

Morris Animal Foundation

Pilot Study Proposal

General Information and Proposal Guidelines

Morris Animal Foundation (MAF) grant applications have two components: an online form and a full proposal attachment. To successfully submit an application, please complete the following:

1. The online form.
2. Attach the full proposal document (see guidelines below) to your online form. The full proposal must be converted to a single PDF document that includes *all* letters and attachments and does not exceed 5 MB. Proposals not attached to the online application will not be accepted.

For help converting your proposal to Adobe PDF, [click here](#). Some applicants have experienced page number increases after conversion to PDF, so check closely as exceeding page limits will result in disqualification. Please make sure that scanned documents are legible before adding them to the proposal PDF.

Information (i.e., title, principal investigator, abstract, budget) entered in the online form must match information contained in the proposal. Complete applications **must** be received **by 11:59 PM EST** on the designated due date.

ATTENTION: Once your application and full proposal attachment are submitted, they cannot be changed. Please review carefully before clicking “Submit.”

Proposals should be designed to convince the reviewers that the applicant clearly understands the problem to be studied, has the expertise to conduct the study, has devised a logical scientific approach for the species to be studied and is proposing a study that is relevant to MAF. For MAF’s definition of relevancy, [click here](#).

Note: Project designs using animal models oriented toward human disease are not appropriate.

MAF permits a maximum of **two** applications per Principal Investigator during a single call for proposals. A proposal can be *re-submitted* a maximum of **two** times (three *total* submissions to MAF).

Attention: Proposals will not be accepted from investigators who have delinquent reports from previous MAF-funded grants.

Pilot Study Description: These grants provide funding for innovative ideas to speed up discovery and advance the Foundation’s mission. Preliminary data are not required to successfully compete for a Morris Animal Foundation pilot-study grant. Pilot studies must meet the following criteria:

- The budget cannot exceed \$10,800 (\$10,000 plus 8 percent for indirect costs).
- The duration of the study cannot exceed one year.
- All investigators are eligible to apply. An investigator can serve as principal investigator (PI) on only ONE (1) Morris Animal Foundation pilot study per year.
- The PI on a Foundation-funded pilot study does not need to have full-time faculty status at his or her institution, and residents are eligible to apply for this award.

Proposal Guidelines:

IMPORTANT: Proposal format: This proposal should be written on 8.5 × 11 inch paper with a minimum of ¾ inch margins; **single-spaced using no smaller than an 11-point font** (Times, Times New Roman or Arial font preferred) and is page limited where noted. The order of the written proposal should follow the outline described below (including use of the outline numbering and headings). Answer the questions individually, and if any of the questions are not applicable, indicate this with “N/A”. Once you have completed your proposal and converted it to a single PDF document, the last page of the online form will prompt you to upload the attachment.

Do not include extra information not requested in these guidelines (articles, extra pages of figures, reports, etc.). Figures, tables and graphics must be included in the “Study Proposal” page limit below and must be readable. Anything extra added to the proposal will not be reviewed.

Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory and failure to do so will result in disqualification (note: page limits are strictly enforced).

I. Title and Abstract (one-page limit):

This page should only contain the project title and a scientific abstract. The abstract is not a preamble to the proposal. **The abstract will be used to determine whether the full proposal will be reviewed** (reviewers do not have access to the full proposal during the abstract screening stage). Therefore, it is important to provide specific information regarding each objective, the design of the experiments and the number of animals used in control and test groups. Description of preliminary data in the abstract will provide reviewers with evidence regarding feasibility of the investigation. This information will be evaluated in context of the relevance and potential impact to determine if the proposal will receive a full review. **Abstracts will be evaluated on the relevance of the research question to Morris Animal Foundation, and will be scored on the scientific merit of the proposed experimental approach as well as the potential impact of research findings on animal health.** Do not include any charts or graphics in the abstract – the online form cannot recognize them. Due to the volume of proposals received, abstracts that do not score high enough for further review will not receive written reviewer feedback. Abstracts should not contain information that identifies the investigators and **must use the following headings:**

Title: (limit of 150 characters, including spaces - do not use “ALL CAPS”)

Rationale: (Why is the project being done? Why is it relevant to MAF?)

Hypothesis/Objectives: (Clearly state the hypothesis to be tested, study objectives, or both.)

Study Design: (Describe the study design and methods to be used.)

Preliminary Data: (N/A if Pilot Study)

Expected Results: (What are the expected results/outcomes?)

Budget and Timeline: (Project costs/year and duration in years.)

Potential Impact for Animal Health: (How will this advance animal health?)

II. Resubmission Summary (3-page limit — excluding copy of the original review): Is this proposal a resubmission? If yes, did the proposal receive a full review? If yes, please include a copy of the review and your responses to the reviewer’s comments.

III. Name, Institution, and email address of Principal Investigator and all co-investigators **(one-page limit).**

IV. Study Proposal (5-page limit – headings must be included):

1. **Specific, Testable Hypothesis and Objectives:** Please be precise and enumerate. Feasibility and realistic expectations of objectives are paramount. Overly ambitious objectives, relative to either time span or scope, will be penalized.
2. **Justification, Significance and Literature Review:** Include relevancy to animal owners and veterinarians as well as applicable breeds or species. The literature review should indicate current status of research in the area, including the investigator’s contributions.
3. **Preliminary Data:** *Discuss any preliminary data if available.*
4. **Experimental Methods and Design:**
 - Clearly address specific objectives.
 - Be precise about experimental design, number of animals, treatments, sampling schedules, expected outcome, etc.
 - For each specific aim, provide a rationale for experimental methods and design and a section on expected outcomes, pitfalls and alternative approaches.

- Justify any clinical trial numbers that are cited.
- It is highly recommended that a statistician be consulted during the design of the study. A thorough description of data analysis **must** be included in the methods section, including sample size calculations. For power analysis, describe how it was performed, show specific power calculations and reference the data used for assumptions in the analysis.
- Technical terminology should be defined on first usage; acronyms and abbreviations may be used subsequently.
- Applicants using client-owned animals must document that the institutional case load is adequate to provide the number of animals per year needed to complete the study as proposed. A copy of the client consent form to be utilized must be included as an addendum to the Animal Involvement Justification Form required in section V of the guidelines.
- For drug studies, confirm the availability of the drug and the support of the manufacturer, if applicable. If the proposal involves the use of a new or newly applied pharmaceutical, justification of the dose and dosing schema is required.

5. Timeline: Indicate sequence and schedule of experiments for the total project. **Note: Pilot studies are limited to one year in length.**

V. Animal Involvement Justification (no page limit): [Click here](#) to download the required form. You must use this form and insert it into your proposal. *All proposals, regardless of live animal involvement, **must include** a completed Animal Involvement Justification form (see link above). This form must be completed for all animals involved in the project, not just the primary species being studied (i.e., any laboratory animals).*

Humane treatment of animals is of utmost priority to MAF and will be reviewed closely. A proposal will be rejected if it does not adhere to MAF's [Health Study Animal Involvement Policy](#).

VI. Recombinant DNA/Biohazards (no page limit): Applicants using recombinant DNA techniques must indicate that they have complied with National Institutes of Health guidelines relative to this technology and that they have approval from their institution's Biological Safety Committee to conduct the proposed research if it is funded. Also indicate here if there are any other potential biosafety concerns, including the use of radiation.

VII. Facilities and Equipment (one-page limit): Availability of necessary facilities and equipment to complete the proposed study should be documented. If more than one institution is involved, a letter of willingness to collaborate from the outside institution(s) must be included as an attachment(s) at the end of the full proposal PDF.

VIII. Cited References (two-page limit): Include complete references listing article titles and all authors (principal investigator name in bold when applicable).

IX. Budget (one-page limit): Use this required form: [Click here](#).

The maximum amount for a pilot study is \$10,000 plus 8% indirect costs if your institution charges for these costs (total maximum award \$10,800). You must calculate your own 8 percent indirect costs and show them as a separate line item above the grand total. If your institution charges less than 8 percent, you may only claim the lower percentage. All funds must be U.S. dollars.

Indicate only amounts requested from MAF. MAF does not pay for capital equipment (i.e., a single piece of equipment, including computers, costing \$1,000 or more), tuition, or salaries for faculty with full-time appointments. Salary requests for principal investigators with less than full-time appointments must be clearly defined and justified in the budget justification section and must include % appointment and other current salary support. You may request salary for technicians, residents, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, based on their percentage of time involved in the project.

MAF has a separate travel grant to provide financial support for travel to scientific meetings for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, MAF fellows, etc. For more information on applying for travel grants, please contact the grants team.

*The final numbers on this budget form **MUST** match the numbers you entered in your online form. Please double-check!*

X. Itemized Budget Justification (one-page limit): Salaries, supplies and animal care costs not justified may be deleted from the budget of an approved/funded proposal. The role of each investigator should be clearly defined. Investigator salary requests will be thoroughly scrutinized. Indicate and justify a percent effort on this grant for all individuals, such as technicians, graduate students, etc., for whom MAF funds are requested.

XI. Other Support (no page limit): Other support for Principal Investigator. Includes all financial support (e.g., federal, nonfederal, commercial, institutional) currently available in support of the investigator's research program. Overlap, whether scientific, budgetary or commitment of an individual's effort greater than 100 percent, is not permitted.

Please follow this format when listing other support:

- Project Number: If applicable, include a code, grant ID or other identifier for the project.
- Source: Identify the agency, institute, foundation or other organization providing support.
- Grant Title
- Major Goals: Provide a brief statement of the overall objectives of the project, subproject or subcontract.
- Annual Costs: In the case of an active project, provide the current year's budget. For a pending project, provide the proposed budget for the entire project.
- Overlap: After listing all support, summarize any potential overlap with the active or pending projects and this application in terms of the science, budget or committed effort.

XII. Prior MAF Support during the last three years (no page limit): If the principal investigator and/or co-investigator(s) have received MAF support in the past three years, provide the following information for each MAF award received:

- a) MAF grant ID number
- b) title of the project
- c) amount and period of support (dates)
- d) brief summary of the objectives
- e) summary of the results of the completed work
- f) list of the publications resulting from MAF awards
- g) list of presentations resulting from MAF awards
- h) list of patents resulting from MAF awards

XIII. Biographical Data (two-page limit for each individual): For each individual (principal investigator, co-investigator(s), fellow, etc.) provide the following information:

- Name
- Position/role on this project
- Current position (title, name, and address of institution)
- Education/training (degrees, institution, year of graduation, field of study)
- Previous positions and honors (include membership on any advisory committees)
- Selected peer-reviewed publications (include titles, all authors, and complete reference)

XIV. Letters of Support: Support letters from collaborators must be included. Collaborators are defined as individuals or organizations, not named as Co-Investigators, whose participation is crucial to the project's success.