

HSOM Caregiving Affected Research Early-career Scientists (CARES) Program

RFA: The Heersink School of Medicine (HSOM) is pleased to announce an RFA for the HSOM Caregiving Affected Research Early-career Scientists (CARES) Program. The HSOM will make up to two 12-month awards of up to \$50,000 to early career research faculty with active intramural and/or extramural research funding supporting at least 50% of their professional effort. Distinct from a pilot grant program, HSOM CARES awards can be used to support “extra hands” personnel and resources to augment research productivity of currently funded projects for faculty whose scholarship has been impacted by caregiving responsibilities. The deadline to apply is Thursday, May 21, 2026.

Purpose: The HSOM Caregiving Affected Early-career Research Scientists (CARES) Program will support funded investigators whose research productivity has been impacted by their caregiving responsibilities with 'extra hands' grants to augment their academic scholarship and facilitate their receipt of future extramural grant awards.

Duration: 12 months

Range of Requested Funds: Up to \$50,000 per award

Eligibility:

- a. Is conducting an original and rigorous research project that has the potential to address a health issue that poses a significant burden (with considerable morbidity and mortality, whether it is a rare or common condition) and that has potential for societal benefit.
- b. Has a primary faculty appointment in the Heersink School of Medicine.
- c. Is early-career faculty, defined as having a full-time, post-training instructor or Assistant Professor faculty appointment in HSOM. Note that this does not include subspecialty fellows who have been given an instructor title for clinical duties. Associate Professors are eligible only if they have been at this position for one year or less at the time of award submission.
- d. Has a minimum of 50% effort allocation to research at the time of application for the HSOM CARES award.
- e. Demonstrates a compelling, time-sensitive need for the HSOM CARES grant to regain research momentum because of family caregiving responsibilities. Typically, this would be childcare, partner care, and/or eldercare, but prospective award recipients may make the case for other reasonable family caregiving responsibilities.
- f. Is PD/PI on intramural or extramural career development award or research project grant(s) supporting at least 50% effort with annual direct costs sufficient to provide both research and their salary support. Consideration will be given to faculty conducting research projects supported by the School or Departmental start-up funds so long as a minimum of 50% of their effort is already allocated to research time. *
- g. Past recipients of CARES at UAB awards from the UAB Center for Outcomes and Effectiveness Research and Education are eligible, but priority will go to those who have not yet received any CARES grant.
- h. If eligible, is willing to commit to submitting an NIH supplement for K (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-23-031.html>) and R (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-23-032.html>) awards within the first year of HSOM CARES funding.
- i. Has less than \$200,000 in all discretionary spending accounts combined (e.g., start-up funds), at the time of HSOM CARES application.
- j. Is willing to respond to all program evaluation activities in a timely manner (e.g., 1-time post-program survey and interview, annual submission of CV with attributable publications annotated).

*The 'extra hands' awards are intended to supplement ongoing research projects; eligible faculty members must have active support for their research projects. Awards are not meant to be used as pilot or bridge funding.

Funds available: The Heersink School of Medicine has invested \$1 million in HSOM CARES funding over a five-year period. Two awards of up to \$50,000 will be available in 2026.

Review Procedures: HSOM CARES 'extra hands' supplemental funds will be awarded through a competitive, peer-review process.

Submission Guidelines: Application components include applicant contact information, HSOM research focus area(s) aligned with your research grant(s), confirmation of program eligibility, current CV and Other Support. Applicants must attach an NIH-style budget and a NIH-Style budget justification. See below under Frequently Asked Questions for a list of allowable and unallowable costs. Applicants must also submit a two-page document describing: 1) an overview of their currently funded intramural or extramural grant(s), 2) how caregiving impacted their research over the past 24 months; 3) how the "extra hands" award would help enhance their scientific productivity on their currently funded grant(s); 4) their research goals over the next 1-2 years and how this funding would advance these goals; and 5) anticipated grant submission goals for the next 1-2 years and how this funding would advance these goals.

Link to application: <https://apps.medicine.uab.edu/funding/HSOMCARESApplication.asp>

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Allowable Costs:**

HSOM CARES "extra hands" awards will help address the challenges of achieving research independence for individuals who have faced significant caregiving responsibilities during the lifespan of intramurally or extramurally funded projects. The supplemental funds must be used to further the already funded research. Awards are intended to advance the applicant's research scholarship and productivity by delegating research tasks and responsibilities to "extra hands" personnel. Possible uses of funds include:

- a. Quantitative methodologist (e.g., biostatistician, epidemiologist, research design (BERD))
- b. Qualitative methodologist (e.g., interview guide, coding, transcription)
- c. Regulatory and compliance / IRB
- d. Survey development / deployment
- e. Data transformation / management
- f. Scientific writer / editor
- g. Graphic designer
- h. Research assistant
- i. Post-Doc
- j. Doctoral student
- k. Master's student
- l. Undergraduate student
- m. Study Coordinator
- n. Other similar 'extra hands'

Unallowable costs:

- a. Childcare or other family caregiving costs directly.
- b. Research costs, such as data, supplies or sequencing costs, that would not directly help applicants reclaim their research time. Such costs would be expected to be covered by an applicant's currently funded research grants.
- c. Applicant travel.
- d. Applicant salary coverage.

Timeline:

Announcement:	Monday, April 13, 2026
Deadline for Applications:	Thursday, May 21, 2026
Review Completed:	Tuesday, June 9, 2026
Notice of Awards:	Tuesday, June 23, 2026
Funding Start Date:	Wednesday, July 1, 2026

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