

IMPORTANT DATES

Letter of Intent Deadline: 11:59pm EST, December 15, 2025
Full Application Deadline: 11:59pm EST, January 15, 2026

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation (AAO-HNSF) Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant is to support innovative research in the specialty and help facilitate the career development of young investigators. This mentored research award is intended to promote research that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements that will translate into improved understanding into the cause, treatment or outcome for diseases of the head and neck. Proposed projects should be related to any area of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery and must have direct or potential clinical significance for patients seen by otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeons. Basic science, translational, and clinical research projects may be funded.

B. ELIGIBILITY

Otolaryngologists in the United States or Canada are eligible to apply for the Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant. Applicants may be independent practitioners or practitioners affiliated with academic or similar institutions who have completed their residency within the past 7 years. All applicants must be members in good standing of AAO-HNS; Associate and Corresponding Members are not eligible to apply as Principal Investigator but may participate actively in the proposed project. Senior faculty mentorship and/or collaboration is encouraged. Past recipients of AAO-HNSF grants are eligible to apply, as are individuals who have competed successfully for independent research grant support from a private or federal funding agency. Applications submitted by ineligible PIs will NOT be reviewed by the CORE Study Section.

C. MENTOR REQUIREMENTS

To ensure success and a positive impact on the recipient's career, applicants must identify a research mentor in the application. The mentor may not be funded directly by the grant. The mentor should be someone who will work with the recipient and provide guidance and support on their project. Ideally, the mentor should be at the same institution; however, it is possible that they could be elsewhere as long as they will work with the recipient in meeting the grant's goals. The applicant is required to include a brief justification for the choice of mentor.

The mentor on the AAO-HNSF Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant advises the candidate on both scientific and career issues and is their advocate at the institutional level. Since the award often does not pay the full cost of salary and research support for the recipient, the mentor, together with the department/institution, must ensure that the awardee has the protected time and the resources to complete the research project and career development plans as outlined in the funded application. The project must be structured to allow the candidate to distinguish their career from the mentor's, e.g., it cannot be one of the aims from the mentor's R01 grant. The awardee should be free to take the project with them should they leave the institution.

D. CONDITIONS

Proposed projects should be related to any area of otolaryngology-head and neck surgery and must have direct or potential clinical significance for patients seen by otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeons. Basic science, translational, and clinical research projects may be funded. They must be designed so as to yield useful information within the period of the award, but priority will be given to projects that are also innovative and promise to develop into new long-range or expanded research

programs capable of attracting funding from other sources.

Applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from the applicant's mentor, which outlines the mentor's commitment to the candidate and willingness to engage in research updates and critical review of the candidate's progress on a monthly basis at minimum. In addition, the application must include a letter from the Department Chair verifying that the applicant will be permitted to devote an appropriate amount of time to the conduct and timely completion of the proposed research project. Applicants must also obtain letters of support/understanding from all key personnel on the project.

E. TERMS

Amount: \$30,000 maximum total (direct and indirect) costs

Period: One year, non-renewable.

Funding: The AAO-HNSF Board of Directors will determine the total number of awards authorized each year since available funding is contingent on the earnings of the Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Scholars Program. Actual award of the grant(s) will depend on the merit of the applications received as decided by the CORE Study Section.

Use of Funds: Award funds may be used for any legitimate costs associated with the purpose of the award, other than salary support for the Principal Investigator and clerical support. A detailed budget and budget justification constitute part of the application and will be evaluated as an important factor in the review process. If university policy stipulates that a portion of this very modest award must go toward institutional indirect costs, no more than ten percent (10%) of the direct costs may be applied for indirect costs. Indirect costs refer to expenses associated with facilities and administration costs. Examples of indirect costs include, but are not limited to utility expenses, communication costs, account and legal expenses, and shared monies across institutions. Please refer to the NIH website for specific information on grant budgets.

Allowable expenses include consultant fees (e.g., statistician, methodologist); salary support for research assistants or other supporting personnel; computer software or hardware; computer database access fees; and expenses related to presentation or publication of results. Equipment and supplies purchased with this award become the property of the recipient institution.

Funding Disclosures: AAO-HNSF will withhold ten percent (10%) of the grant until such time that the research project is completed and all requirements have been met, as outlined in section L; Reporting Requirements. This condition must be acknowledged when signing and submitting the terms and conditions contract to release the initial funds.

Notification: Letters of notification will be sent in June of the award year. Please do not call the office prior to this time to inquire about the results.

Starting Date: The grant may be activated as early as July 1 of the year of the award, but no later than January 1 of the following year.

F. FORMAT

Applications are in a similar format used by 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> for information on the application process.

G. SIGNATURES

The Principal Investigator, Department Chairman, and Institution official are required to sign the original grant application. The AAO- HNSF Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant is 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 institution's policies on pre-submission processing of grant applications. 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.

H. APPROVALS

AAO-HNSF grants are awarded to the institution with which the Principal Investigator is affiliated, unless the individual is an independent practitioner unaffiliated with an institution. If the proposed research involves human subjects, the project must be reviewed and approved by an institutional review board (IRB). The approval must be submitted with the application. Independent practitioners involving human subjects must also submit evidence of a review by an institutional or non-institutional review board with the application. If IRB approval is delayed, a signed certification from an institutional official must be submitted within 30 days of the application deadline. Grant applications that are not IRB-approved will not be reviewed or considered further in that grant cycle. Any changes in the proposed work required by an IRB to secure approval must be submitted to AAO-HNSF with the follow-up certification, prior to review or after the work is in progress.

I. LETTER OF INTENT

All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) online no later than 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time December 15, 2025. The LOI includes the title of the project, the principal investigator, and an abstract of the work. See the ProposalCentral website (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>) to begin the LOI process.

J. RECEIPT DATE

The CORE grants program is paperless; all required documentation must be submitted online at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com>.

**ALL materials must be submitted online by 11:59pm EST, January 15, 2026.
Extensions are not granted.**

K. FOLLOW-UP

In carrying out its stewardship of the research programs, 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 grant 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. An annual written progress report is mandatory outlining the discoveries, impediments to progress, and strategies to achieve research objectives.

L. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Recipients of the AAO-HNSF Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant are **required** to submit an interim progress report *every six months* for the entire duration of the project until completion, a final

progress report thirty (30) days after the close of the project period, and a financial status report within ninety (90) days after the close of the grant period. The recipient(s) are **required** to submit their results to the AAO-HNSF white journal, *Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery*, and to the AAO-HNS Annual Meeting following completion of the project. AAO-HNSF has the right of first refusal for publication and presentation of the results of investigations supported by this award. All publications resulting from a project supported with this award shall acknowledge the contribution of the AAO-HNSF Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant. Failure to comply with the submission requirements to the AAO-HNSF white journal, *Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery*, and to the AAO-HNS Annual Meeting will result in a permanent withhold of ten percent (10%) of the grant.

CONTACT

If you have questions regarding this funding opportunity announcement, please contact COREGrants@entnet.org.