

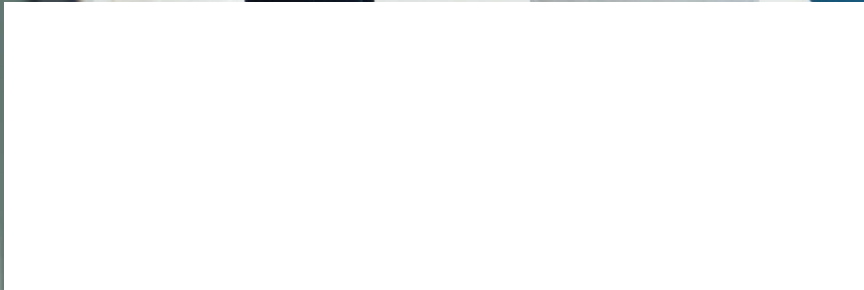
OCTOBER 2024
Vol. 26 No. 10

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The Continuing Evolution of Biotherapies





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NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY: *Apply now for up to \$100,000!*

The new AABB Foundation Process Development Grant aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of blood- and biotherapies-related processes and operations in donor and patient care settings.

Applications will be accepted through Dec. 1, 2024.

Funding will support improvements to business operations through the development, implementation and outcomes analysis of innovative processes, techniques or technologies.

Examples include:

- Models to streamline operations, maximize financial performance and improve decision-making
- Strategy and frameworks for optimizing donor engagement, retention or management
- Research in new diagnostic tools or to optimize existing diagnostic tools
- Process validation to optimize quality, potency or safety
- Pilot clinical studies or IND-enabling studies

For more information and to apply:

aabb.org/pdg

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The Expansion of Cell Collection

Blood facilities have become a viable option to help develop and administer transformative therapies amid infrastructure challenges.



10 AABB Congratulates 2024 Award Recipients

Editor's Note:

The August 2024 issue of *AABB News* included a sidebar on page 8 titled “Smart Blood Fridge: Reducing Turnaround Times.” This article profiled a smart fridge used by the South African National Blood Service to help reduce supply issues and shorten turnaround times for patients to receive blood in rural areas. The smart fridge that was profiled is the Haemonetics BloodTrack HaemoBank system, which uses BloodTrack blood management software. Haemonetics commercializes its BloodTrack system in many areas throughout the world; it is offered in South Africa through Haemonetics’ distribution partner, Vertice MedTech.

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Reflections on the Past Year

Greetings to my fellow AABB members. It's hard to believe this will be my last column as AABB president. Leading our Association has been one of my greatest professional achievements.

As I reflect on the past year, I am proud of what we have accomplished together to advance the blood and biotherapies community and our Association. From our steady growth in biotherapies development, to our strong global partnerships with other transfusion medicine and biotherapies organizations, we have worked tirelessly to advance patient and donor safety worldwide. For example, AABB is expanding accreditation and educational services globally. This will improve safety for transfusion recipients. Additionally, we have increased the number of members and AABB-accredited facilities throughout the world and developed more programs aimed at elevating safety and quality in the field.

I'm also excited about the future of biotherapies. The AABB biotherapies community is transforming patient care, and this year we've made significant strides through educational programs, new biotherapies publications and our advocacy efforts to advance policies that promote appropriate access to safe, clinically effective biotherapies. AABB is also developing guidance for the Standards for Cell and Gene Therapy Services for Pharmacy.

Our Association is an established leader in producing clinical practice guidelines for utilization of blood components in the U.S. and internationally. To that end, AABB updated platelet and red blood cell transfusion guidelines this year to provide recommendations

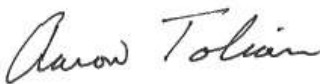
for use of platelet and RBC transfusions in adults and children. AABB also launched the Leadership Certificate in Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine to educate the next generation of blood and biotherapies professionals interested in advancing their leadership skills.

Thank You

I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to making this a successful year, especially the AABB Board of Directors, AABB staff and, most importantly, my fellow AABB members. Once again, the blood community came together to support one another and ensure blood was available during unforeseen challenges, reinforcing our strength and commitment to the mission of AABB. Your encouragement, support and unwavering dedication is deeply appreciated.

At the close of the 2024 AABB Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas, I will be officially handing the president's gavel to my successor, Meghan Delaney, DO, MPH, who has been actively involved in AABB throughout her career and has served on the AABB Board of Directors for many years. I am confident that Dr. Delaney will lead AABB effectively, and I look forward to supporting her in my role as past president.

It has truly been an honor to serve as your president. ■



Aaron A. R. Tobian, MD, PhD
AABB President

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Early-Career Scientific Research Grants Program Accepting Applications

By AABB Foundation Staff
Contributing Writers

The AABB Foundation Early-Career Scientific Research Grant Program supports investigator-initiated original research across all aspects of blood banking, transfusion medicine and biotherapies. These grants have been instrumental in reinforcing AABB's mission of making transfusion medicine and biotherapies safe, available and effective worldwide.

Grant applications are assessed based on scientific merit, relevance to and impact on the field, appropriateness to the funding scope and the potential to yield meaningful data. Numerous previous grant recipients have become leaders in the field, with their innovative research resulting in scientific and medical advances that save lives and improve the health of millions of patients and donors throughout the world.

Investigators on a trajectory toward research independence are strongly encouraged to apply for these grants to advance their scientific pursuits. Applications for the 2025 cycle will be accepted until Dec. 1.

To learn more about the grant application process, review the frequently asked questions below and consider submitting your application for the 2025 cycle.

I'm Interested. What is the Selection Process?

All grant applications will be reviewed by the AABB Foundation Scientific Research Grants Review Committee (GRC). This committee meets once a year to select grant recipients. Outside reviewers may be consulted at the discretion of the committee. The AABB Foundation Board of Directors must approve the GRC's recommendations before official awards may be made. Grants are announced in June and funds are disbursed in July.

A confidential critique review sheet of the proposed grant project that summarizes the GRC's comments is provided to all applicants. AABB and the

AABB Foundation reserve the right to list the grant recipients in publications, including the title, principal investigator and amount of funding.

Who Can Apply?

An applicant must be a doctor, medical technologist, transfusion medicine or biotherapies professional. All applicants will be considered regardless of age, race, gender, national origin or religion.

The Foundation accepts early-career applicants worldwide. Early-career is defined as follows:

1. An early-career investigator is an investigator who has completed a terminal research degree or medical residency – whichever date is later – within the past 10 years of the grant application deadline and has not yet been awarded a substantial research grant (i.e. NIH R01). Of note, there is a 13-month period during which an investigator can resubmit a revised application and retain early-stage investigator status.
2. Clinical fellowship training in a medical specialty or subspecialty training in the years that follow the internship/residency period is not considered a part of the residency. Often the clinical fellowship period will consist of a mixture of clinical and research training. The time spent in research training will be considered as applicable toward the 10 years of research and research training.
3. If you have competed successfully for a substantial research grant (i.e. NIH R01) at any time in your career, you are NOT considered early-career and are, therefore ineligible for an AABB Foundation Early-Career Scientific Research Grant.

The AABB Foundation's intention is to fund researchers on a path toward research independence. No candidate is eligible to receive more than one AABB Foundation Early-Career Scientific Research



HALL OF FAME PERSPECTIVE

Many AABB Foundation early-career grant recipients have become leaders in their field and are recognized in the Foundation’s Hall of Fame for exemplary scientific and leadership contributions. Below, just a few provide their thoughts on how receiving a Foundation grant helped their career.

2024 Inductee

Chance John Luckey, MD, PhD
Associate Professor of Pathology
Medical Director of Cell Therapy Collections and Processing
University of Virginia School of Medicine

“AABB Foundation funding provided invaluable opportunities for me to interact with like-minded clinicians and scientists in the field. The connections I made through the AABB Foundation have not only led to a host of fruitful scientific collaborations supported by the NIH, but more importantly provided some of my closest friends.”

2023 Inductee

Brian R. Smith, MD
Deputy Dean for Clinical and Translational Research
Co-Director, Yale Center for Clinical Investigation
Professor and Chair of Laboratory Medicine
Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Int Medicine, Pediatrics
Yale University School of Medicine

“The AABB Foundation was instrumental in moving my research focus to translational projects designed to positively impact ameliorating the complications of transfusion and improve cellular therapy. Very importantly, it also provided key opportunities to co-mingle clinician-scientists, clinicians, and non-clinician investigators that encouraged cross-disciplinary collaborations critical to moving transfusion medicine forward.”

2021 Inductee

Cheryl Lobo, PhD
Head, Blood-Borne Parasites
Lindsley Kimball Research Institute
New York Blood Center

“Being recognized as an AABB Foundation awardee supported my laboratory both financially and professionally. Not only did the grant monies focus my work on parasite biology in a translational research direction, but they also allowed me to forge strong connections with a collaborative network of transfusion medicine researchers.”

Grant in the course of their career.

What are the Submission Criteria?

- Applications for research into innovative and new projects are a priority.
- No particular project can be funded more than once.
- An application for the same project may be submitted twice if not already funded by the AABB Foundation.
- Awards will not be made to increase the funding available for currently funded research projects. AABB Foundation early-career grants are intended to provide “seed” funding that allows the principal investigator to enhance preliminary data. This data may then be useful in applying for larger grants.

General Application Tips

- Make sure you meet the eligibility requirements and submit your application by the deadline.
- Plan ahead! Producing a strong application takes time and final selection is based, in part, on the quality of your application and accompanying material.
- Have a clear strategy. Make sure all parts of your application form an integrated whole and make sense for your objectives.
- Read and follow the instructions carefully. The instructions are your guide to creating a complete and competitive application.
- Submit information regarding available funding from other sources (fellowships, scholarships, sponsorships, etc.).

Individuals with questions on the application process are invited to contact the AABB Foundation at foundation@aabb.org. For more information, visit aabb.org/grants. ■