



Application Guidelines for the 2021 'A' Award Grant

Application Due: June 18, 2021
8:00 pm (ET)



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About Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) emerged from the front yard lemonade stand of 4-year-old Alexandra “Alex” Scott, who was fighting cancer and wanted to raise money to find cures for all children with cancer. Her spirit and determination inspired others to support her cause, and when she passed away at the age of 8, she had raised \$1 million. Since then, the Foundation bearing her name has evolved into a national fundraising movement. Today, ALSF is one of the leading funders of pediatric cancer research in the U.S. and Canada, funding more than 1,000 research projects and providing programs to families affected by childhood cancer. ALSF is also the only childhood cancer research organization that has been given the NCI peer-reviewed funder designation for rigorous selection of research grants. The mission of ALSF is to change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families, and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer.

‘A’ Award Grant Program Description

The purpose of the ‘A’ Award Grant is to advance ALSF’s mission to find cures and better treatments for childhood cancers by providing support to early career scientists who want to establish a career in pediatric oncology research. The ideal applicant has an original project that is not currently being funded. Demonstration of a future commitment to pediatric cancer investigation as well as institutional support for the career development of the investigator are critical components of a successful application. A mentor is required, and a career development plan must be included. The ‘A’ Award is a four-year grant, with the possibility of a 5th year of funding.

Application Timeline and Review

- A full proposal must be submitted that meets all guideline criteria as well as all eligibility criteria; otherwise, applications will be administratively rejected.
- Proposals will be reviewed by an independent panel of experts according to the NIH recognized peer-review process.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

PROPOSALS DUE	June 18, 2021 by 8:00 pm (ET)
AWARD NOTIFICATION	November 2021
PROJECTED START/END DATE	February 2022 – January 2026

Applicant Eligibility

If eligibility questions remain after reviewing these guidelines, please contact Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation directly before applying.



- Applicants must have an MD, PhD or MD/PhD (DO, MBBS or equivalent). For 2021 applicants, they may be within 6 years of their first faculty appointment as an Assistant Professor. Associate and Full Professors are ineligible. If still at the Instructor level, the applicant must have a commitment from the Department Chair/Division Chief at the time of grant submission for an Assistant Professor position within one year of receiving the award.
- A minimum of 75% of the applicant's time during the 'A' Award period must be allocated as protected time for *all* research activities. This percentage of time includes both 'A' Award activities and the applicant's other research responsibilities.
- Applicants may have research grants from other funding sources during the 'A' Award period, but there must be clear documentation of mechanisms to avoid scientific and budgetary overlap.
- Applicants currently holding an ALSF Young Investigator (YI) Grant may apply. If the 'A' Award is given, it would supersede the YI grant if there is an overlap in the funding periods.
- Applicant institutions may be based in the United States or Canada, and applicants need not be United States citizens. Funds must be granted to nonprofit institutions or organizations.

Scope of Proposal

- Proposals must fall within the scope of Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation's mission, focused on childhood cancers. Proposals with a sole/primary focus on patients >21 years of age will not be considered.

Budget

The requested budget should be in proportion to the scope of the proposed project and should be at or under \$800,000 USD in direct costs over four years. A maximum of \$200,000 in total costs may be requested per year.

- Restrictions:
 - ALSF adheres to the NIH salary cap for principal investigator(s).
 - Indirect costs are not allowed.
 - The grant may not be renewed; no-cost extension requests are allowed.
 - Other budget items may include the following: fringe benefits, travel, supplies, and equipment under \$10,000. ALSF funds cannot be used for tuition remission.
- If utilizing a subcontract or subaward, you must include this expense in the budget.
 - No indirect costs will be paid.
 - The PI's institution is responsible for disbursing funds for subawards and/or subcontracts.



Resource and Data Sharing

Grant recipients are expected to share unique resources developed under this funding award, and as part of the application, applicants are required to submit a Resource Sharing Plan. Applicants should describe their track record of generating resources that are broadly re-used, the specific resources that will be generated in this proposed project, and the mechanisms by which those resources will be shared. To demonstrate a commitment to sharing that will be actualized, applicants should provide information in their sharing plan that clearly states the type of resource that will be shared, the method, characterization and timing of such sharing, and the anticipated resources (budget, personnel, etc.) required by the applicant and the resource user. Reviewers will consider the extent to which the dissemination of resources produced under the award will enhance or diminish the impact of the proposed work. For a full description see the [Resource Sharing Form](#).

Resubmissions

One resubmission of an application previously reviewed by ALSF's Review Board is permitted. Applicants should respond to the prior ALSF critique of the proposal in the Resubmission section of the application. The response to critique will be scored in the review process, and resubmissions compete with new applicants for funding.

Restrictions

- ALSF does not accept proposals for research utilizing human embryonic stem cells or non-human primates. Research with human induced pluripotent stem cells is permissible.
- Awards are not renewable. A fifth year of unrestricted funding is possible if the investigator receives an NIH R01 during the award term. To be eligible to apply for a 5th year of funding, the R01 must be secured by the due date of the Final Report in year 4.
- Applicants in psychosocial aspects of pediatric cancer and/or cancer control are not eligible for the 'A' Award.

Grant Reporting Requirements

- Annual progress reports, and each year of funding is contingent upon demonstration of satisfactory progress toward the completion of proposed research objectives and appropriate budget expenditures.
- Minor carry-over of funds (25% or less) is permitted each year with justification. Each year's budget will be approved subsequent to the review of project progress and milestones.
- ALSF may elect to partially fund or to hold new funds if carry-over is excessive.
- A final report is required at the conclusion of funding. Report must state findings, expenditures, as well as publications and presentations which acknowledge ALSF funding. The grant may not be renewed; no-cost extensions must be requested in the final report.



- Publications, presentations and posters featuring results of the experiments funded by this grant mechanism should acknowledge “Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation (Grant #)”. Copies should be sent via email to Grants@AlexsLemonade.org.

Application Package Instructions

- All sections described below should be combined into one PDF (max 20 MB) and uploaded to the ALSF online application form ([see Application Submission Instructions](#)).
- All templates mentioned can be found at ALSF’s [Information for Grant Applicants](#) page.

Format Instructions

- **PAGE HEADER:** All pages of the application should be numbered; the name of the principal investigator should appear in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- **FORMAT:** Follow NIH format guidelines: Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, or Georgia fonts with a font size of 11 points or larger with a minimum of ½ inch margins.
- **ORDER & LENGTH:** The order of the application should be followed, adhering to the maximum number of pages allowed for each subsection indicated in parentheses.

Section Descriptions

1. Project and Career Development Information

- a. **Cover Page (1 page):** Download and complete the [Cover Page Template](#).
- b. **Table of Contents (1 page):** Provide a Table of Contents with page numbers to the corresponding sections.
- c. **PI Statement (0.5 page):** Describe goals and long-term objectives for the PI over the four-year funding period. Include what the PI hopes to gain from the experience and any future aspirations.
- d. **Mentoring & Career Development Plan (1 page):** A mentor is required. Describe a plan for professional activities/responsibilities during the award and explain how these will contribute to career growth and progression. Include strategies for mentorship, continued education, and future research.
- e. **Institutional Commitment (1 page):** Include a specific plan from the institution (typically a statement from the Division Chief or Department Chair) demonstrating that the applicant is, or is on the fast track to become, an independent investigator. The plan should include the institution’s guarantee of protected time for this research, mentoring support for the applicant, and what start-up funding, laboratory facilities, office space and equipment are dedicated to this project. If the applicant is not yet an Assistant Professor, the application must also include a written commitment from the institution for an Assistant Professor position within one year of receiving the Award.



- f. **Scientific Abstract (0.5 page):** Summarize the research objectives and rationale.
- g. **Impact Statement (0.5 page):** How will this project impact childhood cancer?
2. **Budget/Justification (3 pages):**
 - a. **Budget Template (1.5 pages):** Complete the [ALSF Budget Template for 5 Year Grants](#). The signature from an institutional representative on the cover page of this grant application specifically acknowledges and accepts this budget and acknowledges that no indirect costs will be paid.
 - i. The award amount is \$800,000 over four years.
 - ii. ALSF adheres to the NIH salary cap for Principal Investigator(s)/Co-Investigator(s).
 - iii. Indirect costs are not allowed.
 - iv. If utilizing a sub-contractor, you must include their budget. No indirect costs will be paid to the sub-contractor.
 - b. **Budget Justification (1.5 pages)**
3. **Biographical Sketch(es):** Use the NIH five-page biographical sketch (SF424) format for the principal investigator and mentor.
4. **Research Plan**
 - a. **Resubmissions (1 page, if applicable):** If this proposal was previously submitted to ALSF and did not receive funding, describe any changes in response to the reviewer critiques (e.g. changes in experimental design, scope, new data)
 - b. **Specific Aims (1 page):** List the goals, long-term objectives and what the specific research proposed in this application is intended to accomplish. State the hypothesis to be tested and relevance to childhood cancer research.
 - c. **Significance (1 page):** Describe the relevant background that supports the current research plan. State the significance and importance of your proposed project with respect to childhood cancer research. Relate the specific aims to the goals and long-term objectives. Include potential impact in the clinic for children battling cancer.
 - d. **Innovation (1 page):** Describe how the proposed research challenges and shifts paradigms, or introduces a novel concept, approach or technology and how this could potentially translate to the clinic in the near or long term.
 - e. **Approach (4 pages):** Describe the experimental approach to the research question and how the research will be realistically accomplished within the proposed funding period. This section must include but is not limited to:
 - i. A timeline, including the deliverables that will be generated, and the anticipated time frame for each deliverable.
 - ii. Feasibility of the approach to reach project goals; if available, include PI's preliminary studies pertinent to the project.



- iii. Anticipated potential problems and plans to address these issues.
5. **Resource Sharing (1-2 pages):** Use the [Resource Sharing Form](#) to complete this section of the application to describe the outputs from the proposed project and how they will be shared. Reviewers will be asked to consider the manner in which outputs from this project will be shared and the extent to which this plan will increase or decrease the impact of the proposed project.
6. **Literature Cited (no limit):** Use Vancouver or NIH style (numbered citations within text) format.
7. **Human Subjects (1 page):** If approved, include the IRB approval letter or equivalent. If approval is pending, indicate the expected approval date. Any funds awarded will be held until the letter is received. If IRB approval is not applicable, include a note in this section.
8. **Vertebrate Animals (1 page):** If approved, include the IACUC approval letter or equivalent. If approval is pending indicate the expected approval date. Any funds awarded will be held until the letter is received. If IACUC approval is not applicable, include a note in this section.
9. **Research Collaborators/Consultants (if applicable):** Include letters from individuals (other than mentor) confirming their roles in the project.
10. **Letters of Recommendation:** Include three letters of recommendation. One letter should be from a current mentor; a second should be from the applicant's Division Chief or Department Chair. The third letter may be from a senior colleague of the applicant's choosing and should address the applicant's potential for independence, success, and potential for making an impact in the field. Letters should address the applicant's strengths as they align with the goals of the 'A' Award Program.
11. **Appendix:** Appendices must be critical to the understanding of the application, such as accepted, but as yet unpublished manuscripts, a full protocol, or up to three pages of tables/figures for supplementary data. Excessive appendices will cause the application to be administratively rejected.

Application Submission Instructions

Applicants must not use the Internet Explorer (IE) browser as it is not compatible with the online portal. Chrome and Firefox browsers are recommended.

1. To start an application, navigate to the portal at ALSApps.force.com.
 - a. Returning applicants: login with your username and password.
 - b. First time applicants: click the "New User?" link and complete your one-time registration and then login.
2. After you've logged in, follow the directions on the dashboard to submit your application. Complete the online form with applicant contact and project information.



- a. Enter the Project Title first, even if tentative. Then Save.
 - b. Applicant will be asked for basic contact information for themselves, co-PI(s) if applicable, grant manager and institution. If someone other than the PI is entering information into the portal, the “Contact Person” name entered **must** be the PI’s name.
 - c. In the respective sections enter the budget request amount, type of childhood cancer the project focuses on, as well as a 250-word summary of the research project in lay terms. The applicant will be asked to release this summary for use at ALSF’s discretion (website, press releases etc.) should the proposal be funded. The applicant may copy and paste information from other documents into these sections.
3. The application document must be uploaded as **one PDF** (maximum of 20 MB).
 4. You may save your application to finish later. Go to ALSFapps.force.com and login again. You will land on your dashboard. Click “Applications” to edit your application in progress.
 5. Once completed, submit the application by clicking Review & Submit. You will see error messages for any required fields that need to be completed.
 6. After your application has been successfully submitted an email confirmation will be sent. You will not be able to amend the application after submission.

Contact

- If you have any questions regarding the ALSF ‘A’ Award Grant, please contact Gina Dyer, Grant Coordinator, by email at G.Dyer@AlexsLemonade.org.