



**2023 Hevolution Foundation Request for Applications (RFA)  
in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (HF-KSA)**

**Overview:** The Hevolution Foundation Open Call for Grant Applications in Saudi Arabia (**HF-KSA**) will allocate up to 10 million Saudi Ryals to fund projects in Aging Biology or Geroscience (No Clinical Trials). Funding will be made available to individual Faculty with independent labs in Saudi Arabia. Hevolution envisions funding up to 20 projects in Aging Biology or Geroscience in 2024. Projects will be for up to 2 years in length, and with a budget of up to SR500k total. Preference of funding will be given to projects that advance basic biology knowledge into translation (geroscience). HF-KSA provides no additional indirect costs.

The proposal submission deadline is **02/29/2024** at 5 PM (Riyadh Time), and the expected award start date is in Q4 2024.

**The initiative:** The primary goal of Hevolution’s grants for KSA is to encourage the development of Aging Biology and Geroscience research fields in the country and to facilitate the development of new investigators in this field. This grant initiative aims to interest medical and life-sciences researchers in shifting gears toward focusing more of their research efforts on aging biology and geroscience. The major goal is to identify and support research that will further the Foundation’s mission of “Extending healthy lifespan for the benefit of all humanity”.

Aging biology research can be defined as the basic science approaches that aim to understand the cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying age-related changes and aims at the maintenance and/or improvement of these mechanisms. Examples of projects in Aging Biology include basic research on the hallmarks/pillars of aging, as well as topics such as fibrosis, organelle dysfunction, the microbiome, and other areas identified as drivers of the aging process. Aging Biology studies can be done in any model system, including yeast, invertebrates, etc.

Geroscience research can be defined as a systematic effort to convert aging biology research knowledge into practical applications to improve human health and well-being. i.e., if a project has a clearly articulated pathway towards clinical relevance to the health and well-being of older adults, then it is Geroscience research because it aims at applying those basic biology topics towards a translational goal. These may include proof of concept studies or small-scale studies related to new diagnostic, treatment, or preventive modalities related to aging-relevant biology. Geroscience studies should use one or more of the following models: human subjects, human cells and tissues, mice or other mammals.

**This initiative does not support clinical trials, disease-specific projects, or investigators who are conducting research at a for-profit entity.** The work should focus on strategies to improve healthy aging by addressing basic principles of aging biology and geroscience. Projects that deal strictly with clinical problems such as the diagnosis or treatment of disease, or the social context of aging are not eligible. Programs using certain models (i.e. yeast, invertebrates) will only be considered when there is a compelling justification that these studies may be directly relevant to human health and aging.

**Eligibility:** Please review these criteria prior to submitting your application:

- Applicants must be based in Saudi Arabia.
- The applicants should hold a doctorate degree (Ph.D., M.D., M.D./Ph.D., or equivalent)
- Applicants must be independent investigators or group leaders with independent research space and the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research. The independent investigator should be at the level of Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor or Scientist (including research track) or be in an equivalent position as defined by the applicant’s institution. Applicants must have proof of independence by having published at least one paper as a senior author. All this information will be checked at the submission of the application.

# HEVOLUTION

- Multiple PIs, Co-Is, and collaborators are allowed if the main PI is based in Saudi Arabia. However, the award will go to the primary institution, where a substantial proportion of the work (at least 60%) must be conducted, including appropriate oversight of all matters related to the grant (scientific, programmatic, and financial.)
- The proposed research project must be in the basic biology of aging or geroscience.
- This grant opportunity is open to applicants from academic, government-funded research organizations, or non-profit institutions. Each applicant is allowed to submit only one project As PI or MPI.

**Non-Responsive Applications:** The HF-KSA initiative does not provide support for:

- Research on age-related diseases without a clear focus on the underlying mechanism of aging.
- Projects that deal strictly with clinical topics such as the diagnosis and/or treatment of disease and health outcomes.
- Projects that include clinical trials.
- Investigators who are conducting research at a for-profit entity.

**Selection Criteria:** The following criteria will be used to determine the merit of an application:

- Quality of the proposed research.
- Alignment of the research topic with [Hevolution's mission and goals](#).
- Innovation and creativity of the approach.
- Qualifications and track record of the applicant.
- Excellence of the research environment; including the availability of all tools and platforms needed to perform the proposed work.

**Application requirements:** Please refer to the 'Full Proposal' submission instructions In this [LINK](#). Incomplete applications cannot be considered. All proposals must be uploaded to the application form available on the link.

**Application Procedures and Timeline:** All proposals will be the subject of an external peer review panel of experts in the field. Special emphasis will be placed on innovation and creativity, as well as alignment with Hevolution's mission and goals ([www.hevolution.com](http://www.hevolution.com)). Final funding decisions will be made by Hevolution Foundation, and they will be non-appealable.

Please review the 'Full Proposal' submission instructions in this [LINK](#). Click this [LINK](#) for the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). If you are using animals or human subjects in your research, please review Principles of Research Involving Human Subjects [LINK](#) and Animal Use for Gerontological Research [LINK](#).

## **Timeline:**

RFA announcement: 12/26/2023

An instruction webinar is offered to go through guidelines and application steps. Please follow this [LINK](#) to the webinar.

**Submission deadline: 5PM (Riyadh time) on 29/02/2024**

Award Start Date: Q4 2024

## **Award and Reporting Requirements**

Awards will be subjected to an annual scientific and financial progress report, as well as final scientific and financial reports.

For scientific questions, contact Dr. Khaldoun Alromaih: [k.alromaih@hevolution.com](mailto:k.alromaih@hevolution.com), and for all administrative questions, contact Mrs. Maha Abu Yabis. [m.abuyabis@hevolution.com](mailto:m.abuyabis@hevolution.com). Also, visit the FAQs and the RFA for more information.