

GRANT MECHANISMS WORKSHOP

American Heart Association

- Predoctoral fellowships
- Postdoctoral fellowships

Jose Renato Pinto, PhD

Biomedical Sciences

E-mail: jose.pinto@med.fsu.edu



The Greater Southeast Affiliate serves Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Puerto Rico.

About AHA Research for Scientists

The American Heart Association funds research broadly related to cardiovascular disease and stroke. The association supports research in clinical and basic sciences, bioengineering, biotechnology and public health.

Eligibility

- **Predoctoral Fellowship**

Helps students initiate careers in cardiovascular and stroke research by providing research assistance and training.

Career Stage: Gaining credentials

- have completed bachelor degree, predoctoral M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M. (or equivalent).
- be a full-time student working towards his/her degree.
- have completed initial coursework and be at the stage of their doctoral program where they can devote full-time effort to research or activities related to their development into independent researchers.

- **Postdoctoral Fellowship**

Helps trainees initiate careers in cardiovascular and stroke research while obtaining significant research results under the supervision of a sponsor or mentor; supports individuals before they are ready for some stage of independent research.

Career Stage: Directed step - postdoctoral fellow

- have completed a doctoral degree, including M.D., Ph.D., D.O., D.V.M., Pharm.D., or equivalent.
- have no more than five years postdoctoral research training or experience.
- This award is not intended for individuals of faculty rank.

International and Domestic applicants accepted

Predoctoral Fellowship Application Components

Applicant:

- Research Plan (8 pages)
- Biographical Sketch/Bibliography (5 pages) – NIH format
- Academic Record (no page limit) – undergrad transcript w/grades and grading scale
- **Individual Development Plan (no page limit)**
- Literature Cited (no page limit)
- Publications or Abstracts (3 max)
- Vertebrate Animal Subjects (no page limit) – NIH format
- Resubmission Modifications (if applicable, 2 pages)

Third Party Personnel:

- Sponsor's Biosketch/Bibliography
- Sponsor's Past/Current Trainees
- **Sponsor's Training Plan**
- Sponsor's Research Project Environment
- Collaborating Investigator's Biosketch/Bibliography
- Collaborating Investigator's Letter
- Consultant's Letter
- **Reference Reports (3 required)**

Postdoctoral Fellowship Application Components

Applicant:

- Research Plan (8 pages)
- Biographical Sketch/Bibliography (5 pages) – NIH format
- Academic Record (no page limit) – **undergrad AND grad school transcripts** w/grades and grading scale
- **Individual Development Plan (no page limit)**
- Literature Cited (no page limit)
- Publications or Abstracts (3 max)
- Vertebrate Animal Subjects (no page limit) – NIH format
- Resubmission Modifications (if applicable, 2 pages)

Third Party Personnel:

- Sponsor's Biosketch/Bibliography (5 pages)
- Sponsor's Past/Current Trainees (3 pages)
- **Sponsor's Training Plan (3 pages)**
- Sponsor's Research Project Environment (no page limit)
- Collaborating Investigator's Biosketch/Bibliography
- Collaborating Investigator's Letter
- Consultant's Letter
- **Reference Report (3 required)**

Individual Development Plan & Sponsor's Training Plan

IDP

To begin your IDP, go to <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>. Create an account, and complete assessments of your skills, interests and values; career exploration; goal setting and implementation plans.

- Personal Information
- Mentoring Team
- Career Exploration Progress
- Career Goals
 - Plan A
 - Plan B
- Career Advancement Goals
- Project Completion Goals
- Goals Summary

SPONSOR'S TRAINING PLAN

Describe your detailed plan for the proposed research training of this applicant; describe funds available and provide an assessment of the applicant. The narrative should include the following seven items:

- 1) Describe research in progress in the sponsor's lab.
- 2) Describe your plan to develop the applicant's research capabilities, including a statement on the sequence in which the applicant will be given increasing personal responsibility for the conduct of research.
- 3) Indicate other related training or course work which will be required for specific technical skills or methods the applicant will expect to master.
- 4) Address the relationship of the research training plan to the applicant's career goals.
- 5) Clarify the role the fellow played in the development of the research proposal.
- 6) Provide your assessment of the applicant.
- 7) Describe the scope and source of all funds available to the applicant, including departmental and institutional funds.

Reference Report (3 referents)

	Outstanding (upper 5%)	Excellent (upper 6-20%)	Very Good (upper 21-40%)	Good / Avg (mid 41-60%)	Fair/Below Avg (lower 40%)	Applicant lacks the knowledge	Referent is unable to rate
Research ability and potential							
Knowledge in chosen field, familiarity with literature							
Written and verbal communication skills							
Self reliance and independence							
Motivation and perseverance in pursuing goals							
Ability to plan and conduct research, organize data							
Ability to work as a member of a research team							
Imagination, originality, creativity							
Accuracy							
Laboratory skills and techniques, if relevant							
Clinical proficiency, if relevant							
Overall scientific ability							

Comment specifically on the **applicant's strengths and limitations** as they relate to his/her potential in the chosen field of study. Descriptions of **significant accomplishments and personal qualities** related to scholarly achievement (including major academic strengths and weaknesses) are particularly helpful, if appropriate. Describe any qualifications and traits you consider of special significance in judging the applicant's fitness for a research career in the biomedical sciences, emphasizing research aspects

Are there any supporting documents required by the home department, graduate school and/or Offices of Graduate Fellowships and Awards or Postdoctoral Affairs?

NO, although the budget must be seen and approved by the Research Foundation

Research Proposal and Preliminary Data

- Specific Aims (1/2 to 1 page)
- Background and Significance (1 page)
- **Preliminary Studies (1 page):**
 - Describe concisely previous work related to the proposed research by the applicant that will help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project.
 - Include pilot studies showing the work is feasible. (If none, so state).
 - Data are from the lab
 - Avoid including published data as preliminary data
- Research Design and Methods (~5 pages)
- Ethical Aspects of the Proposed Research (1/2 page)

What Are the Most Common Mistakes?

- Aims not written in hypothesis-driven format
- Preliminary data not supportive
- Absence of “potential problems and alternative approaches”
- Figures too small
- IDP not developed well
- “Weak” references

- **What is the duration of grant support if awarded? *2 years***
- **What is provided?**
 - ***Predoc* Trainee Stipend/Salary:** \$22,950 annually, plus \$1,000 per year for health insurance
 - **Indirect:** The predoctoral fellowship award does not allow for indirect costs.
 - **Project Support:** \$2,000 per year, in addition to the stipend. (travel, computer, equipment, etc.).
 - **Total Award Amount:** \$51,900

 - ***Postdoc* Trainee Stipend/Salary:** Stipend for Postdoctoral Fellow, plus \$1,000 per year for health insurance
 - **Indirect:** The postdoctoral fellowship award does not allow for indirect costs.
 - **Project Support:** \$3,000 per year, in addition to the stipend. (travel, computers, equipment, etc.)
 - **Maximum Annual Award Amount:** \$46,850-\$60,400
 - **Award Duration:** Two years. May apply for a second two-year award. All eligibility criteria apply. Maximum of four years of Association post doctoral fellowship support per individual.
 - **Total Award Amount:** \$93,700 - \$120,800
- **Is there a pre-proposal? *NO***
- **Is there an oral interview? *NO***
- **Current Success Rates 08/2014-02/2015: *Predoc - 15 out of 85 (18%), Postdoc - 16 out of 76 (21%)***

What will the reviewer's be evaluating in the proposal?

Assessment of these 3 criteria should each account for 1/3 of the overall Proposal score.

- 1. Evaluation of the Investigator - 1/3 of the overall Proposal score:
- 2. Evaluation of the Sponsor, Training Plan and Environment - 1/3 of the overall Proposal score:
- 3. Evaluation of the Proposal - 1/3 of the overall Proposal score:

Significance: If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or clinical practice be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods, and technologies that drive this scientific field?

Approach: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, well reasoned, feasible (as determined by preliminary data) and appropriate to the aims of the project? The assessment of preliminary data should be put into perspective such that bold new ideas and risk-taking on the part of beginning investigators are encouraged rather than stymied. Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

Innovation: Is the project original and innovative? For example: Does the project challenge existing paradigms and address an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field? Does the project develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area?

Impact on AHA Mission: Reviewers should ask themselves: What effect will this application have on the mission of AHA? How clearly does this application support the mission of AHA? How will the possible outcomes of this application enhance the mission of AHA?

GOOD LUCK!