“Advanced Degree and Clinical Research Training Grant in Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency”

**Funding Opportunity Title:** “Advanced Degree and Clinical Research Training Grant in Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency”

**Announcement/Launch Date:** November 20, 2015  
**Full Application Due Date:** February 19, 2016  
**Funding Notification:** May 6, 2016  
**Funding Begins:** July 1, 2016

**This Funding Opportunity Contains the Following Information:**
- Background and Purpose
- Funds Available
- Grant Administration Policies
- Eligible Institutions
- Eligible Investigators
- Application Process
- Full Application
- Where to Submit
- Peer Review Process
- Review Criteria
- Receipt and Review Schedule
- Notification of Award/Public Announcement

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The objective of this award is to provide additional career development support for outstanding Respiratory Therapists (RTs) who conduct research (clinical or translational), including detection, inhalation therapies, clinical care, diagnostics, and therapeutic tools in alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency (AATD)-related lung disease. It is expected that the award will provide an incentive for the pursuit of a Master’s-level (or higher) degree and a career in chronic lung disease research with a focus on AATD. Funds will be used to support an RT’s getting advanced training in research (Master’s-level degree or higher) with the subject of the deliverable research project being a meritorious project regarding alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency. While the type of research training program for which the funds can be allocated to tuition support is broadly defined, it is anticipated that masters programs including but not limited to the following areas: respiratory therapy, physician assistant/nurse practitioner, clinical research/investigation, public health, or even business administration (as long as there is a solid link to an important alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency-related research project) would meet the intent of this grant. Funds might also be used to support actual research materials related to the project focused on an aspect of alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency. The project must be deemed important and meritorious by the grant review committee and could involve any of a number of aspects regarding AATD, e.g., strategies in detection, therapy, ethical/legal/social issues, basic science, etc. Because this is considered a training grant, the application must identify a mentor and define the mentor’s role in the proposed research. The mentor’s relevant expertise and commitment to the applicant’s work will be an important review criterion in the application.
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**Funds Available**

The Alpha-1 Foundation (A1F), the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) and the American Respiratory Care Foundation (ARCF) will collectively commit up to $30,000 ($15,000/year) over two (2) years to fund one (1) award. Subsequent commitments and awards will be determined after the first year of the two year award cycle.

**Alpha-1/ARCF Foundation Grant Administration Policies**

The Alpha-1 Foundation, AARC, and ARCF have committed to administering this grant mechanism to ensure the following research protections are afforded to researchers considering a grant submittal:

- Freedom from external involvement in the design of their research project
- Freedom from external involvement in the peer-review process
- Protection of the commercial and intellectual property rights of the results of their research and data.

The Alpha-1 Foundation, AARC, and ARCF policy on institutional indirect or overhead costs states that the use of grant funds to pay for overhead and/or indirect costs is not permitted. Some of the grant funds would be expected to support at least part of the tuition for the research training program to which the successful applicant is applying. Final commitment of the grant will be contingent upon acceptance of the applicant to a credentialed Master’s-level (or higher) program that has been stated on the application.

**Eligible Institutions**

You may submit an application if your institution has any of the following characteristics:

- For-profit or non-profit organization
- Public or private institution, such as university, college, hospital, and laboratory
- Units of State and local government
- Eligible agency of the federal government
- Domestic (Candidates from institutions outside 50 states of the United States are ineligible)

**Eligible Investigators**

Eligible candidates for this award must meet the following criteria:

- Possess an active AARC membership
- Possess a baccalaureate degree in a health related discipline
- Possess the R.R.T. credential
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- Possess a “Full-time” appointment in a Master’s-level (or higher) degree program at an accredited institution
  - If the candidate is applying for support for Master’s-level (or higher) degree training as part of the award, admission into an accredited Master’s-level (or higher) degree program must be demonstrated. Candidates who have VA appointments may not consider part of the VA effort toward satisfying the “full-time” requirement at the applicant institution. Candidates with VA appointments should contact the staff person in the relevant Institute or Center prior to preparing an application to discuss their eligibility.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for this award consists of the submission of an application which will undergo peer review for scientific merit and review of the applicant’s proposed training program and plan. A letter of intent is not required for this funding opportunity. Any discussion or indication of interest prior to or after the submission of an application should not be construed as a commitment of funding.

APPLICATION

Applications must be prepared using the Alpha-1 Foundation’s online application form on ProposalCENTRAL. The online application form is available here: https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp?GMID=135

Note: Applicants must first create a profile and be logged in to ProposalCENTRAL in order to access the online application form.

WHERE TO SUBMIT

The Alpha-1 Foundation requires applicants to submit their applications online using ProposalCENTRAL.

The online application form is available here: https://proposalcentral.altum.com/default.asp?GMID=135

Inquiries or technical issues regarding ProposalCENTRAL and the online application process should be directed to customer support at:
Phone: 703-964-5840, Toll-free phone: 1-800-875-2562
Email: pcsupport@altum.com

Live customer support is only available from 8:30am – 5pm ET.

Note: Any indication of the Alpha-1 Foundation, AARC or ARCF’s interest in an application should not be construed as a commitment of funding.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS
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Applications are subjected to a rigorous peer review process by a panel convened to provide the necessary expertise for the topic of this funding opportunity. A Review Committee consisting of experts from the AARC, ARCF, and the Alpha-1 Foundation will evaluate the applications.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The application will be reviewed based on the following major criteria:

- Strength of the candidate, including past productivity and the promise of a career focus on alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency
- Scientific merit of the proposed research
- Strength and commitment of the scientific mentor

RECEIPT AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

Full Application Due Date: February 19, 2016
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NOTIFICATION OF AWARD AND PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Applicants will be notified in writing jointly by the President and CEO of the Alpha-1 Foundation, the Executive Director of the American Association for Respiratory Care, and the Executive Director of the American Respiratory Care Foundation for all funding decisions. Once an Applicant and his or her institution have been notified of a grant award, these three organizations will request a signed release form from the applicant’s institution for publicizing information related to the grant award on their websites and in printed materials.