients and families
- Elucidation of the burden of alopecia areata on patients and families, including the psychosocial impact

Awards

The Early Career Award is a 2-year, non-renewable award with an expected start date of 1/15/27. Applicants may request up to \$150,000 (\$75,000 per year over two years.) Applicants may request **direct costs only**. Indirect costs are not allowed on NAAF grants.

Eligibility

- Applicants must hold the degree of MD, DO, and/or PhD (or equivalent) and be eligible to apply for grants under the guidelines of their host institution.
- Eligible applicants may not have current or previous NIH R series funding as PI or Co-PI on an alopecia areata-focused project.
- Priority consideration will be given to individuals who have not received NAAF grant funding in the past.
- Investigators and institutions throughout the world are welcome to apply.
- Evidence of IRB or IACUC (or equivalent) approval is required as applicable.

How to apply

NEW this year: Applications will be submitted via ProposalCentral. Instructions below.

Important Dates

Application deadline:	11:59 PM PT, Thursday, September 17, 2026
Awards announcement:	anticipated on or before December 31, 2026
Earliest start date:	January 15, 2027

Questions

Email grants@naaf.org for additional information or with any questions on the NAAF Early Career Award application or review process.

Application Submission Instructions

General information

The full application is due no later than **Thursday, September 17, 2026**, by 11:59 p.m. PT. All applications must be submitted via ProposalCentral.

NAAF recommends that you **start your application early** to become familiar with ProposalCentral. If you have not used ProposalCentral before, you will need to create a new account to proceed.

- Once you are registered in ProposalCentral, select Grant Opportunities from the top navigation menu. In the search field, enter National Alopecia Areata Foundation and click Search.
- Locate the Early Career Award announcement and click “Apply Now.”
- To activate the navigation bar on the left, enter the title of your proposal on the title page and “save” the application. The navigation bar on the left will now become interactive for you to continue your application.
- Once the application is completed, please validate, sign, and submit the application.

To complete the application, complete all of the Proposal Sections listed on the left side of the page.

Title Page: Enter project title, complete the other fields, and click “save” the application.

Download Instructions and Templates: Download these instructions if needed.

Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal: Add personnel who can have access to review and edit the proposal. This may include co-investigators and department or grants administrators who will need to review or co-sign your application.

Lead Investigator: Add investigator information and upload biosketch.

Lead Investigator Institution: Provide contact information for the signing staff official and financial officer at the institution where the lead investigator is located and where the study will take place.

Research Team / Key Personnel: Add the roles and the contact information for any co-investigators (if applicable) and other key personnel you wish to include in the application. Include percentage effort for each person listed. Upload a biosketch for co-investigators and key personnel.

Letter of Reference: Submit at least one and no more than three letters of reference. For each referee, provide an email address in the application. ProposalCentral will send the referee a link with instructions for submitting their letter directly.

Project Information: Complete the sections Lay Summary, Abstract, and Keyword selection.

Project Aims: List two to five aims that outline the central objectives of the project.

Milestones: Identify at least one milestone (a specific progress point or event at a key stage of achieving the project aims) per project aim entered in the previous section.

Budget Period Detail and Justification: Note that indirect costs are not permitted on NAAF grants. Complete the budget fields for personnel and non-personnel costs (e.g. supplies, animal care, etc.). Include a budget justification for the items listed in the detailed budget.

Other Support: Enter details of other funding support for this project if applicable.

Organization Assurances: Indicate applicability and status of IRB and/or IACUC approval.

Lead Investigator Publications: Add publication entries. If you already have a Professional Profile in ProposalCentral, entries previously saved will be populated here.

Research Proposal: Upload your Research Proposal and other documents in this section. The Research Proposal must not exceed 8 pages, not including references and figures. Detailed information on the Research Proposal document and other files for upload are included in ProposalCentral.

Signatures Page and Print: Signatures are required from the lead investigator requesting funds from NAAF and from the signing official from the lead institution.