

Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI)

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About HABRI

- 1. Where can I learn more about HABRI?**
 - a. You can learn more about HABRI’s history on our website [here](#).
 - b. To read HABRI’s 2023 Impact Report, please click [here](#).
- 2. How do I learn more about the types of projects HABRI funds?**
 - a. A full list of HABRI-funded projects can be found on the [HABRI Funded Projects](#) Page.

HABRI Grant Application Process & Timeline

- 3. What is the timeline for the HABRI Request for Proposals (RFP)?**
 - a. The 2025 RFP opened for applications on Monday, October 7, 2024, with proposals due on Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 11:59pm Eastern.
 - b. HABRI traditionally issues our RFP in October with proposals due in February of the following year.
- 4. I submitted a proposal for a HABRI grant. When can I expect to hear back?**
 - a. The HABRI Scientific Advisory Board reviews applications starting immediately after the submission deadline in February and continues through the Summer. Notifications are issued on a rolling basis as applications progress through the review process. Grant funding notifications are typically issued by mid-August of the same year.

Principal Investigator Eligibility

- 5. Is HABRI funding available to international applicants or those working outside the United States?**
 - a. Yes, international applicants from academic institutions and non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. There are no additional governance requirements in order to meet IRB and IACUC requirements (institutional

- approvals suffice). All dollar amounts must be expressed in U.S. dollars.
- b. International applicants must provide evidence that their institution has all necessary approvals and legal clearances to accept payments from the United States prior to executing any contracts with HABRI.
6. **I have already received funding from HABRI as a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or otherwise involved in a project funded by HABRI. Am I eligible to apply with a different proposal?**
- a. Yes. Per the proposal guidelines, applicants must disclose whether they have received funding from HABRI in previous years. HABRI allows up to two applications per principal investigator during a single call for proposals.
7. **I am a student. Can I submit my proposal to the HABRI RFP?**
- a. HABRI does not have rules prohibiting students from applying for a HABRI grant. All student applicants, including PhD candidates, must apply with a faculty mentor as a co-investigator.

Proposal Eligibility

8. **I want to submit a proposal, but I don't yet have approval from my Institutional Review Board (IRB). Can I still submit my application?**
- a. IRB and/or IACUC approval is not required prior to the submission of an application but is required should funding be awarded. Regardless of the status of such approvals, the proposal should describe how human and animal welfare will be assured. Funds will be withheld until proof of IRB/IACUC approval has been provided. Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the approval process prior to submitting for a HABRI grant.
 - b. Applicants are expected to have IRB/IACUC approval(s) and to have prepared study materials upon the start date of the project. IRB/IACUC approval should therefore not be included in the project's timeline.
9. **I want to conduct a study evaluating the success of an existing program. Will HABRI consider this application for funding?**
- a. Proposals that seek to evaluate the success of a program will be closely scrutinized for replicability, generalizability and potential biases. Applicants are encouraged to craft a proposal that will ensure the Scientific Advisory Board that evaluations of existing programs are justified and will contribute to the field of human-animal bond science.
10. **My research team has at least 2 projects that could fit the HABRI call for proposals. Can I submit more than one proposal?**
- a. Yes, HABRI allows up to two applications per principal investigator during a single call for proposals. There is no limit to how many times someone can apply as co-PI.

Constructing a Proposal

1. **What are the common pitfalls and mistakes that applicants for a HABRI**

grant make?

- a. Applicants must ensure that the sample size for the study proposal is well justified. Sample size should be both realistic and sufficient to draw conclusions from the experiment.
- b. Meeting recruitment goals is a common challenge for researchers and attrition is common. Proposals that aim to recruit a large number of participants in a short period of time will be closely scrutinized.
- c. Applicants should carefully design their experiment to ensure that potential confounding factors are controlled for. For example, if a therapy dog and handler are deployed to a pediatric hospital as part of an experiment, without an adequate control group, it would be impossible to isolate the benefits of the therapy dog compared to the benevolent presence of the human handler, or simply the pleasant distraction from the pediatric hospital environment.
- d. HABRI is interested in proposals that investigate health outcomes of human-animal interaction for both people and animals involved. Proposals that exclusively investigate health outcomes for people with no consideration of how to improve outcomes for animals will be viewed as less competitive. Alternatively, proposals that exclusively focus on improving health outcomes for animals with no consideration for improving human health will also be viewed as less competitive.
- e. Animal welfare is essential for all HABRI proposals. Proposals that introduce companion animals to new and/or unfamiliar environments (for example, an intervention in a hospital, or a foster dog walking program) should always provide in-depth detail for how the welfare of animal participants will be addressed and protected before, during and after the study.

2. How should I present highly technical details in my proposal?

- a. As the field of human-animal interaction is multi-disciplinary in nature, HABRI encourages applicants not to limit technical detail in their proposals. Rather, applicants are encouraged to explain the study, including all technical aspects, in enough detail to ensure reviewers, regardless of their field of discipline, can understand the technology and research design. This includes the use of machine learning or “AI” in your project.
- b. Please write your proposal submissions with the multi-disciplinary nature of the review board in mind. Proposals that are overly complex or fail to clearly describe the objectives of the study using grounded, tangible descriptions will be viewed as less competitive.

3. Do I have to include preliminary data in my proposal? If so, how much should I include?

- a. Preliminary data will significantly strengthen your proposal. You should include preliminary data that shows your proposed approach is feasible and has potential to be impactful.
- b. If you lack preliminary data from your own work to place in the *Preliminary Data* subsection of the Study Proposal, one option is to show feasibility through the subsection *Justification, Significance and Literature Review* of the Study Proposal.
 - i. For example, citing external work using original analysis applied directly to your specific aims would be appropriate for the *Justification, Significance and Literature Review* subsection of the Study Proposal.
- c. When you cite reference data, please remember that reviewers are not required to

read any cited work or web pages, so supporting information should be directly included in your proposal.

- d. There is not an objective measure of when a proposal has enough preliminary data to be sufficient. You are encouraged to provide the amount of preliminary data that would convince the reviewers on the Scientific Advisory Board that your proposed approach is feasible and has potential to be impactful.
4. **Is preliminary data limited to the Principal Investigator's past work?**
 - a. The Principal Investigator should rely on data they have collected, however past work from team members collaborating on the proposal is also acceptable, especially if these collaborators were chosen to round out gaps in the Principal Investigator's expertise.
 - b. Preliminary data that supports the feasibility and potential impact of the proposal, when not collected by the Principal Investigator and team, is only appropriate for the *Justification, Significance and Literature Review* subsection of the Study Proposal.
 5. **Am I allowed to use acronyms and shorthand in my application?**
 - a. Applicants are encouraged to make their proposals more readable with acronyms, abbreviations, and shorthand, provided all relevant terminology is properly defined in Section VI – Glossary of Abbreviations and Acronyms. The Scientific Advisory Board is not expected to know acronyms, abbreviations, and shorthand included in the proposal but not defined in Section VI.

Grant Budget

1. **Is there a maximum budget for a HABRI grant proposal?**
 - a. While there is no budget cap, HABRI awards an average of 5-6 projects each year with project costs averaging approximately \$49,000 per project and an average duration of about 20 months.
2. **The Principal Investigator (PI) of the proposed project is a full-time faculty member with significant teaching load each semester. Would salary for this PI be an allowable cost?**
 - a. HABRI does not pay salary support for PIs, co-investigators or other collaborators (which includes consultants) if they have full-time faculty appointments.
 - b. HABRI does allow post-doctoral fellows applying as the PI to apply for salary support up to 20% of their full-time appointment.
3. **I have a faculty appointment but I am not contracted during the Summer months. Can I apply for salary during this time?**
 - a. Yes, faculty will less than a full time 12-month contract may request salary during non-contracted months of the year only.
4. **Does HABRI fund capital projects or programming?**
 - a. No, HABRI does not fund capital projects nor does HABRI provide support for programs.

Pet Partners Funding

5. **What is the additional funding available through Pet Partners for?**

- a. Pet Partners, the leading therapy animal organization in the United States, has entered its fifth year partnering with HABRI with the mission of improving human health and well-being through the power of the human-animal bond. This partnership allows for additional funding for research to investigate the health, education, and wellness outcomes of animal-assisted interventions (AAI), both for the people and animals involved.
- b. To be eligible for this additional funding, investigators are encouraged to incorporate Pet Partners registered volunteer therapy animal teams into their proposed research. Pet Partners registered volunteer teams must meet [high standards](#) which support patient and public safety; outstanding animal welfare; and greater consistency for research purposes.
- c. All of the guidelines, requirements, and deadlines associated with HABRI's 2025 RFP apply to this additional funding opportunity. Please indicate if you are applying for this supplemental funding by following the instructions laid out in the Proposal Guidelines.

6. **Am I still eligible for general HABRI grant funding if I apply as a Pet Partners grant?**

- a. Yes, you are **still eligible** for general HABRI funding if you apply for additional funding from Pet Partners.

Submission & More Help

7. **How do I submit my completed application?**

- a. To apply for a HABRI grant, please send an email to submissions@habri.org. Please ensure the subject line of the email and PDF submission are both titled "HABRI 2025 Grant Proposal – Principal Investigator Last Name."
- b. For proposals applying for supplemental funding available through Pet Partners, please send an email to submissions@habri.org. Please ensure the subject line of the email and PDF submission are both titled "HABRI/Pet Partners 2025 Grant Proposal – Principal Investigator Last Name."

8. **Can I contact someone at HABRI to talk more about my proposal application?**

- a. For additional questions related to drafting and submitting your application, please feel free to contact Matt Cryer at mcryer@habri.org.
 - i. Please **do not** email submissions@habri.org with questions.
- b. To ensure fairness to all applicants, HABRI typically does not discuss the merits or likelihood of funding of individual applications prior to funding.