2025 ACCELERATOR AWARD
RFA & Submission Guidelines

The **Accelerator Award** provides funding for those who are developing a non-invasive treatment at any stage of the bench-to-bedside research pipeline or researching the prevention of hydrocephalus. The Hydrocephalus Association aims to accelerate scientific progress by asking applicants to demonstrate how the award will advance their research to the next level. Examples of this include but are not limited to transitioning research from in vitro studies to animal studies, advancing from small animal models to larger animals, or progressing from animal models to clinical research.

The hydrocephalus community seeks preventive measures and non-invasive therapies to manage and mitigate the impact of the condition. This award aims to fund research projects aligned with the Community Research Priorities for treatment and prevention.

Priority #1	Develop new treatments that do not require brain surgery to manage hydrocephalus.
Priority #2	Develop new one-time treatments to manage hydrocephalus (i.e. permanent treatments that do not require additional interventions).
Priority #3	Identify the causes and processes that lead to hydrocephalus (e.g. genetic influences, inflammation).
Priority #8	Develop ways to prevent the development of hydrocephalus.
Priority #12	Develop therapies (e.g. cellular regeneration) to repair brain damage for people affected by hydrocephalus.

In the Letter of Intent (LOI), investigators must indicate which priority statement(s) are addressed by the project. Investigators are invited to submit a LOI by **March 18, 2025 at 5:00 pm ET**. Employment of cross-disciplinary teams is encouraged.

Award Details:

This award supports:

- projects that can be completed within 12 months.
- projects that can be completed with $85,000.

Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be an established investigator with previous or current hydrocephalus-related funding (PI or Co-PI on a grant) or have a publication record in hydrocephalus research.
- demonstrate that their proposal will accelerate their research to the next level of research; indicate what the next level would be.
- have completed one or more of the following degrees: MD, PhD, DSc, DO, Pharm.D, or equivalent.
- hold a faculty role as an associate professor, full professor, or any equivalent academic or non-academic position.

- be based at an accredited non-profit research or academic institution (worldwide).
- be a member of the HA Network for Discovery Science. Sign up HERE.

Deadlines:

- **LOI:** All applicants must submit an LOI. LOIs must be submitted through the **WizeHive application portal** before **5:00 PM (ET) on March 18, 2025**.
- LOI invitations to submit full proposals will be sent out in April.

- **Full applications:** due before **5:00 PM (ET) on May 23, 2025**.
- Grant finalists will be contacted in October 2025.

Application Details:

*The Letter of Intent (LOI) components to be submitted in the **WizeHive application portal** include:*

- Sponsoring institution information.
- A list of the applicant's hydrocephalus-related research and funding.
- Identification of primary and secondary topics of study.
- A summary of the project and impact.
- An acceleration statement of how the award will accelerate the project to the next level.
- Identification of the treatment/prevention Community Research Priorities addressed by project.
- Identification of three potential reviewers.

*The Full Application components to be submitted in the **WizeHive application portal** include:*

- **Overview:** Contact details and other relevant administrative information.
- **Budget:** Proposal Budget. This award provides no institutional overhead.
- **Biographical Sketch: Investigator/Co-Investigator/Key Personnel:** Biographical sketches are required for the Applicant, Co-Investigator(s) (if applicable), and Key Personnel. Do not exceed five (5) pages for each Biosketch.
- **Acceleration:** Describe how this award is will accelerate the research project. List any active or pending grant support that has or may appear to have a significant scientific or budgetary overlap with the research proposed in this application.
- **Research Plan:** The Research Plan for the proposed project that contains a project summary, layperson summary, specific aims and hypotheses, background and significance, research design and methods, impact, literature cited, and supporting figures and tables (optional).
- **Facilities and Collaborations:** Describe the Institutional Facilities and any Consultations/Collaborations if applicable.
- **Institutional Support Letter:** Applications must include a letter from the appropriate administrative institutional official confirming the institution's commitment to the responsible conduct of research, the candidate's eligibility and good standing, and that, if selected, the candidate would be able to accept the award.

All applicants must provide assurance of compliance with local research regulatory bodies and with local laws in advance of the start of research activities. Additionally, for applications using human embryonic stem cells or human tissue, the candidate must obtain appropriate Embryonic Stem Cell Research Oversight Committee (ESCRO) and human subjects research approvals in advance of the start of research activities.

For additional information, please contact samantha@hydroassoc.org or research@hydroassoc.org.

Submission Information

Letter of Intent Deadline: March 18, 2025

Full Application Deadline: May 23, 2025

All applications should be submitted through the **WizeHive application portal**. Applicants must sign up for an account and complete the eligibility check. Once verified, the Letter of Intent (LOI) or Full Application must be completed by the appropriate deadlines.

Applicants must submit a letter of intent **by March 18 by 5:00 pm ET** describing the nature of the proposed project and its relationship to hydrocephalus and identifying their institution, topics of study, the treatment/prevention Community Research Priorities addressed by project, and three (3) potential reviewers.

Completed full applications, including institutional commitment, must be submitted **by May 23 by 5:00 pm ET**. Applicants will be notified of awarding decision in October 2025.

A Scientific Review Committee of research scientists from both within and outside of the hydrocephalus research area will review the Accelerator Award applications. Each application will initially be assessed and scored by a primary and secondary reviewer based upon the following criteria:

- **Acceleration.** Reviewers will score the potential of the proposed project to accelerate progress in hydrocephalus research.
- **Research Approach and Feasibility:** Reviewers will score how well the scientific rationale, hypothesis, experimental design, methods and analyses support the research question and the completion of the aims, as well as the feasibility of the project in the one-year time frame.
- **Impact:** Reviewers will score the extent the research impacts a critical problem or important scientific question, generates preliminary data that can be used as the foundation for future research projects, and has the potential to impact, either short- or long-term, the field of study and/or patient care.
- **Investigator and Environment:** Reviewers will score how well the investigator(s) and environment are suited for and will contribute to the success of the research.

Based upon the assessment of applications by the Scientific Review Committee, the National Director of Research and Research Committee will make a recommendation to the CEO for approval.

Submit any questions to the Research Programs Manager (samantha@hydroassoc.org) or the Director of Research Programs (research@hydroassoc.org).

Application Components

1. Overview

The Overview includes the main project information, including the project title, assurances, institutional information, and signatures from the applicant and institutional signing official.

2. Budget

Please complete the **Budget** section for the total duration of support requested (maximum of 12 months). Include personnel costs, subcontract costs, and estimate material costs according to general categories (i.e. animal costs, supplies, equipment, etc.).

Budget:

- Personnel – Designate the percentage of the applicant's time devoted to research on this project. If the salary is supplemented by support from other agencies, the percent of salary requested must be equal to or less than the percent of time allotted to this project. Indicate combined dollar amount for salary and benefits. If support is requested for a technician, identify the amount of time the technician will devote to the study.
- Subcontracts – Identify the dollar amount of any subcontracts.
- Materials – Please estimate material costs according to general categories (i.e. animal costs, supplies, equipment, etc.). You may change the materials listed as needed. A detailed budget, or budget justification is not necessary.
- Indirect Costs – Indirect costs are not covered by this grant and cannot be included.

Applicants can apply for a maximum of $85,000 of funding. The Hydrocephalus Association reserves the right to request a budget justification after application submission.

3. Biographical Sketch

Complete a NIH-format biographical sketch for the Applicant, Co-Investigator(s) (if applicable), and Key Personnel. Clearly identify high impact research, as well as the role of each individual on the project. Highlight prior publications relevant to the present application. Biographical Sketches should not exceed five (5) pages.

A. **Personal Statement.** Briefly describe why you are well-suited for your role in the project described in this application.

B. **Positions and Honors.** List in chronological order previous positions, concluding with the present position. List any honors.

C. **Contribution to Science.** Briefly describe up to four (4) of your most significant contributions to science related to the proposed project. Indicate the historical background that frames the scientific problem; the central finding(s); the influence of the finding(s) on the progress of science or the application of those finding(s) to health or technology; and your specific role in the described work. Reference up to four peer-reviewed publications or other non-publication research products (can include audio or video products; patents; data and research materials; databases; educational aids or curricula; instruments or equipment; models; protocols; and software or netware) that are relevant to the described contribution. Each description should be no longer than one half page including figures and citations. Also provide a URL to a full list of your published work as found in a publicly available digital database such as SciENcv or My Bibliography, which are maintained by the US National Library of Medicine.

4. Acceleration

This section provides the opportunity to explain why the proposed research represents the essential next phase in your ongoing efforts to develop a non-invasive therapy or prevent hydrocephalus. If you currently hold or have applied for a grant that overlaps or may be perceived to overlap with the project proposed here, please explain.

A. **Acceleration.** State how this award will accelerate your research. Demonstrate why the proposed research represents a critical juncture in the broader efforts to advance the field of hydrocephalus treatment or prevention. Illustrate how the proposed project builds upon prior work and fills crucial gaps in knowledge (500-word limit).

The following list, although not all-inclusive, provides examples of how research can be accelerated to the next level:

- Advancing the testing of a drug agent from in vitro to in vivo
- Advancing research from in vitro work into animal models
- Transitioning small animal models research to large animals
- Translating preclinical research into clinical research/trial

B. **Other support.** If applicable, please list any active or pending grant support that has or may appear to have a significant scientific or budgetary overlap with the research proposed in this application. Please provide details or state that there is no overlap (125-word limit).

Scientific overlap occurs when (1) substantially the same research is proposed in more than one application or is submitted to two or more funding sources for review and funding consideration or (2) a specific research objective and the research design for accomplishing the objective are the same or closely related in two or more applications or awards, regardless of the funding source.

Budgetary overlap occurs when duplicate or equivalent budgetary items (e.g., equipment, salaries) are requested in an application but already are provided by another source.

5. Research Plan

This section is the opportunity to describe the Research Plan in sufficient detail to permit a thorough scientific review. Reviewers will look favorably on writing that is clear, concise, specific and informative.

A. **Project Summary.** State concisely and realistically what the research described in the application is intended to accomplish during the duration of the grant. Describe how your project could improve the outcomes, treatment, or lead to the prevention of hydrocephalus. The summary will be made public if the grant is awarded (150-word limit).

B. **Layperson Summary.** Summarize the research project for a general, non-science audience. Avoid using any technical jargon. Describe how your project could improve the outcomes, treatment, or lead to the prevention of hydrocephalus. The summary will be made public if the grant is awarded (150-word limit).

C. **Specific Aims and Hypotheses.** State concisely and realistically what the research described in the application is intended to accomplish during the period of the grant, including the hypotheses to be tested (500-word limit).

D. **Background and Significance.** Briefly describe background information critical to understanding the present proposal. Concisely state the importance and rationale of this project including how this research is addressing a critical gap in hydrocephalus research (500-word limit).

Since you are applying to the Hydrocephalus Association for a grant, there is no need to make arguments for the significance of the condition. Please focus your application on the impact that your research will have on the state of hydrocephalus research or the clinical management/treatment of hydrocephalus.

D. **Research Design and Methods.** Provide a detailed discussion of the research design and methods to be used to accomplish the specific aim(s). Discuss the data expected to be obtained and the means by which data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted (1500-word limit).

Preliminary data is not required but is allowed. Up to 10 supporting figures or tables can be uploaded to the application. The outcome of research supported by this award should be the generation of robust preliminary data that can be used as a foundation for future research projects.

Provide details on the statistical analyses that will be used, including power analyses.

If new methods, techniques, or procedures are to be used, explain their potential advantages over existing methodologies.

Discuss potential difficulties and/or limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve aims.

Point out any procedures, situations or materials that may be hazardous to personnel or patients and the precautions to be exercised.

E. **Impact.** If the aim(s) of the application is achieved, state how scientific knowledge will be advanced and how this work will inform your future research projects. Describe your next steps including submission of grant proposals to other governmental and nongovernmental agencies. Please be specific (300-word limit).

F. **Literature Cited.** References should include the names of authors, publication title, name of the journal or book, volume number, page number and year of publication.

6. Facilities and Collaborations

All applicants must complete the Facilities section. If the project includes consultant arrangements and/or collaboration with other individuals outside of the applicant institution, complete the Consultant or Collaboration Arrangements section.

A. **Facilities.** Please provide an overview of the institutional facilities/equipment available for this study (1000-word limit).

B. **Consultant or Collaboration Arrangements.** If the proposed project includes consultant arrangements and/or collaboration with other individuals outside the applicant's institution, describe the working relationships and support this description by letter(s) of support signed by collaborating individual(s). If clinical material required by this grant is to be furnished by other individuals, include a statement from these individuals agreeing to their participation and precautions taken to ensure anonymity of patients (500-word limit).

7. Institutional Commitment Letter

Applications must include a letter from the appropriate administrative institutional official confirming the institution's commitment to the responsible conduct of research, the candidate's eligibility and good standing, and that, if selected, the candidate would be able to accept the award. The letter must be on the institution's official letterhead.

8. Other Documentation

In advance of research activities, grantees must submit a signed letter from the appropriate sponsoring institutional official to provide assurance of compliance with local research regulatory bodies and with local laws and to verify that the research conducted in accordance with this award has met the institutional requirements for the following:

1. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved the procedures for the use of human subjects, or human organs, tissues and body fluids, in the proposed research, in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services policies. Include the IRB number and a copy of the approved form with the letter.
2. A DATA SAFETY MONITORING PLAN (DSMP) for any proposed study that places human subjects at more than minimal risk.
3. A plan to include, recruit and retain subjects from both genders, all racial and ethnic groups (and subgroups), and children as appropriate for the scientific goals of the research.
4. Research Involving Recombinant DNA meets the requirements contained in the document "NIH Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules" (revised April 2002).
5. Research Involving Animals meets the guidelines of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Public Health Service, which require that all proposed studies be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). If applicable, please provide the federally approved Animal Welfare Research Number, and the IACUC letter of approval.
6. Adequate protection will be assured for any Biohazards involved in the research.
7. Approval for the use of human embryonic stem cells must be obtained through an appropriate Embryonic Stem Cell Research Oversight Committee (ESCRO).