Veterinary Student Scholar
APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDELINES

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Veterinary Student Scholar (VSS) program is a competitive program that provides veterinary students the opportunity to become involved in mentored research that advances the health and/or welfare of dogs, cats, equids or wildlife. The VSS program awards stipends up to $5,500 to veterinary students who are selected by their institution to participate in clinical or basic animal health research.

Morris Animal Foundation is committed to training the next generation of veterinary researchers. These awards are competitive, and each institution is encouraged to select and submit the strongest student projects based on scientific merit, potential animal health impact and opportunity for the student scholars to develop veterinary research skills. All proposals must adhere to Morris Animal Foundation's guidelines and mission.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

- Up to two (2) VSS applications per institution may be submitted to this Request for Proposals (RFP).
- Applicants must be currently enrolled in an accredited veterinary medicine program through the duration of the grant contract period (this does not need to be AVMA accreditation). Students enrolled in a combined DVM/PhD degree program are not eligible for this RFP.
- Applicants who have previously received a VSS stipend are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants must have the support of a mentor qualified to guide the proposed research project.

Project Criteria

- **Mission Adherence:** Projects must advance the science of canine, feline, equine or wildlife health. Projects oriented toward human health and production animal health do not fall within Morris Animal Foundation's mission and are not accepted.
- **Health Study Policy:** Projects must adhere to Morris Animal Foundation's Health Study Policy for Animals Involved in Research. Please note that studies that involve induction of disease or euthanasia for research, or data/samples sourced from these, will not be accepted for this particular request for proposals. **Budget:** The stipend cannot exceed $5,500 and funds can be used only for student support during the research project. Funds cannot be used for project expenses such as travel, publication costs, or indirect costs.
- **Duration:** Project duration is typically 2 – 3 months.
- **Parachute Science:** Morris Animal Foundation discourages the practice of parachute science. Research projects occurring in a different country to that where the student is enrolled must involve a mentor in that country.

APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Morris Animal Foundation uses Fluxx to facilitate grant application and management. Visit maf.fluxx.io to create a user account and submit an application.

Both the student and the individual submitting the application (if different from the student) must create an account before applying for funding. Accounts are reviewed and validated by Morris Animal Foundation, which may take up to two business days. Please create an account several days prior to the proposal deadline.

More information on Fluxx is available in our Fluxx Applicant User Guide.

Morris Animal Foundation grant applications have two components: an online application and a full proposal attachment. **Applications must be received by 4:59 PM ET** on the designated due date. To submit a proposal, please complete the following:

1. The **Online Application** in the Fluxx database with contact information for the investigator(s) and institution, and key project information.
2. Full Proposal document using the proposal outline below, uploaded to the Fluxx portal.

You will be notified as to the status of your proposal approximately three months after the proposal submission deadline. All proposals recommended for funding are reviewed by the Foundation's Animal Welfare Advisory Board (AWAB), and reviewers may query the lead proposal author about aspects of the study protocol relating to animal care and use. On occasion, a proposal may be turned down at this stage. Proposals undergoing successful AWAB review move forward for contracting. This process can take several more weeks to complete. **VSS grants must be used to fund research starting within 6 months from the date the grant is contracted.** There are two RFPs offered for VSS grants each year, please visit the Morris Animal Foundation Apply for a Grant Webpage to view the RFP calendar. This RFP is scheduled to start contracting in approximately April 2024.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Carefully review and adhere to these proposal guidelines, including page length. Deviations from these guidelines may result in the rejection of your proposal. Proposals will be reviewed and scored based on this rubric.

Proposal Format:

- Proposals must be completed using the proposal outline below, including the use of outline number and headings. Do not remove any headings or sections from the template. If there is information that does not apply to your proposal, enter "Not Applicable" in that section.
- Font must be single-spaced or greater and no smaller than Times New Roman 11-point. Margins must be 0.75 inches or greater.
- Technical terminology should be defined on the first usage. Acronyms and abbreviations may be used subsequently.
- The proposal must be converted to a single PDF document for submission.

Proposal Outline:
 A. Title Page (one-page limit): Name, institution, and email address of student and mentor(s).

 B. Project Summary (<u>three-page limit</u>): **This section must be written by the student.** Please include the headings outlined below:
  i. **Project Overview:** Describe the project and the experimental approach intended to meet the objectives.
  ii. **Potential Impact for Animal Health:** Describe how the project will advance animal health.
  iii. **Student's Role:** Describe student's specific role in the project and research skills to be learned.
  iv. **Career Vision:** Describe student's career vision and how this award will assist in progress toward those goals.
  v. **Program Resources:** Describe research resources available, such as research facilities, animal care and use committee, research seminars, grant-writing support, etc.
  vi. **Cited References:** Include citations referenced numerically in the project summary.

 C. **Animal Involvement Justification Form** (no page limit): Include the required Animal Involvement Justification form provided in the [proposal template](#) in ALL proposals, regardless of live animal use. Please provide as much detail as possible on any procedures or sample collection.
 Client Consent Form: If your study involves client owned animals, either prospectively or retrospectively, attach your Client Consent Form following the Animal Involvement Justification form involvement.
 Permits: If your study involves free-ranging wildlife please list any required government or agency permits, and their approval status. If biological or archived samples will be utilized, a copy of permits for original sample collection will be required.

 D. Institutional Letter: A letter from the institution providing a statement of the student's good standing in the professional curriculum.

 E. Mentor Letter (two-page limit per mentor): A letter is required and should:
  i. Address the student's accomplishments, perceived strengths, motivation, academic abilities, and potential as a future veterinary researcher.
  ii. Describe the research project and the student's specific role in the study, including specific skills to be learned.
  iii. Describe mentor's current relationship with the student and the mentoring and training plan for this project.
  iv. Describe the research environment with regards to mentor qualifications, facilities, laboratory space, field research, etc.

 F. Student Biosketch (two-page limit): Include your name, position/role on the project, education/ training (degrees, institution, year of graduation, field of study), previous positions, research experience and honors.