The Preeclampsia Foundation (PF) announced today that it is expanding its research grant program this year, with a goal of making up to 4 grants from a total pool of $100,000.

Dr. Thomas Easterling, from the University of Washington and Chair of the Preeclampsia Foundation's Medical Board said, "These grants are intended to provide initial funding for innovative ideas which might otherwise not be pursued due to lack of funding." Leslie Weeks, PF Board Chair and preeclampsia survivor herself added that "the Foundation's main programmatic pillars are education and research; the Vision Grants a critical component in fulfilling our mission, which is to reduce maternal and infant death and illness due to preeclampsia."

Preeclampsia is one of the most common complications of pregnancy, with estimates ranging from 5% to 8% of all pregnancies, and is one of the leading known causes of premature birth. Every year, nearly 350,000 pregnancies in the U.S. are complicated by preeclampsia; with 25% of those reaching severe or critical status. That equates to
more than 1,500 severe cases each week
and unfortunately – even in the US –
more than 1 of those mothers die each week because of preeclampsia
. Worldwide estimates suggest that 75,000 women and 500,000 babies die annually because of preeclampsia.

Commenting on the expansion of the grant program, PF Executive Director, J. Thomas Viall stated that, "we are still a fairly young organization and I am proud of the commitment this Board has made, and the pace at which it is moving, to make the Foundation a significant funder in the preeclampsia research world. Our ultimate goal is to reach $1,000,000 in annual research support in the next 5 years."

Interested researchers can go the www.preeclampsia.com to obtain grant guidelines and submission deadlines.