



AMERICAN HEAD AND NECK SOCIETY (AHNS)

2026 PILOT GRANT

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this award is to support basic, translational, or clinical research projects in head and neck oncology. Clinical or translational research studies are strongly encouraged and should be specifically related to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, outcomes, or pathophysiology of head and neck neoplastic disease.

B. ELIGIBILITY

Candidates for this award should reside in the U.S. or Canada, be medical students, residents, or M.D. faculty members at the rank of associate professor or below and be an AHNS member in good standing. Previous AHNS or AAO-HNS Foundation research grant recipients are eligible to compete for this grant. However, candidates who have successfully obtained funding from a private or federal funding agency for the same research are ineligible. Candidates who have applied for support of the same research from other funding sources, and who are notified of an award from both another agency and from AHNS must choose only one of the awards.

Applications submitted by ineligible PIs will NOT be reviewed by the CORE Study Section.

C. CONDITIONS

Research supported by this award should be specifically directed toward the pathogenesis, pathophysiology, diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of head and neck neoplastic disease, and may be either basic or clinical/translational in approach. While not specifically required, proposals which aim to introduce new knowledge and methodology from other disciplines to research in head and neck disease, or which demonstrate collaborative effort with members of other related disciplines are encouraged. Projects must be designed so as to yield useful information within the period of award, but priority will be given to projects that are also innovative with promise to develop into new long-range or expanded research programs capable of attracting funding from other sources.

The grant application must be accompanied by letters of support from the Chair of the candidate's academic department and from the principal scientific advisor or mentor. These letters are to indicate a general level of support of the applicant, the fact that the Department will make time, space, and other resources accessible for completion of the project, and that the applicant will have appropriate supervision/support throughout the period of the grant. Applicants must obtain letters of support/understanding from all key personnel on the project.

D. TERMS

1. **Amount:** \$20,000 maximum
2. **Period:** 12 months, non-renewable
3. **Use of Funds:** A detailed budget and budget justification constitute part of the application and will be evaluated as part of the review process. Funding may not be used to support the Principal Investigator's salary during the period of the award. Allowable expenses include consultant fees (e.g., statistician); salary support for research assistants or other technical personnel; computer software or hardware; purchase and maintenance of experimental animals; laboratory supplies and services; and expenses related to publication of results directly related to the supported project, exclusive of reprint costs. Equipment and supplies purchased with this Award become the property of the recipient institution. The AHNS prefers not to pay institutional (indirect) costs for this very modest award; if the institution is unwilling to waive such costs, however, they are limited to no more than 10% of the Total Direct Costs (sum of amounts requested for personnel, consultant costs, equipment, supplies, patient/animal care costs, and other expenses). The Total Costs (direct + indirect) may not exceed \$20,000.
4. **Review:** Applications will be reviewed by members of the Centralized Otolaryngology Research Efforts (CORE) Study Section, composed of AHNS members designated for the Study Section, and members



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of the AAO-HNSF CORE Study Section Subcommittee. Recommendations for funding must be approved by the AHNS Council.

5. **Notification:** Letters of notification will be sent in June of the award year. Please do not call the AAO-HNSF or AHNS office prior to that time to inquire about results.
6. **Start Date:** The recipient of the AHNS Pilot Grant will be announced publicly at the closest AAO-HNS Foundation Annual Meeting immediately following the award. The award may be activated as early as July 1 of the year of award, but no later than January 1 of the following year.

FORMAT

Applications are in a similar format to the National Institutes of Health. All applications must be completed and submitted online through ProposalCentral at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>. Visit <http://www.entnet.org/CORE> to begin the application process.

F. SIGNATURES

The Principal Investigator, Department Chairman, and Institution official are required to sign the original grant application (all signatures must appear on copies). The AHNS Pilot Grant is legally awarded to the institution with which the Principal Investigator is affiliated, not to the investigator or his/her Division or Department. For this reason, it is very important that applicants comply with their home institution's policies on pre-submission processing of grant applications. THIS CAN TAKE TIME, SO IT IS WISE TO PLAN AHEAD, ALLOWING ADEQUATE TIME FOR PROCESSING AND APPROVALS. Applicants are advised to consult their institution's offices of research administration or sponsored projects for information on processing requirements for an application prior to its submission.

G. APPROVALS

If the proposed research involves human subjects or vertebrate animals at any time, the project must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). This approval should be obtained prior to submission and submitted with the application. If such approval is unavoidably delayed, enter "pending" instead of the approval date and upload the documentation that you have submitted to your institution seeking approval so the Study Section can see that the appropriate steps are in process to obtain the approval. Grant applications which are not supported by evidence of the appropriate IRB or IACUC approvals will not receive funding until such approval letters are submitted. In no case may the project start be delayed beyond January 1 of the year following the award. Any changes in the proposed work required by an IRB or IACUC to secure approval must be submitted to the AHNS with the follow-up certification, prior to review or after the work is in progress.

H. LETTER OF INTENT

All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent online no later than December 15, 2025. The letter of intent is completed online and includes the title of the project, the principal investigator, and an abstract of the work. This will facilitate planning review requirements. Visit <http://www.entnet.org/CORE> to begin the letter of intent process.



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I. RECEIPT DATE

Allow yourself enough time to have the appropriate individuals review your application. Once your application is complete, print your cover page and have all of the necessary individuals sign. Keep in mind that it may take a few days to obtain all of the necessary signatures. The CORE grants program is paperless, so no hard copies of the signature page are to be mailed. Once all signatures have been obtained, you should scan the document and upload the .pdf to the system and retain the original for your files if needed. Once the signature page has been uploaded, run the checks within the system and click 'SUBMIT.' You will receive a confirmation email indicating that your proposal has officially been submitted.

ALL materials must be submitted online by 11:59pm, Eastern Standard Time, January 15, 2026.

J. FOLLOW-UP

In carrying out its stewardship of research programs, the AHNS or AAO-HNSF may request information essential to an assessment of the effectiveness of this program. Accordingly, the recipient is hereby notified that s/he may be contacted after the completion of the award for periodic updates on various aspects of employment history, publications, support from research grants or contracts, honors and awards, professional activities, and other information helpful in evaluating the impact of the program.

K. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Recipients of the AHNS Pilot Research Grant are required to complete an interim report at 6-months. Within 30-days of the completion of the project, the awardee will submit a final report suitable for publication. All publications resulting from this Award, shall acknowledge the contribution of AHNS Pilot Grant. A final financial report must be submitted within 90 days of the close of the project. Any publications resulting from a project supported with the award shall acknowledge the contribution of the AHNS Pilot Research Grant.

If you have questions about this funding opportunity announcement, please contact Loren Hamilton (loren@ahns.info) at the American Head and Neck Society (AHNS).