

HFSP RESEARCH GRANTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A FULL PROPOSAL

Invited applicants should read the following instructions carefully before filling in the online application form. Instructions for completing the online form appear as blue boxes in each submenu. A page of **administrative information** for institutional officials is available at the end of this file. The guidelines for applicants issued for the letter of intent can be consulted here: [LI2026 Guidelines](#).

No budget proposals are required. Award sums are fixed but if teams include two members from the same country, USD 50 000 per year will be deducted from the award sum. This will be determined after the scientific review.

DEADLINE

The submission deadline is **September 11, 2025, 9:00 am ET. Please make sure that all team members and institutional officials have signed the application before this deadline.**

Technical Support hours for ProposalCentral are 8:00 am ET to 5:00 pm ET Monday - Friday. You can contact ProposalCentral at pcsupport@altum.com or by calling toll-free 1-800-875-2562 (U.S. and Canada) or 1-703-964-5840 (international direct dial). You can contact HFSP at grant@hfsp.org for any other question.

STEPS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE FULL PROPOSAL

Almost all fields in common with the letter of intent have been copied automatically to the full proposal (mainly affiliation, CV...) but can be modified as necessary (e.g. if you are in the process of moving to another institute, please indicate this new position in your CV and update your affiliation in your professional profile to indicate where the project will be run if successful). The publication list and most sections/fields related to the scientific project must be completed directly in the online form - **please make sure that you save as often as possible, and before moving to the next submenu**. To be on the safe side, you are advised to prepare the texts for the scientific elements offline before pasting them into the system. Only the **Proposed Research** plan is completed using a Word template to be downloaded via submenu "Research Project".

Please note that ProposalCentral will require you to log in again if you have been inactive in the system for more than 20 minutes. You can use the submenu "Validate" to check for any missing REQUIRED information or files at any time. Mandatory elements that are missing will be listed, you can complete any of these before proceeding to the next step. Please note, however, that the system does not detect if not all team members have listed publications.

You may also print a PDF of your application via submenu “Signature page/Print application”. **However, please note that the PDF is still under development. Reviewers will be advised to use the site for evaluation of your proposal.**

- **Access your account/application and Professional profile**

Please log in as an applicant to your ProposalCentral account, the application will appear in “Home” (the reference number is: “letter of intent reference number Lol - 1”). If you have lost the login details, please use “forgot your password” on the ProposalCentral welcome page and follow the instructions to access your account. In case of difficulties, please contact ProposalCentral at pcsupport@altum.com.

If you need to access your professional profile (e.g. for change of affiliation), once you are connected, navigate to your Professional profile and modify your profile as necessary. Please remember that only the following data need to be provided in the professional profile at this stage (other information on the CV has to be entered in the application itself):

- Section 1: Institution & Contact Info

For the institution: use the search engine available in the system and select the name of your institution in the proposed list - preferably with “confirmed” status but if the status of your institution appears as “unconfirmed”, this has no consequences for your application. In the unlikely case that the system finds “no Matching Institution”, please contact ProposalCentral.

- Section 2: Degrees

- Section 7: Publications (as for the Lol stage, you can import publications from your ORCID account, see submenu **Publications**).

- Section 11: Account Information. Here you can update your email address, password and security questions as needed.

- **Submenu “Title Page”**

The title has been copied from the letter of intent. It has to remain identical, please do not modify. Applicants are also asked to complete a resubmission section if applicable (Max. 600 characters).

- **Submenu “Download templates & Instructions”**

You can download these application guidelines, as well as the template for the Proposed Research plan (also available in submenu “**Research Project**”) and a form to update the status of your research support, if necessary.

- **Submenu “Principal Applicant”**

Please update your CV (Research experience) if your situation has changed/will change in the last/next months. The fields “Current research support and pending research applications” as well as “Previous HFSP research grants” (if you were awarded an HFSP research grant in 2020 or later) must be completed.

The “Number of peer-reviewed publications in the last 5 years” can be adjusted if required (only consider peer-reviewed papers including preprints on public servers, accepted publications and publications in press, but not manuscripts in preparation or under submission).

- **Submenu “PI Confidential Data”**

Only visible by the Principal Applicant, usually nothing to modify.

- **Submenu “PI Institution and Administrators”**

Contact details of the Principal Applicant are automatically prefilled with the data registered in the Professional profile. If corrections are necessary, please change in your Professional Profile. If you encounter problems, please contact the ProposalCentral helpdesk.

Primary affiliation: the name and address of your institute is prefilled with the information from your professional profile.

Secondary affiliation: Prefilled but please correct if applicable. Please note that all affiliations are considered for eligibility checks and award level.

All the members of the team must indicate an institutional official and are asked to name a financial official if possible. The full proposal must be signed by all the applicants as well as their institutional officials (no signature is required from the financial officials).

Institutional officials: This may be the provost, director of sponsored programs, vice-president for research, the individual who will be responsible for the administration and fiscal management of the program, or equivalent, should an award be made. They should be aware of the financial terms of HFSP funding which are not negotiable ([LI2026 Guidelines](#)) and warrant that the applicants, and potentially the grantees, follow their institutional rules (e.g. good scientific practice, research ethics and research security, open science and sustainability). An automatic email will be sent to this person once their name and email address have been added to the application. Please make sure they are available to sign the proposal before the deadline. The institutional officials will need edit access (see submenu **Enable other users**) to be able to sign this application.

Financial officials: This is the person who will sign financial reports if you are awarded a grant. This person does not have to sign this application now; if you already have their name, please enter it, otherwise leave the field empty – it is optional and will not block the submission process. As above, an automatic email will be sent to this person once their name and email address have been added to the application.

To add administrators:

The Principal applicant must complete the “PI institutional official” and possibly, a “PI Financial Official”.

*PI Institutional Official	
Enter email address	<input type="text"/>
Confirm email address	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="button" value="Add"/>
PI Financial Official	
Enter email address	<input type="text"/>
Confirm email address	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="button" value="Add"/>

Co-applicants will have to add their institutional officials and financial officials in “Co-PI Institutional Officials” (make sure you select the correct role (Co-PI1 institutional official or Co-PI2 institutional official) see the screen shots below).

Co-PI Institutional Officials

Please add the institutional officials for all Co-PIs. They will also receive an email. Options in submenu “Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal” allow you to give these users ‘Edit’ access to the grant application.

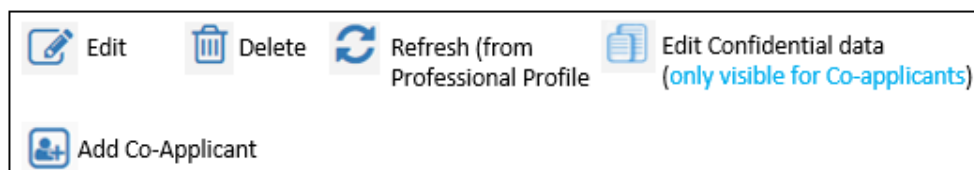
Enter email address	<input type="text"/>
Confirm email address	<input type="text"/>
	

The screenshot shows a web form with the following elements:

- A dropdown menu with the text "Please select:" and a downward arrow. The dropdown is open, showing a list of roles:
 - *Co-PI 1 Institutional Official
 - Co-PI 1 Financial Official
 - Co-PI 2 Institutional Official
 - Co-PI 2 Financial Official
 - Co-PI 3 Institutional Official
 - Co-PI 3 Financial Official
 - Co-PI 4 Institutional Official
 - Co-PI 4 Financial Official
- Form fields on the left:
 - * E-Mail
 - Name
 - * First
 - Middle

- **Submenu “Co-PIs”**

The team must be identical to the team that submitted the letter of intent. No substitutions, deletions or additions of applicants are permitted.



By default, all members of the team have access to the application with the access rights given for the letter of intent (see submenu **“Enable other users to access this proposal”**, only users with administrator access can see this submenu).

Co-applicants can update their affiliation in their Professional Profile. Please remember to press the icon “refresh” (see above) so that data are updated in the application.

Use the icon “edit” to:

- update your CV (Research experience) if your situation has/will change in the last/next couple of months.
- complete the fields “Current research support and pending research applications” as well as “Previous HFSP research grants” (if you were awarded an HFSP research grant in 2020 or later).
- complete/update the “Number of peer-reviewed publications in the last 5 years” (it is not copied from the letter of intent).

Confidential data for Co-applicants are accessible via the icon “Edit confidential data” (only visible for the respective co-applicant) but should not normally need any update.

- **Submenu “Enable other users to access this proposal”** (only visible for users with administrator access)

By default, access rights (under permission) of the Co-PIs are identical to those from the letter of intent.

Co-PIs must be given “Administrator” access permission by the Principal applicant to be able to complete the online form and add their institutional officials. If they only have “Edit” access permission, the Principal applicant has to add the institutional and financial officials for all members of the team.

Institutional officials must have “Edit” access permissions to be able to sign the application online.

The Financial officials are not requested to sign and do not need any access permission.

To give any other people access to the application, type the email of the person in “Give User Proposal Access” and choose the correct permission level.

- **Submenu “Publications”**

This information is not copied from the letter of intent, in case you want to select different publications at this stage. Publications can be added one by one using the “Edit” action button, but we advise you to import them from your professional profile or ORCID account. You may also enter preprints on public servers, accepted publications and publications in press, but these need to be added manually to your professional profile or the application, and they need to have a DOI.

In the Publication submenu, **each team member** should select up to 10 relevant publications from the last 5 years (since January 2020) to add to the proposal (by using the “+” button).

Co-applicants’ publications can be added by the Principal applicant on behalf of Co-applicants **only** if they have at least Edit Access to their professional profile, so the Principal Applicant has access to their list of publications.

Eventual new co-publications between team members should be added to the list in the submenu “Title page”.

If in your discipline, peer-reviewed conference proceedings are considered archival publications (i.e. they are reviewed based on the full manuscript, are considered as prestigious as journal papers and have a DOI) you may list peer-reviewed conference publications relevant to the application (this is common in non-biological disciplines).

HFSP is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment ([DORA](#)) which we consider to be an incentive to evaluate research proposals on the basis of their content and not by criteria such as Journal Impact Factors (JIF). Reviewers at all stages of the HFSP grant application process are advised that they should consider the quality of the research published and/or proposed in an application. While productivity may be an important factor, the assessment will be based on the content of articles and not the JIF.

- **Submenu “Abstracts & keywords/disciplines”**

Scientific Abstract (for review): summarize the objectives, hypotheses, approaches and research plan - limit 2,400 characters (including spaces and punctuation). Please avoid abbreviations and keep in mind that review committee members are not necessarily specialists in your sub-disciplines.

Public abstract to be published on the HFSP web site if your project is funded, this should not contain any privileged/confidential information - limit 2,400 characters (including spaces and punctuation). It must differ from the scientific abstract and should be understandable by a broad audience.

Disciplines, Keywords and Additional Keywords, are copied from the letter of intent but may be modified.

- **Submenu “Research Project”**

Most elements have to be typed (or pasted) directly in text fields of the online form. Only the research plan with reference list and figures/tables has to be uploaded as one Pdf file, see the specifications below.

- To be entered in text boxes in the system:

Overview (max 8 000 characters - including spaces and punctuation): Please explain how the proposal meets the aims of the HFSP and summarize the scientific aims of the proposal. **Keep in mind that HFSP grants support programs of novel, interdisciplinary research that promises to significantly move the frontiers of research and could not be undertaken without international collaboration; they are not intended to support ongoing research programs.**

The following questions should be addressed:

- (a) which aspects of the proposal are especially novel/extending frontiers?
- (b) which collaborative elements are essential for the project to be pursued?
- (c) which different disciplines/approaches are represented among the team members?
- (d) how did the idea of the collaboration originate?
- (e) how will the collaboration be conducted? In the case of team members with dual affiliations they should specify where their part of the project will be conducted.

Difference to ongoing research (max 1 500 characters): please describe how this proposal differs from the ongoing research activities of each team member.

Interdisciplinarity (max 1 500 characters): please explain how your team is interdisciplinary and how the combination of complementary expertise/approaches/tool sets will serve the purpose of your project. Specifically, if your team consists of more than 4 members (including the Principal Applicant) or if your team has more than one member in the same country (even if it is a secondary affiliation), please explain why this team composition is necessary for the interdisciplinary nature of the team as a whole.

- To be uploaded as one Pdf file (Proposed Research – use the template provided and save as Pdf): Please use the name of Principal applicant as file name.

Proposed research: describe the objectives, hypotheses, approaches and background of the research proposed by the team, as well as the detailed research plan including figures and/or tables, where appropriate. Please integrate the different research approaches of all team members into a single, combined research plan. It should contain the following elements:

1. **Scientific background** of the proposal
2. Outline of the **objectives** and integrated **research plan**, and allocation of the research to each applicant. Hidden partners /collaborators should be avoided.
3. The necessity for **international collaboration**. This should include an explicit statement of which collaborative elements are essential for the project and how the collaboration will work (if more detail is required than was given in the Overview). If you plan to work/collect data in a country where no

team member has an affiliation, please explain whether/how you aim to include scientists from this country in your research plans.

4. A detailed description of the **contribution to be made by each team member**.
5. In applications with **theoretical components** (e.g. mathematical modelling, bioinformatics), please describe the theoretical approaches and their interaction with experimental strategies clearly and in some detail. The Review Committee includes members with appropriate expertise.
6. A discussion of **potential problems and alternate strategies** if these are encountered.
7. If your project involves manipulation of human subjects, animals or stem cells, please note down the procedures in your institution (or the organization handling the permits) to obtain the authorization.
8. List of references.

Please note that preliminary data are not necessary and may indicate that the project is not novel.

Formatting Requirements (please use the template):

The final pdf-file should not exceed 4 Mbytes.

Maximum 30 000 characters including spaces and punctuation in the main text including tables and figure legends but excluding references – please indicate the number of characters in the online form (last field in “Research project”).

Type size: Calibri 11-point, text, 1.5 line spacing (references and figure legends can be single spaced).

Figures and tables: Do not use high-resolution figures, and keep in mind that readers may be colour-deficient.

- **Submenu “Bioethical considerations”**

Check if there is a regulation regarding bioethical issues, intellectual or industrial property rights at the institution with which each member is affiliated. If your project involves manipulation of human subjects, animals or stem cells you should consider the ethical aspects. Note that all planned experiments must be legal/permissible in the countries and institutions of all team members.

- **Submenu “Mail reviewers”**

Please name six referees who could give authoritative written opinions on your application. They should not be members of your own institutions or cities, and they should preferably be located outside your own countries. They should not be, or have been, associated with any team member within the last 5 years, and should not have other conflicts of interest. List up to 5 keywords that describe their fields of competence to enable a balanced set of reviewers to be chosen (note that two or three descriptors are normally sufficient). The referees chosen will not be restricted to those you suggest. You may request that direct competitors (including close collaborators) are not consulted (this option is used only rarely by applicants).

- **Submenu “Validate”**

Click the “Validate” button to check if any REQUIRED information or file is missing. The result will be listed on the screen. Please correct any missing information before proceeding to the next step. Please note that the system does not check whether all team members have listed publications, you need to check this yourself.

Please make sure that all team members have filled in all mandatory information and all team members and institutional officials have signed before the deadline – else the application cannot be submitted.

- **Submenu “Signature page/Print application”**

Please note that the format of this Pdf is still under development, and the reviewers will be instructed to consult the application online. For information, you will receive a mail when a team member /institutional official signs the proposal. Please note that signature lines are listed for all possible team sizes so there may be more signature lines than necessary (names are indicated in brackets).

- **Submenu “Submit”**

Once the application is submitted, the Principal Applicant will receive a confirmation email.

RESEARCH SUPPORT UPDATES

HFSP requests that you update us if your team has been awarded research support from another funding source, after the submission deadline, before **Friday, 2nd January 2026**. If you received funding for an overlapping or similar project, please also add the abstract for reviewers to check. You should download the template (Research Support Updates) in the submenu “Download templates and instructions” now in case you might need it in January.

PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

Use of private data of HFSP applicants and awardees

HFSP is committed to safeguarding your personal information in accordance with the Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the European Council of 24 October 1995 on the protection of individuals with regards to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

The HFSP [Privacy Policy](#) explains how, and on what legal basis, we collect, store, and use personal information about you as an applicant or awardee for the HFSP Research Grant program or as any other person that interacts with our Organization.

Use of private data in your proposed research

In case your HFSP funded research project involves the collection/processing of sensitive personal data (e.g.: health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction, etc.) or genetic information, please justify the need for their collection, discuss the possible ethical implications and how you will address them in the appropriate section of the HFSP Research Grant proposal.

In case your research involves observation of participants, please state whether any video or photo will be used publicly and describe the methods you will use to guarantee the privacy of the participants, including the informed consent provisions (if applicable). In case you are planning to use existing data, please specify if these originate from any available sources, and whether the use of the data has been authorized for secondary use (by the primary owner of the data who must also confirm that the informed consent included the possibility of a secondary use of data).

TIPS

A number of promising full proposals each year fail to convince the Review Committee for the following reasons:

- the project reads as simply continuing the ongoing research project of the principal applicant;
- the interactions between partners are only vaguely described and the committee has the impression that team members will be working in parallel rather than closely collaborating;
- the applicants fail to cite relevant background publications in the field and present a catalogue of techniques without stating the chosen approach;
- the reviewers are convinced that not all team members have read the complete project, specifically noted if there are serious errors in project components in maths or physics. Similarly, they note a team member whose contribution is not integrated into the overall plan or who appears merely as a resource (mice, cDNAs, antibodies etc.) without receiving meaningful feedback from other team members or see that a team plans to work/collect data in a country where no team member has an affiliation.
- there is no indication of an experimental plan nor are there alternative plans for the case that the initial approach does not work. The committee wants to be convinced that this has been thought through - they are not looking for 'milestones' or 'deliverables';
- applicants do not appreciate what HFSP understands by 'risk'. It is not simply that « It's risky because it may or may not work ». A hand waving « but we hope it will », followed by a few vaguely described experiments, will not convince the reviewers. It is expected that the team is aware of the risk and that according to the team's calculations there is a reasonable chance that it will work. This might involve a discussion of the current limiting parameters of a technique, and the novel methods proposed that might bring improvements. For data analysis it might mean providing an estimate of the number and nature of data points to be collected and a discussion of the appropriateness of a computational tool to handle such a dataset.
- if the entire project depends on the success of a single initial experiment and no alternative plan is presented;
- if proposed modelling and mathematical methods are not presented clearly; applicants should be aware of the considerable modeling expertise on the committee. Review Committee members are expecting equations, mathematical methods and discussions of the limits of the proposed approaches etc;
- Technical support from institutions' research facilities is acceptable but team members should not include local collaborators (hidden partners) bringing more than a punctual contribution or service.

Given the program structure, it is impossible for us to reconvene the Committee for a second round of assessments each year, so you are advised to bear the above problems in mind when preparing your Full Proposal.

We look forward to receiving your application by the deadline of 11 September 2025.

INFORMATION FOR INSTITUTIONS

This page is provided as information for applicants' institutional officials at the Full Proposal stage.

At this stage we only request a signature from the institution officials – online signature. The responsible institution official may be the provost, director of sponsored programs, vice-president for research, the individual who will be responsible for the administration and fiscal management of the program, or equivalent, should an award be made. They should be aware of the financial terms of HFSP funding which are not negotiable and warrant that the applicants, and potentially the grantees, follow their institutional rules (e.g. good scientific practice, research ethics and research security, open science and sustainability). ([LI2026 Guidelines](#)).

No budget proposals indicating the amounts per category of expenses are required – see Guidelines Section 5.6 [LI2026 Guidelines](#).

- Indirect costs must not exceed 10% of the direct costs of each co-investigator's budget
- HFSP funds may not be used for the investigators' own salaries
- Starting dates: the research team must decide on a starting date for the grant, which is expected to be at the latest December 1st in the calendar year in which the award is made.
- Annual distribution of funds: each year, the investigators decide on the exact distribution of the funds awarded, and the principal investigator must submit a **Distribution of funds** each year before the beginning of the next period.

For Ethical considerations, please see section 6 of the [LI2026 Guidelines](#) and Submenu "Bioethical considerations" on the online form.

For Intellectual property rights and publications, see section 7 of the [LI2026 Guidelines](#).

*The HFSP budget is determined in US dollars. While payments may be requested in another currency, the amount in that currency will be determined by the exchange rate against the US dollar at the time of each transfer (and thus may vary for each annual payment). **HFSP reserves the right to wire funds in local currency.** After receipt of the funds, the grantee will have to confirm the amount assigned to the project. In the final financial report, due at the end of the grant, in the currency of payments, the amount received should correspond to the total declared during the grant period.*

HFSP ACCELERATOR GRANT

HFSP Board of Trustees approved a three-year pilot for the '**HFSP Accelerator Grant**' launched in July 2024. Therefore, this is the third year in which Research Grant awardees can apply. It aims to support the integration of an additional scientist, the accelerator member, in a recently funded HFSP grant project.

Principal Applicants of teams awarded in the current year can apply for this scheme. The related information can be found [here](#).

This should not influence the proposal now, but it may come your way next year if you are awarded.