



PRESENTING



The Association Française de l'Ataxie de Friedreich (AFAF) and Friedrich's Ataxia Research Alliance (FARA) invite proposals for research projects that advance drug discovery, development of novel biomarkers or improve clinical outcomes in Friedreich's ataxia patients.

On July 1-8, 2017, 20 riders from the United States and 28 riders from France came together for a 350 mile ride from Strasbourg France to Lentilly, France (a suburb of Lyon, France) in rideATAXIA's first venture overseas – [rideATAXIA Europe, Le Peloton de l'Espoir](#) (The Peloton of Hope). The event also included a single day ride with multiple route lengths in Lentilly.

rideATAXIA Europe- Le Peloton de L'Espoir aims to unite the patient community in an empowering physical activity, draw attention to opportunities to be involved in clinical research through registration in the Global FA Patient Registry and raise funds for an AFAF and FARA collaborative research grant. Le Peloton de l'Espoir will also strive to spread FA awareness in France and beyond.

AFAF and FARA will co-fund a research project with the funds raised from Peloton de l'Espoir. This will be a one year research award aimed at funding a short, focused project that can provide substantial proof of concept. Based on current funds raised, we estimate being able to make one research grant award between 75-100,000 Euro.

AFAF and FARA agree that areas of research priority include:

- Drug discovery – research that focuses on new therapeutic targets and/or in vitro and in vivo work to vet new therapeutic compounds. The final outcome of such a product would be a new validated target and/or vetting a new drug candidate to make a go/no go decision toward further pre-clinical development.
- Biomarkers – Specifically biomarkers that can be of use in offering improved approaches to clinical trials; outcome measures and pharmacodynamics markers.
- Improving clinical outcomes: research that focuses on improving specific symptoms of FA and would have a positive impact on quality of life. There is specific interest in strategies to improve speech, hearing, vision and fatigue.

Both organizations agree that grant applications that foster international collaboration are highly desirable.

Proposal Details:

Those eligible to submit proposals include investigators from public and private nonprofit universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, government agencies, biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies, other for-profit entities; irrespective of the country of origin.

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required for all proposals and must be submitted by September 15, 2017. The LOI must contain a brief description of the objectives, rationale, and key preliminary data for the project (1-3 pages is sufficient), an estimate of the budget, and the CV/biosketch for the principal investigator and any key collaborators. The LOI must be submitted as a PDF file via email to grants@curefa.org. The subject line should read as follows, LOI AFAF/FARA RFP. The LOIs will be reviewed by the funding organizations Scientific Research Committees and, based on the outcome of this review, the submitting investigators will be either

invited to submit a full proposal or informed that the LOI has been declined. This notification should be made within two weeks of the LOI deadline.

The deadline for receiving full proposals is December 1 2017. Awards will be announced February 1, 2018, and will have a start date of Feb 15, 2018.

Full Proposals should include the following:

Project Description

A detailed description of the project that includes the specific aims, background, preliminary data, and research plan. Do not exceed 10 pages (excluding references).

Budget

A detailed budget must be submitted with all proposals, including a justification of all requested expenses. Allowable expenses are: personnel costs/salary with fringe benefits, laboratory reagents and supplies, equipment, animal expenses, publication costs, patient expenses directly related to study and not reimbursable by third party insurers, and patient travel. Expenses that will not be awarded include: indirect costs/overhead, investigator travel to meetings and conferences, memberships in scientific societies. As a general guideline budgets should not exceed 75,000 Euro for a 12-month period. AFAF and FARA do not support indirect costs.

Timeline and Milestones

All projects must have objective milestones that are clearly communicated.

Human Subjects

If human subjects are used in the proposed study, the study must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or equivalent. Full funding will not be provided until proof of IRB approval is demonstrated to FARA. Human subjects studied in the course of research conducted under a grant are under no circumstances a responsibility of FARA.

Animal Research

If animals are used, the proposed study must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), or equivalent, indicating that appropriate precautions have been taken to assure that proper treatment, care and humane conditions are provided.

Review and Decision Process

All full proposals submitted in response to the this RFP will undergo a rigorous and confidential review procedure that is overseen by a joint AFAF and FARA Scientific Review Committee

1. The SRC makes a preliminary review and if the application is considered acceptable, it undergoes external peer-review by established researchers with the appropriate expertise. The reviewers are assigned by the SRC, often based on suggestions provided by the applicant.
2. Each reviewer provides comments and scores based on significance of proposal, approach/methods of the research plan, innovation, investigator/experience, and environment/resources. If funding is recommended, comments are also provided on the appropriateness of the requested budget.
3. Following thorough discussion of the reviews, as well as the significance and relevance of the proposed research to this RFP, the SRC submits those applications for which funding is recommended to the AFAF and FARA Board of Directors.
4. Only applications that are recommended for funding by the SRC will be considered for funding by AFAF and FARA. The funding decision made by the AFAF and FARA Board of Directors is final.