



RESEARCH IN FAMILY MEDICINE GRANT AWARDS

In 2007 the AAFP Foundation Research Committee (RC) discussed the need to have a set of criteria clarifying the expectations for projects granted research awards. In 2008 the committee formally adopted the “Guiding Principles for AAFP Foundation Research Grants” to help focus the deliberation of the proposals and determination of grants.

Since these criteria encompass the overall philosophy of the Foundation’s grant program, the RC believes it is important for the potential applicants for Foundation research grants should understand the criteria as they consider submitting proposals.

Guiding Principles for AAFP Foundation Research Grants

1. To support research of value to the practicing family physician
 Rationale: The funds for this program are provided largely by donations of practicing family physicians; the research they support should have relevance to their practice.

2. To fund pilot studies
 Rationale: Considerations of statistical power are important, but it should be a priority to fund innovative high quality research, even if that work is not powered to find statistically significant differences. We should encourage investigators to spend these limited resources on the best possible research methods rather than direct funding preferentially to satisfy the demands of sample size/recruitment. In turn, these high quality pilot studies will generate preliminary data to support larger grant applications to major funders which can and will fund large studies.

3. To encourage proposals by junior investigators
 Rationale: Without access to small grant funds to support the generation of pilot data, junior investigators are destined to remain just that in today's funding environment. The role of the AAFP Foundation grant programs in supporting the pathway of junior investigators to major funding should not be underestimated.



JOINT GRANT AWARDS PROGRAM APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Research grant applications will be considered only if submitted in the exact format of the official AAFP Foundation Grant application form. Proposals will be returned if they do not strictly adhere to the page limit and formatting requirements. **Proposals must be typed using font size 12. Page limits are indicated for each section.**

- Proposals for all three Foundation research grant programs are reviewed by the Research Committee at each of its semi-annual meetings. **While multiple proposals can be submitted to these programs, each proposal must be for a separate and unique project.**
- The principal investigator or one of the co-investigators must be a **member of the AAFP.**
- The AAFP Foundation Research Committee (RC) will give **priority to new researchers** and **those who mentor new investigators by including them as part of the research team.**

Electronic Submission Required

One copy of the completed application formatted appropriately for Microsoft Word (doc. file) must be e-mailed to smorantz@aafp.org or sent on CD. (The Application in MS Word format is available www.aafpfoundation.org or by e-mail request to smorantz@aafp.org) Attachments such as charts and photographs from other sources will be accepted by e-mail and in hard copy. In addition, **mail** the original copy of the completed application and appendices to:

Chair AAFP FOUNDATION RESEARCH COMMITTEE (RC))
Attention: Susie Morantz
AAFP FOUNDATION,
11400 Tomahawk Creek Parkway, Suite 440
Leawood, KS 66211-2672

Please review these instructions and follow them closely in the preparation of the grant application. These instructions parallel the items in the Grant Application and are so identified.

- A. TITLE OF THE PROJECT** – The title should be brief and descriptive of the intent of the proposed project.
- B. NAME, TITLE, OFFICE ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, E-MAIL ADDRESS OF EACH INVESTIGATOR AND THE AAFP ID NUMBER OF THE INVESTIGATOR(S) WHO ARE MEMBERS:**
 - Provide the name, title, office address, phone, e-mail and AAFP ID number (if applicable) for each investigator involved in the project. **NOTE: The principal investigator must be a family medicine researcher**, the one individual designated by the applicant organization to direct the project. If the proposed project is to be under the direction of co-investigators, identify these individuals as "co-investigators."
- C. TOTAL AMOUNT OF GRANT FUNDS BEING APPLIED FOR FROM THE AAFP FOUNDATION, THE TOTAL COST OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT, AND THE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL PROJECT COST THE AAFP FOUNDATION AMOUNT REPRESENTS** – Specify the amount of AAFP Foundation grant funds being applied for and the total cost of the project (calculate the percent of the total cost the AAFP Foundation funds will represent.) Include other grant funds already secured and in-kind support.
- D. PROPOSED LENGTH OF TIME FOR THE PROJECT TO BE COMPLETED** – Indicate the anticipated start date and the completion date.
- E. NAME OF THE APPLICANT ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION OR INDIVIDUAL** – The organization, institution, or individual conducting or sponsoring the proposed project must be identified. (Note: An individual will incur a tax liability.)
- F. NAME OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL, TITLE, OFFICE ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER** – Specify the name of an official at the organization or institution who is authorized to commit the organization or institution to conduct the study as proposed and ensure that the requirements established by the AAFP Foundation are met. Include the title, office address and telephone number.

G. APPLICANT AGREEMENT – All applicants should be aware of and acknowledge their understanding that, in the event an application is approved, the grant award will be contingent upon agreeing to the following conditions:

1. Grant funds must be used exclusively for the purposes and in the manner set forth in the application. If the funds are not used in keeping with the grant application as approved by the AAFP Foundation, the grant will be voided and the total amount of grant funds awarded returned to the AAFP Foundation upon demand;
2. Unexpended grant funds at the conclusion or suspension of the project will be returned to the AAFP Foundation;
3. Approval from the AAFP Foundation must be obtained, in writing, for any re-budgeting of grant funds prior to any re-allocation of grant funds;
4. Adherence to the timeline set forth in the grant application. If circumstances prevent adherence to the approved timeline, grantee must submit written explanation of those circumstances to AAFP Foundation and set forth exact date of expected project completion. The timeline will not be considered revised unless and until AAFP Foundation notifies grantee of AAFP Foundation's acceptance of the revised expected completion date;
5. Submission of written progress reports at the midpoint of the project and a report of the final results upon completion. If a report of your findings is submitted for publication, please provide a reprint or draft;
6. Financial reports detailing the expenditure of grant funds must be provided on a regular basis (determined by the length of the grant period) and a final accounting summary of the expenditure of grant funds will be due upon completion of the project;
7. Ninety percent (90%) of the grant funds will be distributed in quarterly payments, if the project timeline is more than a year in length. If the grant period is less than one year, the funds will be distributed in two installments. Following the initial allocation, all subsequent distributions will be made only when all required financial and progress reports have been received by AAFP Foundation;
8. The final ten percent (10%) of the grant funds will be distributed upon completion of the project and submission of all required final financial and progress reports;
9. Reports delinquent in excess of 90 days will prompt a reminder notice from AAFP Foundation. If grantee does not either obtain an approved timeline extension from AAFP Foundation (See Section G4) or submit the necessary reports within 60 days of the reminder notice, AAFP Foundation will consider the project terminated. No further funds will be provided to grantee;
10. In the event the research project involves human subjects, the applicant must agree to submit the project to an Institutional Review Board (IRB) and obtain approval for research on human subjects prior to the receipt of funding. Grant funds from the AAFP Foundation will not be released until a copy of the IRB approval or waiver notification is received by the AAFP Foundation;
11. The grantee agrees to appropriately acknowledge the support of the AAFP Foundation in any published reports of the project and to provide the AAFP Foundation with a copy of any resulting published research articles;
12. The grantee agrees to abide by any additional condition(s) specified at the time an award notification is made by the AAFP Foundation.
13. The AAFP Foundation may disclose information only from proposals of successfully funded projects, including the title of the project, the grantee institution, the principal investigator and the abstract. See "Policy on Information Available to the General Public" on the application form for more detail.

H. HYPOTHESIS – State briefly (**one-third page or less**), the research question and specifically what is expected to be answered by this project. In this and all subsequent sections of the application the proposal should not make specific references to individuals, institutions, the location thereof, or any other identifiers. Any such references will be "blinded" prior to review.

I. ABSTRACT – Summarize the proposed project, in **no more than two-thirds of a page**, outlining succinctly the objectives and methodology. Applicants are reminded to refrain from identifying specific individuals, institutions or geographical regions in this section.

BACKGROUND, DESIGN AND ANALYSIS SECTIONS – The applicant should **complete these sections using no more than 5 pages**. Under each section address the information requested:

J. BACKGROUND, SIGNIFICANCE AND RATIONALE – Provide the following:

1. A statement of **purpose and specific goals and objectives** of the proposed study and an explanation of the needs or problems it is intended to address.
2. A description of **related work by others and previous work by the applicant** to solve related problems and an explanation of how the proposed research will expand upon or complement those efforts.
3. An explanation of **who will benefit from this research study** and how the results of the project will be communicated to those who will benefit.
4. **In the case of long-term or continuous study**, an explanation of how the project or activity would be continued upon expiration of the requested grant.

K. METHODS AND DESIGN – Provide the following: (*Seeking consultation from an expert in methodology is highly recommended*)

1. An explicit and complete description of the proposed research design(s) and procedures covering both *what* is to be done and *how* it is to be accomplished. The attempt should be made to use conventional language of research methodology found within the scientific research literature when referring to the design(s), for example, cross-over, cross-sectional study, longitudinal study, randomized clinical trial, double-blind placebo controlled, pilot study, descriptive study, etc.
2. A description of the sample population and the number in the study group and explain why this is the appropriate population. (see L.1.below)
3. If a **SURVEY** is to be used, the instrument **MUST BE INCLUDED** as an appendix.
4. An outline of the schedule for implementing the project within the specified time. Outline the timetable for the accomplishment of specific objectives.

L. ANALYSIS OF DATA – Provide the following: (*Seeking consultation from an expert in analytical design is highly recommended*)

1. An explanation of how the effectiveness of the project or activity will be measured. If appropriate, a power analysis should be used to determine sample size.
2. An explanation of the criteria or indicators that will be used in this analysis. How will they be measured? What are the appropriate statistical tests: What specific results are expected?

M. REFERENCE SECTION – The applicant should provide a bibliography of the references cited in the above section(s).

N. BUDGET – Applications for up to \$50,000 will be accepted to support research projects that pose questions of high relevance to Family Practice using rigorous design and appropriate statistical analyses. The Council also welcomes applications for smaller scale studies with lower costs.

Provide a detailed budget with a breakdown of estimated project costs. List separately the amounts of in-kind support being provided by the applicant institution, the amounts to be covered by other grant funds which have been secured by the applicant, and the amounts requested from the AAFP Foundation. The budget must include all major direct expense categories as enumerated on the application. **Note: The AAFP Foundation does not provide grant funds for indirect or overhead costs.**

Following are additional guidelines for specific areas:

1. **Salaries and Wages** – All personnel who are to participate in the project should be listed by position and/or title. **Do not name individuals involved in adherence to the required "blinding" of the proposal during peer review.** Indicate the associated full-time equivalency (F.T.E.) for each position and the associated projected costs for each position. If salaries are included for investigators who are also full-time faculty members, justification must be provided as to the need for funds to cover this compensation.

2. **Payroll Taxes and Fringe Benefits** – Specify the amount and the percent of the total salary that the taxes and benefits represent.
3. **Consultants** – Specify the type of consultant and associated costs. Indicate the number of days of consulting the figure represents.
4. **Travel** – Specify the type of travel expense (lodging, transportation, meals) and the projected amount. **Note:** *AAFP Foundation funds requested for travel must be used only for the purpose of conducting research, not for presenting results.*
5. **Computer Support** – Specify the type of support required and the associated costs. **Note:** **AAFP Foundation funds cannot be used for the acquisition of computers or other electronic hardware.**
6. **Communications** – Specify type of expense (e.g., postage or telephone) and the associated costs.
7. **Supplies and Materials** – Specify the type of expendable supplies and materials and the associated costs.
8. **Equipment Rental** – **Note:** *The AAFP Foundation funds generally will not be used to support the capital acquisition of equipment. Should the applicant rent or lease any equipment, the type and associated cost must be stated. If rental would be more costly than purchase then documentation should be provided to justify purchase.*
9. **Other Direct Expenses** – Specify any other direct costs by type and amount not attributable to one of the above classifications.

In the event there are no costs for a particular category, the applicant should indicate this notation by placing N.A. (not applicable) in that section.

- O. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION** – For each category of expense indicated on the budget summary page, provide a brief statement justifying the expense in the context of the proposal and how or why the expense relates to the work required.
- P. IRB AND INFORMED CONSENT** – Discuss the ethical implications of this study and how human subjects will be protected. In the event the research involves human subjects, the applicant is asked to briefly describe the requirements that must be met to submit the project to an Institutional Review Board (IRB). **If applicable, include a draft of the informed consent form in the appendix.**
- Q. SPECIAL SECTION FOR REQUIRED APPLICATIONS WHICH ARE RESUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION** – As the AAFP Foundation Joint Grant Awards Program has evolved; several applications and the associated critiques have been returned to the applicants for possible rework and resubmission in a subsequent review cycle. In those cases, the applicant must include a summary of how the deficiencies cited in the original application have been addressed in the resubmitted application. Also, be sure to note in your transmittal letter that this application is a resubmission and reference the application number assigned to the original application. Every effort should be made to include this information with the application.
- R. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH(ES)** – The applicant is asked to provide a brief biographical sketch using the format provided for the principal investigator(s) and co-investigator(s) or, in lieu of a biographical sketch, a copy of his/her curriculum vita (c.v.) may be attached.
- S. APPENDIX** – In the event the applicant wishes to provide supporting materials such as informed consent form, survey instruments or supporting letters, it is requested that a listing be made on the "Appendix" page of the application with the corresponding page numbers for those appendices.

NOTE:

1. If a survey or data collection instrument to be used in the project has been developed, a copy must be enclosed along with any information relative to pre-testing results or assumptions used.
2. If the project requires informed consent, a draft of the informed consent form must be included in the appendix of the proposal.

For additional information or clarification, the applicant should contact the AAFP Foundation by e-mail to smorantz@aafp.org or by calling 1-800-274-2237, Extension 4470.