**WALTHAM**
Petcare Science Institute

# Human-Animal Interaction Research Programme
# Call for Applications: 2023 Research Award

Waltham Petcare Science Institute plans to fund one award for a maximum USD 255,000 to support high quality innovative research into Human-Animal Interaction (HAI).

## 1. Background

For over 40 years, Waltham has supported research from around the world which aims to understand, advance and share knowledge about the relationship between humans and companion animals. Waltham funded research has explored the role of pets in child development, society, educational settings, human aging and many different clinical applications (e.g., obesity, autism). Please see our website for a description of the types of HAI research we have funded in previous calls: https://www.waltham.com/science/human-animal-interaction.

The purpose of this call is to continue supporting high quality science that provides the evidence base critical to fully understanding the mutually beneficial relationship between people and companion animals. The knowledge generated is vital in bringing to life the Mars Petcare purpose: A BETTER WORLD FOR PETS.

## 2. Required elements of submitted applications

- The animals involved in the research must be companion animals that are considered domestic species and are routinely kept as pets (e.g., cats, dogs) and should not include wild animals (e.g., dolphins, tigers) or farm animals (e.g., cattle, sheep)
- The application may not involve invasive surgical techniques or procedures, euthanasia or other harmful or aversive techniques performed on human or non-human animal participants

## 2.1 Preferred Topic Areas

For research to be eligible for funding under this call, the application must focus on HAI (specifically companion animal ownership or interaction) as it relates to one or more of the following preferred topic areas. Please note, preference will be given to projects that examine these issues using a combination of behavioural and physiological data collection techniques.

- Under-researched populations (e.g., Global South countries, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ community)
- Impact on mental health (e.g., under-researched disorders/populations, across lifespan)
- The role of technology in HAI across different populations (e.g., Millennials, Generation Z)

## 2.2 Criteria for research design

### 2.2.1 Essential criteria
- The research design implementation must be clearly delineated and of high quality
- The study must have an adequate sample size to be appropriately statistically powered; evidence of statistical powering must be included
- Detailed description of planned statistical analysis for primary measures

### 2.2.2    Preferred criteria

- Blind scoring of dependent variables
- Use of standardised/validated measures (applicant must provide a strong rationale for using measures that do not have published validity and reliability)
- Multi-disciplinary research teams with relevant expertise for navigating the complexities of HAI research (e.g., clinician/practitioner, veterinarian, nutritionist, animal behaviourist, statistician)

## 3. Funding details

- The award amount is up to USD 255,000 to be paid in three instalments over a three-year period
- Data collection is expected to be completed within a two-year period. This allows for six-month preparatory period and a final six-month period for final data analysis and write up for publication
- The Principal Investigator must be employed by a university or academic institution, but there is no geographic restriction on the location of that university
- We support diversity and inclusion, and particularly welcome applicants from underrepresented or marginalised populations
- The selected project must receive appropriate institutional human and animal ethics approval prior to funding
- Funding to cover institutional overheads is limited to 10% of the total award value, within the overall award limit

## 3.1    Submission & Review Process

### 3.1.1    Application submission

- The application form and submission details can be found on https://www.waltham.com/grants-awards .
- The completed application forms must be **submitted via email to contactwaltham@effem.com** . You will receive confirmation of receipt of your application within 3 working days. If you have not received this, please send a simple text email to the above address or submit query via the contact us form https://www.waltham.com/contact-us, using the "Our Institute" option.

### 3.1.2    Application review

Applications will be subject to a three-step review process:

Step 1.    Internal review by Waltham of best fit to preferred topics and methodologies as stated in this call (see section 2 above). A subset of the total application pool will proceed to step 2.

Step 2.    External peer review of application for scientific merit and impact. The top-ranking applications will proceed to step 3.

Step 3.    Consideration of the result of external peer review by Waltham, plus internal review of application scientific merit and impact. Final funding decision is contingent on successful completion of the WALTHAM™ scientific governance process which includes a review of proposed methodology, plan for statistical analysis, and human/animal ethics as appropriate.

### 3.1.3    Application review

- Upon receipt of your application, you will receive a confirmation receipt within 3 working days. See 3.1.1. for additional action required if you do not receive this.
- All applicants will be notified of the status of their application via email once a funding decision has been made. This is estimated to be around the 15th February 2023. Status enquiries before this point will not be responded to.
- Unfortunately, we are unable to provide unsuccessful applicants with feedback, input or reviews.

**Application Deadline: 15th November 2022**