

2021 Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science – Request for Applications

Grants awarded through this RFA are intended to produce foundational knowledge about the neurobehavioral differences associated with ASD, which will directly inform the development or refinement of tools needed for translational efforts, such as biomarkers and outcome measures. Special emphasis is placed on objective, quantitative measures that may be used in conjunction with standardized clinical measures and genomic information to better triangulate phenotypic and neurobiological variability within and across individuals with ASD.

The maximum budget is \$750,000 or less, inclusive of 20 percent indirect costs, over a period of up to three years.

[Policies and Procedures](#)

Application Deadline
May 3, 2021

Maximum Budget

Over a period of up to three years
Maximum of \$750,000

Important Dates

Application Available
March 1, 2021

Informational Zoom Meeting
March 24, 2021

Application Deadline
May 3, 2021

Award Notification
August 2021

Award Start Dates
September 1, 2021
October 1, 2021
November 1, 2021



The Simons Foundation uses an electronic grants submission process. All interested grant applicants must submit their applications online through [proposalCENTRAL](#).

The deadline for application submission is Monday, May 3, 2021, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

proposalCENTRAL Login Information

Applications must be submitted via [proposalCENTRAL](#) (pC). To start an application in pC, users must first log in to their pC account.

If You Need to Create a New Account in pC:

To create a new account, go to [proposalCENTRAL](#) and click "Create An Account Now." Fill in the required fields, check the boxes to agree to pC's terms of service and acceptable use policy, and click "Save."

If You Have an Existing Account in pC:

For all users with a pC account, log in under "Application Login" at [proposalCENTRAL](#) and select "Create New Proposal" or click on the "Grant Opportunities" tab. Scroll down to "Simons Foundation" and click "Apply Now" for the "Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative – Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science " program to start the proposal and access the templates. After all sections are completed, you will be able to click on the "Submit" button to send.

To submit an application, you must complete the following [proposalCENTRAL](#) sections:

1. **Title Page:** Please provide the following information:

- a. Project title
- b. Indicate use of Simons Collections patient recruitment (e.g., [Research Match](#)), biospecimens, or data.

2. **Download Templates and Instructions:** All templates necessary to complete your proposal are available for download in this module (or the "Proposal Attachments" module, where attachments are submitted as PDF-only files; see the corresponding "Proposal Attachments" section below for more details).

- a. Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science RFA Announcement

- b. Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science RFA Application Instructions
- c. Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science RFA Specific Aims Page Template
- d. Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science RFA Proposal Narrative Template
- e. Biosketch Template
- f. Other Support Template
- g. Human Participants Study Information Sheet
- h. Human Cognitive and Behavioral Science RFA Proposal Narrative Template
- i. Budget Justification Template
- j. Resources and Research Environment Template
- k. Renewable Reagents and Data Sharing Plan Template
- l. Simons Foundation Policies and Procedures
- m. Detailed Budget Template for Subcontract (if applicable to project)

3. **Enable Other Users to Access This Proposal:** This section allows you to give other users access to your grant application. You have the option of giving them one of three levels of permission: View, Edit or Administrator.
4. **Applicant/PI:** The principal investigator (PI) should be listed here. For grants with multiple PIs, the contact PI should be listed here.
5. **Organization/Institution:** Contact information for the signing official and the financial/fiscal officer from your institution is required; select the correct person or enter new names in this section.
6. **Key Personnel:** Indicate key personnel, including but not limited to: PIs, co-investigators, consultants and postdoctoral research associates. In rare circumstances, the applicant organization may designate multiple PIs who share the authority and responsibility for leading the project, intellectually and logistically. For more information on the responsibilities of PIs, please refer to the [FAQ section](#).
7. **Abstract:** Enter your abstract as text in this section.
8. **Budget Period Detail:** Enter your budget period detail in this section.
 - a. **Award start date:** Proposals selected for funding will be announced in August 2021, and funding will begin on September 1, 2021; October 1, 2021; or November 1, 2021. Please note that grants may not activate without current ethical approval documentation for human participants and/or animal research, unless given prior approval by SFARI staff.

- b. **Personnel:** Please provide the name, role, appointment type, percent effort, institutional base salary, requested salary, fringe rate and requested fringe for all personnel.

Other considerations: Please note that there is no salary cap for PIs or other faculty on a Simons Foundation grant; however, the compensation is prorated according to the individual's percent effort on the grant. There is no minimum percent effort required for PIs or other personnel on any SFARI award type, but it is expected that the PI will commit sufficient effort to this project to provide a leading intellectual and guiding role on the project. PIs committing less than 15 percent effort to their project should justify their effort level in detail. SFARI funds may be used only for personnel considered employees of the grantee institution who are eligible for benefits. Funds may not be used for stipend or benefit supplementation unless specifically authorized under the terms of the program from which funds are derived. The Simons Foundation reserves the right to modify budgets when an application has been selected for an award (see [Simons Foundation policies](#)).

1) Please do not use the field marked "For Internal Use Only-Estimated Cost for Simons Collections Biospecimens" below the "Indirect Costs" section in the "Budget Period Detail."

2) Investigators interested in recruiting human participants, including those from a Simons Collection, must complete and submit a Human Participants Study Information Sheet.

- c. **Indirect costs (IDCs):** Indirect costs to the primary institution are limited to 20 percent of direct costs with the following exceptions: equipment, tuition and any portion of each subcontract in excess of \$25,000. The primary institution may take indirect costs on the first \$25,000 modified total direct costs of each subcontract. Indirect costs paid to a subcontractor may not exceed 20 percent of the modified total direct costs paid to the subcontractor.
- d. **Equipment:** The Simons Foundation (SF) will own equipment purchased with foundation grant funds with a unit cost of \$50,000 or more. At the end of the grant funding period or in the case of grant termination for any reason, the foundation reserves the right to retain ownership or cede ownership to the PI's institution. Equipment with a unit cost of less than \$50,000 shall be the property of the institution.
- e. **Biospecimens:** If the proposal includes the use of Simons Collection biospecimens (i.e., from the [Simons Simplex Collection \(SSC\)](#) or [Simons Searchlight](#)), the Simons Foundation will review the estimated cost based on the [price list](#) on SFARI.org. Biospecimen costs will be considered separately from other project costs. Enter the projected figure in the field marked "Simons Collections Biospecimens (No IDC)" in the "Budget Period Detail" section, under "Other Expenses." A description of use, including the number and type of biospecimens, should be included in the proposal narrative and budget justification (see the "Proposal Attachments" section below). Biospecimen costs must be excluded from the IDC cost calculation.
- f. **Budget:** The total budget is \$750,000 or less, inclusive of 20 percent indirect costs, over a period of up to three (3) years. For projects that propose 2–3 years of research, progress will be critically evaluated at the end of each annual funding period before support for the upcoming year will be approved.

We strongly encourage investigators to tailor their requested budgets and duration to levels

appropriate for the scope of their specific aims. As with all Simons Foundation funded projects, it is at the foundation’s discretion to modify final budgets as needed. As such, it is to the investigator’s advantage to include realistic budget estimations in their initial grant application.

- g. **Multiple PIs:** The applicant PI will be the designated contact PI for the project. The contact PI will be responsible for directing the project and will coordinate all administrative deliverables.

Principal investigators (PIs) who do not have substantial ASD clinical expertise should include a close collaborator with such expertise on their grant application (e.g., multi-PI application).

- 1) Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who would like to be paid separately must upload in the “Proposal Attachments” section:

- i. Signed signature page for each PI (available for download in the “Proposal Attachments” and “Download Templates and Instructions” sections).
- ii. Budget template for each non-applicant PI (available for download in the “Proposal Attachments” and “Download Templates and Instructions” sections).
- iii. The direct and indirect costs for all non-applicant PIs. Direct costs must be included in the “Budget Period Detail” section in the “Consortium & Contractual Direct” section, and indirect costs should be included in the “Indirect Costs” section. Please add a separate line for direct costs and one for indirect costs for each non-applicant PI.

Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who will be paid directly by the contact PI’s institution are considered subcontracts. Please refer to the subcontract instructions in the “Subcontracts” section below.

Applications with multiple PIs from the same institution do not need to submit additional materials. Additional non-applicant PIs should be listed as key personnel in both the “Key Personnel” and “Budget Period Detail” sections, and only one signature page is needed.

- h. **Subcontracts:** Applications with subcontracts (including PIs who will be paid directly by the contact PI’s institution) must submit:

- 1) Subcontract detailed budget (available for download in the “Proposal Attachments” and “Download Templates and Instructions” sections) for each subcontract.
- 2) Subcontract direct and indirect costs. Subcontract direct costs must be included in the “Consortium & Contractual Direct” section, and subcontract indirect costs should be included in the “Indirect Costs” section. Please add a separate line for direct costs and one for indirect costs for each subcontract.

Requirements	Multiple PIs (at different institutions who want to be paid separately)	Subcontracts (including subcontract PI)
Signed signature page	Yes	No

Detailed budget template for additional PIs at different institutions	Yes	No
Detailed budget template for subcontracts	No	Yes
Direct costs entered into the "Consortium & Contractual Direct" section of the "Budget Period Detail"	Yes	Yes
Indirect costs entered into the "Indirect" section of the "Budget Period Detail"	Yes	Yes
Key personnel biosketches	Yes	Yes
Key personnel current and pending support	Yes	Yes
Renewable reagents and data-sharing plan	No (contact PI to submit one overall document)	No
Resources research and environment	No (contact PI to submit one overall document)	No
Budget justification	No (a justification should be included in the budget template)	No (a justification should be included in the budget template)

9. **Budget Summary:** The budget summary will populate from the saved detailed budget.

10. **Organization Assurances:** Indicate use of human participants or vertebrate animals in this section and status of approval from the Institutional Review Board or Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee. Grants cannot activate without current human participant and/or animal research ethical approval.

11. **Proposal Attachments:** The following documents are to be uploaded in this section, where they are also available for download:

a. **Specific Aims Page:** The Specific Aims Page should not exceed one (1) page and should be a summary of the proposed project focused on the research aims of the project, including a concise rationale for the hypothesis, description of preliminary data and experimental approach, and impact on autism research.

b. **Proposal Narrative:** The Proposal Narrative should not exceed five (5) pages of single-spaced, 11-point text, 0.5-inch margins. The Proposal Narrative should be considered an expanded version of the Specific Aims Page and used to provide more detail on the following:

- 1) Relevant scientific background
- 2) Preliminary results when applicable

- 3) Specific aims
- 4) Experimental design
- 5) Pitfalls and alternative strategies
- 6) Project significance and relevance to autism
- 7) Timeline and milestones

Figures, figure legends and references should follow the narrative text and will NOT count towards the page limit. References should be in *Journal of Neuroscience* format, including full author list, title and a link to the PubMed publication. Figures are limited to five (5), each fitting on a single page. Please attach them at the end of the five-page narrative in the same PDF file.

c. Human Participants Study Information Sheet:

Applicants are strongly encouraged, but not required, to use SPARK or Simons Searchlight [Research Match](#) as part of their participation recruitment strategy.

d. Biographical sketch of key personnel

e. Budget justification

Note: SPARK and Simons Searchlight [Research Match](#) includes services for identifying and contacting participants on behalf of your study. As such, some study team costs that are typically budgeted to a PI's grant may be reduced with the use of Research Match. Simons Foundation will work with applicants selected for funding through this RFA to negotiate mutually agreeable budget terms, as needed.

f. Budget templates:

- 1) **Multiple PIs:** Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who would like to be paid separately must submit a signed budget template for each PI institution.
- 2) **Subcontract:** Applications with subcontracts must submit a budget template.

g. Research environment and resources

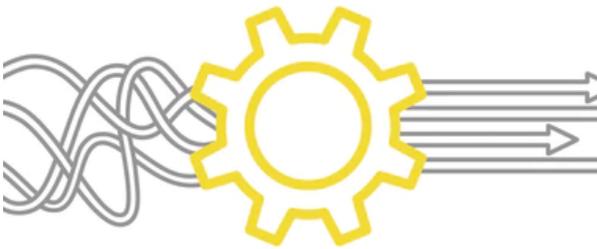
h. Renewable reagents and data-sharing plan

- i. **Current and pending support:** Please upload current and pending support both for PIs and for key personnel.
- j. **501(c)(3) determination or equivalency letter (foreign institutions only):** Please upload, if available, a copy of your U.S. IRS 501(c)(3) determination or equivalency letter as part of the application (see [Simons Foundation policies](#)).

k. **Signed signature page:** Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who would like to be paid separately must submit a signed signature page from each PI institution.

12. **PI data sheet:** Your professional profile will populate this section of the application. If revisions are required, please select “Edit Professional Profile” and go to the “Personal Data for Applications” section.
13. **Validate:** You must click the “Validate” button to check for any missing required information or files. All missing required information will be listed on the screen. Please supply any missing information before proceeding to the next step.
14. **Signature page(s):** The signed signature page is available for download in this section and must be signed by the signing official, then re-uploaded in the “Proposal Attachments” section. Applications with multiple PIs from different institutions who would like to be paid separately must submit a signed signature page for each PI institution.
15. **Submit:** You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. Any missing information will be listed on the screen. If your submission is successful, you will receive a confirmation message on the screen and a confirmation email.

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