

Introduction

The National Ataxia Foundation (NAF) is a patient-centered nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating the development of treatments for ataxia and improving the lives of those affected by it. NAF is a global leader in driving ataxia research, fostering national and international collaboration to advance scientific discovery. As part of its commitment to identifying causes, treatments, and potential cures for ataxia, NAF offers limited, short-term financial support through its Annual Research Grant Program.

Description

The *Michael Lundquist Grant to Advance MSA-C Research* is awarded annually to independent researchers for outstanding proposals that aim to make meaningful advancements in the treatment and care of individuals affected by **multiple system atrophy, cerebellar subtype (MSA-C)**. While proposals may include aspects relevant to other forms of ataxia, the primary focus must be on preclinical, translational, or clinical research directly related to MSA-C.

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Accelerate the development of disease-modifying therapies,
- Support clinical trial readiness, including biomarker discovery and validation,
- Develop new or improve existing methods for the accurate and timely diagnosis of MSA-C
- Bridge the gap between scientific discovery and therapeutic application, and
- Significantly advance or reshape our mechanistic understanding of MSA-C pathogenesis.

This grant honors the legacy of Michael Lundquist and reflects NAF's commitment to advancing research that improves outcomes for people living with MSA-C.

Funding Period and Amount:

- **Funding Period:** April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027
- **Grant Amount:** Up to \$50,000
- **Use of Funds:** Funds may be used for direct research expenses only.
 - *Personnel Costs:* No more than 50% of the award may be allocated to personnel expenses.
 - *Indirect Costs/Cost Sharing:* Not allowed.
- **No-Cost Extensions (NCE):** Considered only under extenuating circumstances and subject to NAF approval. See [NAF Annual Grant Program Policies](#) for more details.

Important Dates: All documents due by 11:59 pm Eastern time zone on the dates listed.

Grant Submissions	Open Date	Deadline	Decision Notification
Letter of Intent	June 16, 2025	August 15, 2025	October 2025
Grant Application	Upon LOI approval	December 5, 2025	February 2026

Eligibility & Guidelines

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Have completed postdoctoral training and hold a full-time appointment as a faculty member, clinical fellow, or senior scientist at an academic institution, non-profit organization, or for-profit company.
2. Applications are open to U.S. and international researchers; non-U.S. citizens are eligible.
3. Applicants who were the lead Principal Investigator (PI) on a funded NAF grant within the past two fiscal years are **ineligible**.
4. Applicants must be in good standing with any previous NAF awards, as defined by the [NAF Research Grants Policy](#).
5. Only **one application** may be submitted per applicant (as lead PI) per year; applicants should carefully select the program that best matches their career stage and research proposal.

Grant Funding Priorities

The *Michael Lundquist Grant to Advance MSA-C Research* prioritizes projects that aim to drive meaningful progress in the understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of **multiple system atrophy, cerebellar subtype (MSA-C)**. While proposals may include aspects relevant to other forms of ataxia, the primary focus must be on MSA-C. Proposals solely focused on Multiple system atrophy Parkinsonian type (MSA-P) will not be considered.

Proposals will be evaluated based on their potential to:

- **Accelerate the development of disease-modifying therapies** that address the underlying biology of MSA-C
- **Support clinical trial readiness**, including the discovery, validation, and implementation of reliable biomarkers
- **Develop new or enhance existing diagnostic tools** to improve the accuracy and timeliness of MSA-C diagnosis
- **Bridge the gap between scientific discovery and therapeutic application**, facilitating the translation of research findings into clinical impact
- **Significantly advance or reshape the mechanistic understanding of MSA-C pathogenesis**, uncovering new avenues for intervention

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: Create a ProposalCentral Account. NAF uses ProposalCentral for all grant submissions. New users must create an account at [ProposalCentral](#).

STEP 2: Submit Letter of Intent (LOI). Submit via ProposalCentral by **August 15, 2025 at 11:59 PM ET**. All LOIs will undergo competitive review based on alignment with NAF's mission, scientific merit and relevance to ataxia. Only the top 30–50% of LOIs will be invited to submit a full application. Notification of LOI outcomes will be sent by mid-October 2025.

LOI Components: More detailed directions can be found in the [Letter of Intent Instructions](#).

1. **Statement of Need:** (4 sentences or less) Clearly describe the specific gap in the ataxia research or clinical care landscape that your project addresses.
2. **Impact Statement:** (4 sentences or less) Describe the potential impact that your proposal may have on advancing our understanding of ataxia improving diagnosis or enhancing care and quality of life for individuals with ataxia.
3. **Specific Aims:** (1-page max)
4. **Biosketch:** (5-page max)

STEP 3: If invited, applicants must submit a complete application via ProposalCentral by December 5, 2025 at 11:59 PM ET. Full details and formatting requirements are outlined in *Grant Application Instructions*.

Full Grant Application Requirements:

1. **Scientific Abstract** (300-word limit)
2. **Lay Summary** (200-word limit)
3. **Specific Aims** (1-page max)
4. **Biosketch** (5-page max)
5. **Research Plan** (6-page max, including the following sub-sections):
 - a. Background and Significance
 - b. Preliminary Studies
 - c. Research Strategy
6. **Budget Details and Budget Justification**
7. **References**

STEP 4: Funding Decisions. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by February 2026. Please refrain from contacting NAF regarding the status of your application.

For any questions about the LOI or Grant Application Process, please contact Aimee Alcott at Aimee@ataxia.org.