



KDA WAITE-GRIFFIN SBMA FELLOWSHIP

A career-development opportunity for research into Kennedy's Disease

2026
Request for Proposals

February 1, 2026

Introduction

Terry Waite and Patrick Griffin met at a 1999 conference for Families of Spinal Muscular Atrophy. During a special breakout session for patients with SBMA, the men discovered that they both had created websites to share information about Kennedy's Disease and both had plans to start a non-profit organization to support research into SBMA. Terry and Patrick combined their email lists and, with a lot of help from Terry's wife Susanne, established the Kennedy's Disease Association (KDA) in 2000. Today, KDA has grown to over 1,500 associates from many countries. To honor these men, KDA is pleased to offer a career-development fellowship for SBMA research.

An important KDA goal is to support young researchers and encourage them to include research in SBMA in their future career plans. The Waite-Griffin Fellowship provides \$75,000 to cover salary/benefits for the applicant for one year, plus an additional \$2,000 for travel or education. The awardee is expected to devote at least 70% of their time to SBMA research. Any extra funds may be used for supplies.

The KDA Waite-Griffin Fellowship award is for a period of one year. The fellowship may be extended for an additional year assuming demonstrated progress in SBMA research and the availability of funds.

Important Dates and Deadlines:

Your **proposals must be received by Monday June 1, 2026**. The KDA will send a confirmation email within three days of receipt. Please send your proposals as a .pdf file to the following address:

Email: grants@kennedysdisease.org

Completed applications due:	June 1, 2026
Scientific Review Board review:	August 2026
Notification of award:	September 2026

Eligibility:

Applications are welcome from researchers who are interested in a career in SBMA research and/or patient care. Applicants should be no more than five years from the award of a PhD degree, or no more than five years from the completion of residency/fellowship training for MD or MD/ PhD degrees and be engaged in postdoctoral training. Applicants cannot hold the position of Assistant Professor or higher nor can they have their own laboratory. All applicants must have an established mentor who has a PhD, MD or MD/PhD degree and possesses a well-documented history of accomplishments in the field of SBMA research. All mentors must have primary appointments at academic, public or private, non-profit research institutions. Applications from the for-profit sector will not be accepted.

2025 Waite-Griffin Fellowship Application Guidelines

The general guidelines for the format of the proposal are shown below. If you have additional questions, please contact the KDA Research Director Dr. Nicholas Holdgate at nholdgate@kennedysdisease.org.

A. Application Length:

The narrative for the proposal should total no more than three (3) pages in length (Arial font, 11pt, and margins at least 0.5 inch), with one additional page allowed for tables and figures as well as an additional pages for budget, other support and other required documents. There is no page limit for the list of references.

B. Components of the Proposal

- **Cover Sheet** - Contact information for the applicant, the mentor and the responsible institutional official, and a summary of the proposal. The proposal should be signed by all named individuals.
- **Narrative:** (limited to three pages)
 - **Program Aims and Objectives** - A description of the aims and objectives of the proposed project, and their relevance to the understanding and/or treatment of Kennedy's disease.
 - **Background** - A brief overview of the status of research relating to the proposed project, including a review of the current literature. This section may also include preliminary data relevant to the proposed aims.
 - **Methodology** - Rationale and description of the research methods, including statistical data analysis, to be used to carry out the proposed project. This section should also include a proposed timeline for the completion of the project.
 - **Dissemination of Expected Results** - Plans for disseminating the expected results as well as a discussion of potential funding sources for future research.
- **References to Cited Publications**
- **Budget/Funding Requirements** - Detailed budget including an explanation of the funding request in relation to the aims of the proposed research.
- **Biosketch of Applicant and Mentor** – A description of the qualifications of both the applicant and the mentor. This should include academic background, relevant research experience, funding history and a list of relevant publications and presentations. An NIH style biosketch is appropriate.
- **Career Development Plan from Mentor** – Summary of research environment and resources available to the applicant, training opportunities provided by the mentor (1 page maximum)
- **Lay Summary** - A short description of the primary goals of the proposed research and its potential significance (e.g. possible therapies, further understanding of pathological mechanisms, etc.) written for the non-scientist.
- **Other Support** - List other funding support for applicant and mentor.

C. Additional Requirements

- The recipient of any fellowship from KDA must use the awarded funds for the specific purpose for which they were originally intended. Funds not used in the above specified manner must be returned to KDA within 60 days of the receipt of the annual financial reconciliation report by KDA. Payment of the awards is contingent on receiving any institutional approvals (IRB or IACUC) that are required for the proposed research.

- As a condition for funding, **"indirect costs" should not exceed five percent (5%) of the total amount of the grant.** Several institutions in the past have waived all "indirect costs." Check with your administrators to make certain this is not an issue before submitting your proposal.
- Awardees will be required to submit to the KDA a financial report and final project report when the project has been completed. Included should be a summary of research progress (1-2 pages including figures), a brief lay summary (half page) suitable for posting on the KDA website, and a report of all publications, presentations, and other grant proposals that arise from the sponsored research. Funded researchers are also required to submit or have submitted for them to the National Institutes of Health's PubMed Central database an electronic version of their final, peer-reviewed manuscripts upon acceptance for publication, to be made publicly available no later than 12 months after the official date of publication, Copies of publications would also be appreciated.
- Awardees agree to acknowledge the KDA for their support of the research reported in publications, related announcements, and/or presentations.
- Awardees are expected to present their results at the annual KDA Conference upon the completion of the grant period.

The Kennedy's Disease Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to finding a treatment or cure for Kennedy's Disease. For more information on the KDA, visit our web site at www.kennedysdisease.org.