



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY – HEAD AND NECK SURGERY FOUNDATION (AAO-HNSF) AND SNOT FORCE ALLIANCE, INC. (SFA)

AAO-HNSF/SFA THOMAS S. HIGGINS UNIFIED AIRWAY RESEARCH GRANT

2026 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

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 AAO-HNSF/Snot Force Alliance, Inc. (SFA) Thomas S. Higgins Unified Airway Research Grant is to use the AAO-HNSF's clinical data registry, Reg-ent, to critically **evaluate the relationships and practice care patterns of unified airway conditions**, including inflammatory, immunologic, and allergic disease that spans both the upper (sinus/rhinitis) and lower (airway/pulmonary) tracts. Recipients of this award will be granted access to the Reg-ent clinical data registry and will partner directly with the Reg-ent team to extract the needed data and refine the project design.

B. ELIGIBILITY

Otolaryngologists in the United States or Canada are eligible to apply for the AAO-HNSF/SFA Thomas S. Higgins Unified Airway Research Grant. Applicants may be independent practitioners, residents or fellows in an approved training program, or practitioners affiliated with academic or similar institutions. All applicants must be members in good standing of AAO-HNS. 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. Reg-ent participation is not required, though the applicant and their institution is eligible for a waived subscription fee (\$2,500) if chosen for the grant.

C. CONDITIONS

Proposed projects must be related to chronic inflammatory conditions of the upper airway, including, but not limited to, chronic rhinitis, chronic rhinosinusitis, nasal polyps, and asthma. Co-morbidities may include, but are not limited to, eosinophilic esophagitis, eczema, immunodeficiency, vasculitis, and autoimmune disorder.

The project must be designed to yield useful, non-basic science information within the award period, and priority will be given to projects that are also innovative and promise to develop into new long-range or expanded research programs.

Basic science projects or projects using animal models are not appropriate for this grant program. Applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from the applicant's 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.

D. TERMS

Amount: \$5,000 maximum total (direct and indirect) costs

Period: One year, non-renewable.

Funding: One available annually.

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



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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 total 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.

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.

E. 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.

F. SIGNATURES

The Principal Investigator, Department Chairman, and Institution official are required to sign the original grant application. The AAO-HNSF/SFA Thomas S. Higgins Unified Airway 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. This can take time, so it is wise to plan ahead and allow for adequate time to process 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 involved 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 unavoidably delayed, certification of approval signed by an official of the application institution should be submitted within 30 days after 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 the AAO-HNSF 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 (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



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abstract of the work. See the ProposalCentral website (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>) to begin the LOI process.

I. 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.**

J. FOLLOW-UP

In carrying out its stewardship of the research programs, SFA or AAO-HNSF may request information essential to an assessment of the effectiveness of this program. Accordingly, the recipient is hereby notified that they 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.

K. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Recipients 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 Snot Force Alliance Thomas S. Higgins Unified Airway Research Grant.

CONTACT

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