Application Guidelines for the Harry Frank Guggenheim Distinguished Scholar Awards

The Foundation welcomes proposals from any of the natural and social sciences, or allied disciplines, that promise to increase understanding of the causes, manifestations, and control of violence and aggression. Highest priority is given to research that can increase understanding and amelioration of urgent problems of violence and aggression in the modern world.

Priority is given to work that addresses urgent, present-day problems of violence— what produces it, how it operates, and what prevents or reduces it.

The Foundation is interested in violence related to many subjects, including, but not limited to, the following:

- War
- Crime
- Terrorism
- Family and intimate-partner relationships
- Climate instability and natural resource competition
- Racial, ethnic, and religious conflict
- Political extremism and nationalism

The Foundation supports research that investigates basic mechanisms in the production of violence, but primacy is given to proposals that make a compelling case for the relevance of potential findings for policies intended to reduce these ills. Likewise, historical research is considered to the extent that it is relevant to a current situation of violence. Examinations of the effects of violence are welcome insofar as a strong case is made that these outcomes may serve, in turn, as causes of future violence.

The Distinguished Scholar Awards

Most awards fall within the range of $15,000 to $75,000 per year for periods of one or two years. Applications for larger amounts and longer durations will be considered but must be strongly justified. The awards are made to individuals (or two or, rarely, three principal investigators) for specific projects, not general research support. They are not awarded to institutions for institutional programs. Individuals who receive research grants may be subject to taxation on the funds awarded.

Application Procedure

Applications are submitted online. The application link can be found on our website, hfg.org. The direct address is https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=hfg.

1. Applicants first create a login account and then may access the online application materials.

2. You will next submit a brief questionnaire, equivalent to an LOI (Letter of Interest), describing the proposed project.

3. The LOI form will be assessed by the foundation for the project's suitability for funding consideration.

4. If your LOI is approved you will then be invited to complete the full application.

The deadline for submission of the LOI form is ***11:59:00 p.m. ET, July 31***, and notification of the decision on your LOI will be available by August 7. The deadline for submission of the full application (contingent on approval of the LOI) will be ***11:59:00 p.m. ET, September 11***. Late submissions of either phase of the application process will not be considered.

Funding decisions are made by the Foundation's Board of Directors at its meeting in December. Applicants will be informed of the Board's decision by email and letter. The grant period ordinarily begins on January 1, but a later starting date may be requested if appropriate to the research project.

Taxation

Distinguished Scholar Awards are made to individuals for specific projects. However, an awardee may choose to have these funds administered through a host institution for reasons of convenience or necessity. If an awardee so directs, the award will be administered and accounted for by the institution on behalf of the awardee in accordance with the budget prepared by the awardee and included with the application (subject to revisions approved by the Foundation). Please see the section below entitled "Individual vs. Institutional Applications" for detailed instructions.

Regardless of whether the award funds are paid to the awardee directly or paid to an institution on behalf of the awardee, the awardee may be liable for taxes on funds awarded, depending on locality, tax status, timing, nature of the award, etc. Applicants should consult their own tax advisors to determine the tax consequences of receiving a Distinguished Scholar Award.

Education and Citizenship

Applicants for a Distinguished Scholar Award may be citizens of any country. While almost all recipients possess a Ph.D., M.D., J.D., or equivalent degree, there are no formal degree requirements for the award. The award, however, may not be used to support research undertaken as part of the requirements for a graduate or doctoral program. Applicants need not be affiliated with an institution of higher learning, although most are college or university professors.

Budget Guidelines

Proposals should be accompanied by a precise budget. Please refer to the budget worksheet at https://www.hfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/HFG-Budget-Worksheet.pdf. This should be 1) downloaded, 2) completed and saved, and 3) then uploaded in the Budget section of the application. Your budget should cover only one year; applicants who are applying for two years of support will submit a detailed second-year budget if an award was granted for the first year. In addition to the budget worksheet, you will need to submit a budget explanation that justifies each item in the worksheet.

Requests will be considered for salaries, employee benefits, fieldwork, research assistantships, supplies and equipment, essential secretarial and technical help, and other items necessary for the completion of a project. The Foundation does not supply funds for overhead costs of institutions, travel to professional meetings, self-education, costly

laboratory or field equipment, dissemination of research findings, or graduate-degree research. (Our African Fellows award is an exception.) The Foundation will not consider applications for the support of meetings or conferences.

As noted above, the majority of Distinguished Scholar Awards range between $15,000 and $75,000 per year, for one or two years, depending on the nature of the research. The size of our grants says something about the research we support. We aim to attract applications for projects that can be done within that range, and we expect budget requests to match the specific needs of the project. We will not contribute a portion of costs to a project with other funding unless an independent "Guggenheim component" of the research can be identified and shown to make a difference to what can be accomplished by the larger project, which must be fully funded otherwise. Be aware that many solid pieces of research are proposed to us each year that can be carried out well within these budget limitations; projects that require significantly more money are simply not appropriate for funding by this Foundation.

Salaries

In general, a salary is only justified if paid work will be given up to free up time for the specific research project proposed to us. In these cases, we need to know the applicant's base salary, the duties they are expected to fulfill, what they will give up in duties and salary to conduct the research proposed, and how that relates to the salary requested from us.

Here are some general guidelines to follow when asking for salary support:

- We generally do not fund projects that require an investigator's full-time effort, except in cases of extended fieldwork, archival research, sustained writing projects, or other intensive work.

- We will consider requests for supplementation to a sabbatical half-salary, up to what we allow.

- Requests for 2%, 5%, or even 10% of a researcher's time appear to add nothing to the active scholarly engagement available for a project, especially when these requests come from university professors whose salaries already cover time for research.

- As most university professors are expected to conduct research during the time they do not teach, summer salaries are not a priority for the Foundation and will be considered only with an adequate explanation for why the project cannot be conducted without such compensation.

- Request either a salary or a per diem allowance during fieldwork, but not both.

- Applicants without a salaried job should request a salary commensurate with local rates for someone with comparable qualifications.

Fieldwork

Since the Foundation prefers to make contributions exclusively to the direct costs of research, we commonly fund the costs of fieldwork, including travel, living expenses, local research assistance, insurance, transcription costs, necessary software/equipment, visa fees, gifts/remuneration for informants or survey participants, and other relevant expenditures. As with any other requests, these items should be thoughtfully justified:

- Requests for airfare/travel expenses should be accompanied, if possible, by documentation of the average price for economy-class tickets.

- When requesting funds for vehicle rental/local transportation, please give an approximation of how much these services will cost per day.

- Per diem living expenses should represent an honest estimate of the costs of the research proposed. If an applicant is not familiar with the average living expenses where they will be working, they might consult with regional experts. The U.S. Department of State website provides per diem rates by country, and the website of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) provides per diem rates by U.S. city. (These figures should be taken as guiding rather than binding.)

Research Assistance and Secretarial Help

We support research projects conducted by individuals or two or (rarely) three principal investigators, with student assistance or fieldwork help when necessary, for specific tasks appropriate to assistants. If students are substantial collaborators on the project, we expect to review each one's C.V., as with other professional collaborators. Student

assistants must be paid only for the work they do and at reasonable rates for junior researchers. We do not contribute to tuition or other university fees related to their status as students. Please do not try to hide tuition costs under the category of "benefits." Fees for "consultants" are generally not allowed. If the principal investigator cannot do the work without substantial expert advice, then they may not be the right person for the project.

It is appropriate to ask for secretarial help if a research project entails clerical tasks that are specific to that project. If so, describe that work and include a C.V. for the person to be employed. General office support, calculated as a percentage of a secretary's regular salary, is not an allowable budget item.

Equipment and Supplies

Ask only for equipment and supplies needed for this research project. While not all requests are as clearly fictional as the recent application with a budget line of $1,000 for "pens, pencils, etc.," we do not consider general office supplies to be essential to a research project. Nor will we supply funds for a personal computer or any other equipment unless it is necessary to the project and unavailable otherwise. These restrictions exist in order to maximize the number of projects that can be supported.

Application Sections

A. Project Title

Complete all questions in this section that are applicable to your proposed project. Some questions are required; these are marked with an asterisk (*). If your project has more than one Principal Investigator, you will enter information about the Co-PIs in Section C of the application. Please see "Additional Notes," at the end of these guidelines.

B. Abstract and Survey

Enter an abstract by typing or pasting text. (Note the length limit.) The abstract should be an informative but succinct description of the project, including its relevance to aggression and/or violence. The survey questions—about the topics, time period, and geographic region of your project—are for statistical purposes only; this information does not affect our evaluation of the application.

C. Co-Principal Investigators

If there is more than one Principal Investigator, enter the Co-PIs here.

D. Budget

Please consult "Budget Guidelines" above.

E. Budget Justification

Upload a document explaining the need for and planned use of the funds requested for each item in each category of the worksheet completed in D.

F. Personnel

Upload a single file containing the curricula vitae and lists of relevant publications for the principal investigator(s) and all professional personnel. Do not exceed two pages for each person.

G. Research Plan

Upload a document presenting the specific aims of the project and discuss the background and significance of the proposed work. Describe the methods and procedures of the research and the means by which the results will be analyzed and interpreted. Indicate your familiarity with the relevant scholarly literature, and explain how your project will complement or improve upon it. Research plans are typically about 15 double-spaced pages (not including references listed in a bibliography or footnotes).

H. Other Support

Describe facilities and resources already available for the proposed research. Also list the title, source, dollar amount, period of time for funding expected or being sought for this project from other sources during the period of the grant requested and the expected notification dates, including actual or probable publisher's advances. If no other applications have been or will be submitted, please so state.

I. Protection of Subjects

Explain what steps will be taken to protect the rights and welfare of any human subjects who might be involved in the research. If non-human animals are to be used in the project, discuss how the animals will be cared for so that they will not suffer unnecessary discomfort, pain, and injury. If these concerns are not applicable to the project, please so state.

J. Referee Comments

Applicants should send a copy of the application to each of two referees, chosen for their relevant expertise. For each referee, please enter an email address and click "Compose Email" to send them a message from you asking them to be a referee. They will receive a second email from our system with a link to upload their letter. Referees should give us their opinion of the merit of the proposal, the procedures involved, and the applicant's ability to complete the project successfully. The referees may not be involved in the project directly. **Referee comments are due September 11.**

K. Electronic Signature

Completing this section is equivalent to hand signing your application.

Additional Notes

Here, we provide some guidance on those items that tend to cause the most confusion. Of course, you should feel free to contact the Foundation before submitting a proposal if you have a concern not addressed in these guidelines.

Multiple Principal Investigators

If the proposal involves collaboration of two or more principal investigators, a single member of the research team, the one filling out the application, becomes the primary contact. This person will serve as the chief correspondent regarding the application's completeness and notification of the Foundation's decision on the proposal.

When completing Section A, the primary contact should list their contact information. Additional PIs should include their contact information in their C.V.s. Only the primary contact completes Section K., Electronic Signature.

Individual vs. Institutional Applications

We provide a place in Section A to indicate whether you are applying as an individual or through an institution. The Foundation has no preference as to whether the applicant submits the proposal as an individual or has the host institution submit it and administer it on the applicant's behalf through an office of sponsored research or equivalent.

If applying as an individual, do not complete the Institutional Contact information within Section A. If applying as an institutional applicant, please do provide that information. The contact person is usually a department head, research coordinator, or representative of a university's office of sponsored research. We will include this contact in correspondence on matters of the application's completeness and to notify of the Foundation's decision on the proposal. If the grant is approved, this person will serve as the administrator of the awarded funds, ensuring that budgets are kept up-to-date and changes in the status of the project are made known to the Foundation.

Further Information

Requests for further information or questions should be directed to The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, 120 West 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10036, by telephone to (646) 428-0971, or by email to info@hfg.org. More information is also available on our website, hfg.org.

These guidelines were updated in June 2026.