



The AOFAS Research Grants Program Description, Policies, and Guidelines for Applicants and Institutional Representatives

Updated October 2015 for the 2016 Grants Cycle



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ABOUT THE AOFAS RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM

Deadline for All Applications

January 1, 2016

Application Submission Deadline
extended from the usual December 1 deadline for the 2016 cycle **only**.
(online system closes at 11:59 pm Central Time)

Funding Amounts for Three Grant Categories

- Pilot Project Research Grants - up to \$5,000
- Small Project Research Grants - up to \$20,000
- Established Project Research Grants - up to \$50,000 (one available for 2016 cycle)

Period of Grant

The period of research grants is from July 1 after the application deadline through June 30 of the following year.

Award Announcements

Award decisions are announced at the AOFAS Specialty Day after the application deadline, with email notification to the Submitting Applicant only following. Announcements for the 2016 cycle will be made at AOFAS Specialty Day on Saturday, March 5, 2016.

The AOFAS Research Grants Program
is funded by generous donations from individuals and corporations to

The Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Foundation
“The Foundation”

Objectives

The objective of the Research Grant program is to advance foot and ankle investigation by providing seed and start-up funding for promising research projects and encourage supplemental submissions to national funding sources.

Subject to the levels of philanthropic support, Pilot Project Research Grants of up to \$5,000 each per year and Small Project Research Grants of up to \$20,000 each per year are awarded. In a new initiative being piloted for the 2016 and 2017 cycles, one Established Project Research Grant of up to \$50,000 will be available each cycle.

The new Established Project Research Grant is intended to support innovative research for clinical trials and pre-trial work that could be used to obtain additional grants from national funding sources. Applications must be backed by preliminary work, publications, and/or presented data to demonstrate feasibility of projects and capabilities of the research team.

The objective of the Pilot Project Research Grant program, which began with the 2015 cycle, is to encourage young investigators, especially residents and fellows to participate in research, to promote the development of new lines of research, and to improve the quality of research grant applications by providing seed funding for NEW pilot projects. It is expected that the data obtained from these projects will be used to develop future grant applications. Pilot project grants may not exceed \$5,000, and no more than 4 pilot project Research Grants may be awarded in one cycle.

Eligibility

Access to Research Grants is a benefit of AOFAS membership. An AOFAS Active Member, Candidate Member or International Member must serve as either the principal investigator or co-investigator.

For Pilot Project Grants, applicants must be an AOFAS Resident Member or Fellow Member, and an AOFAS Active Member, Candidate Member, or International Member must serve as either the principal investigator, co-investigator, or project advisor.

The principal investigator and co-investigator(s) may not be awarded more than two grants in any four consecutive years. Members of the Research Committee and its ad hoc reviewers may not apply for grants in the year in which they review applications.

Review Process

Grant applications are reviewed and scored by the AOFAS Research Committee and its ad hoc reviewers on a blind basis using an NIH-style process. The committee makes recommendations to the AOFAS Board, which makes the final decision on funding. The Board decision also is made on a blind basis, with Board members knowing only project titles and requested award amounts.

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Application Procedure

The application process is described below in the following sections, and detailed instructions for completing the application form can be found in the relevant sections throughout the online application system.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- To maintain the blinded application review process, the names of the investigator(s), names of their institution(s), and any other information that would identify the applicants or their institution should NOT appear anywhere in the application EXCEPT in the sections specifically designated for investigator and institutional information.
- Identifying information may include the names of collaborating bodies or organizations such as labs, vendors, partner institutions that, by association or geographical proximity, might “unblind” the application to reviewers.

Disclosures & Signatures

Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest (COI)

Potential conflicts of interest for each investigator, whether an AAOS member or not, must be disclosed by updating disclosure information on the AAOS website:

<http://www7.aaos.org/education/disclosure/verifyUser>.

Disclosures must have been updated within the 12 months preceding grant submission. **NOTE:** Each investigator must obtain a receipt of his/her AAOS COI disclosure showing date and details (verification screen after completing or updating disclosure), save that receipt as a PDF file, and upload it to the AOFAS online grant application system.

E-Signatures Required

Signatures are required for principal investigator, co-investigators, department chair, the institutional representative authorized to sign for the institution, and the financial officer of the institution. No “per” signatures are permitted.

The Submitting Applicant may be either the principal investigator or a co-investigator. The Submitting Applicant will designate the names and e-mail addresses of the other related persons whose signatures are required, then those persons will receive an invitation to register in the online system to get access to complete their required reviews of the instructions, policies, and guidelines and the application content before signing via a time- and date-stamped e-signature.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The Submitting Applicant **MUST** complete the online application form. Other associated persons, including the principal investigator, co-investigators, institutional grants officers and financial officers, and departmental chairs must review the application and sign **BEFORE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE**. Their signatures are required **AFTER** the primary applicant completes the online application but **BEFORE** you may submit it.
- The applicant is responsible for completing the online application content well in advance to allow time for any delays due to institutional review processes or requirements, personnel absences, etc.
- **Holiday Week Alert:** Please be aware of co-investigator(s) and institutional representative and financial officer schedules and availability during the holiday week of Dec 24-31, 2015!
- Plan to complete your application well in advance and allow plenty of time for those persons to review and add signatures before the Friday, January 1, 2016 deadline. Their signatures are required **AFTER** you complete the application but **BEFORE** you may submit it.

Notification of Award and Research Funds

The AOFAS will notify the designated contact person (the applicant who begins the application in the online system) by email following announcement of the award at the Specialty Day program. The Funding Agreement acceptance statement must be signed by the principal investigator and co-investigators within the online system within thirty (30) days following notification.

Seventy percent (70%) of the grant award is distributed upon receipt of the Funding Agreement acceptance statement. Payment of the remaining 30% is contingent upon receipt of the final project

report (including financial expenditures) and will be distributed upon submission of the paper to Foot & Ankle International for review.

Funding requests made later than 18 months after the initial Funding Agreement acceptance letter will not be honored. Failure to produce a final report will result in a request to the grant awardees to refund to AOFAS the initial funding allotted.

No salaries and wages may be allotted to the principal investigator or co-investigators.

At expiration of the grant, any unexpended balance of \$100 or more must be refunded to the AOFAS within sixty (60) days.

The grant recipient may terminate a grant prior to the normal expiration date by notifying the AOFAS in writing and stating the reasons for termination. Unexpended funds must be returned to the AOFAS within sixty (60) days, together with a final report of expenditures. The AOFAS reserves the right to terminate grants at any time upon three months written notice.

If the grantee has not completed the project prior to expiration for just reasons, he/she may submit a written request (30 days prior to expiration) for a no-cost extension stating the reason and requested period of extension.

Policy on Animals in Research

Use of animals and institution must justify the number of animals requested for the project. If applicable, provide IACUC approval and OLAW assurance approval, regarding use of and number of animals requested for project.

All animals used in research supported by AOFAS grants must be acquired lawfully and be transported, cared for, treated and used in accordance with existing laws, regulations and guidelines. Scientists and institutions must make decisions as to the kind and sources of animals that are most appropriate for particular studies. AOFAS policy requires that such decisions be subject to institutional and peer review for scientific merit and ethical concerns and that appropriate assurances be given that NIH principal governing the use of animals are followed.

Policy on Human Subjects in Research

Use of human subjects and sample size must be justified. If applicable, IRB statements from your institution's human subjects committee must be provided. IRB approval is required for patient X-rays.

AOFAS grant recipients are entrusted to assure adequate protection of human subjects. NIH regulations regarding human subjects should be followed.

(continued)

Interim Progress Report and Final Report

The report formats for the Interim Progress Report and the Final Report will be sent with notification of the grant award. Reports should be sent to the AOFAS via e-mail to: aofasinfo@aofas.org. Report deadlines are:

- Interim Progress Report – October 1 of the year the grant is awarded
- Final Report – May 1 of the following calendar year

Seventy percent (70%) of the grant award is distributed upon receipt of the signed funding agreement. Payment of the remaining thirty percent (30%) is contingent upon:

- Receipt of the completed Final Report (including financial expenditures) **and**
- Submission of a paper based on the grant work to Foot & Ankle International for review.

For Applicants Awarded Grants

An **Interim Progress Report** is due **October 1** of the year the grant is issued.
A **Final Report** is due **May 1** of the following year.

Policy on Delinquent Financial/Research Reports

The AOFAS reserves the right to deny additional grants to any institution, where after proper notification, an investigator has not submitted his/her final report within 18 months of the acceptance letter date. This policy will be enforced when reports are one year past the final due date. Upon receipt of these reports, the institution shall again become eligible for AOFAS grants.

Policy on Changing Aims of Grant

If the principal investigator and collaborators find that the original aims of the grant cannot be accomplished, and that to continue the project substantial changes in aims or methodology must be considered, the principal investigator must request permission from AOFAS to modify the aims. This request must be made in writing and must include the reasons for the change.

Budget

The budget for the project should include direct costs only. No salary or wages amount may be allotted to the principal investigator or co-investigators. Funds may not be used for travel.

Presentation and Publication

Grant recipients are **REQUIRED** to submit an abstract for presentation of their research at the AOFAS Annual Meeting or Specialty Day Program within one year of the end of the term of the grant.

"Foot & Ankle International, the official scientific journal of the AOFAS, has the right of first refusal for publication of research findings by grant recipients. The primary paper from the supported research must be submitted to FAI and that any secondary papers from this original research may be submitted to other journals for publication."

The following acknowledgment should be used as a footnote on the first page of the text:

“Supported by a grant from the American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society with funding from the Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Foundation.”

The above credit line must also be included when a grant recipient presents a paper at a professional scientific meeting. The grantee must send reprints of all papers and publications resulting from work done under a grant, including those that appear after the grant has been terminated.

Application Format

Application materials should be submitted via the online application system, per the instructions indicated in this document, *The AOFAS Research Grants Program Description, Policies, and Guidelines for Applicants and Institutional Representatives*, as well as throughout the online application form.

The **Project Title** must contain a reference to the clinical relevance of your project.

The **Research Strategy** may be prepared and formatted in Microsoft Word, with figures, tables, and images incorporated. The document should be 6 pages maximum, with a font size not smaller than 10-point. Minimum margins must be 1/2 inch for left and right, 1 inch for top and bottom. Convert to PDF file format for upload into the online system.

Documents that need to be uploaded should be in PDF file format, with files named as indicated in the instructions. Please adhere to page/word/character limitations as indicated in the instructions throughout the online application form.

Graphics (figures, tables, photographs or other image files, medical images, data tables) should be converted to PDF file format, where practical; named as indicated in the application form; uploaded into the online system under Appendices; and referenced by the relevant file name where appropriate in other sections of the application form.

Institutional approval documents (IRB approval, human subjects protection program, institutional animal care and use, site review, etc.) should be named as indicated and uploaded as separate files in the appropriate place in the application according to instructions.

Resubmissions

If the application is a resubmission of an application submitted on the same or a similar topic, with or without the same title, within the past three years, the applicant must select “yes” on application form in the appropriate space to indicate this. An application may be resubmitted twice.

A resubmission must include a statement of how the applicant has responded to previous critique(s) and summarizing changes made from the original application. If extensive changes have been made or the entire application has been rewritten, the main points of change should be summarized.

Submission Instructions

New for the 2016 AOFAS Research Grants application cycle (submission deadline January 1, 2016, 11:59 pm CST), all applications must be submitted via the new online system.

Either the principal investigator (PI) or a co-investigator may be the one designated person responsible for starting and submitting the application in the online system – the “Submitting Applicant.”

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- The Submitting Applicant **will be the ONLY POINT OF CONTACT for all future correspondence related to the application.**

Besides the Submitting Applicant, other persons associated with the application (the PI or one of the up to three Co-Investigators, and the Department Chair, Institution Administrative or Grants Management Representative, and Institutional Financial Officer) will be designated by the Submitting Applicant.

These other associated persons must review the application and provide signatures and agreements as indicated in the system, **AFTER THE PRIMARY APPLICANT HAS COMPLETED ALL REQUIRED SECTIONS.** Please allow time for these representatives from your institution to provide these signatures **BY THE APPLICATION DEADLINE**, and **AFTER** the application forms have been completed by the primary applicant.

Paper, faxed, or emailed applications WILL NOT be accepted. The application must be submitted in the AOFAS online system by January 1, 2016 at 11:59 pm Central Time. The online system will close at this time, and later submissions will not be considered.

Specific instructions for each part of the application are provided at the appropriate places throughout the online application.

Questions and Additional Information

Please direct queries about The AOFAS Research Grants Program, the application process, instructions, or online system to: research@aofas.org

AGREE TO THE DESCRIPTION, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES TO CONTINUE TO APPLICATION

In the online application system, Submitting Applicants must click the "**Save & Continue**" button at the bottom of *The AOFAS Research Grants Program Description, Policies, and Guidelines for Applicants and Institutional Representatives* page to continue to the grant application form to acknowledge that they have read and agree to the information.

