



THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GASTROENTEROLOGY REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS 2020 “Smaller Programs” Clinical Research Award



Description

The American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) will support Clinical Research Awards of up to \$35,000 specifically aimed to support junior faculty at smaller GI training programs in the United States and Canada. While the College has become a significant engine of clinical research in gastroenterology, the majority of these awards have been granted to investigators at large research institutions. Given the College's aims to stimulate and support excellent clinical GI research, while at the same time maintaining an ongoing commitment to fund the best science, funds under this RFA are intended to make the promise of a research career more broadly available by targeting investigators at smaller training programs. The number of awards will be determined by the ACG Research Committee.

Objective

The main goals of this RFA are to stimulate pilot research at smaller clinical GI training programs, thereby encouraging junior faculty to pursue a research career and to remain in academics at these institutions. The mission of the ACG Clinical Research Awards program is to fund innovative patient-oriented research. For the purposes of these awards, patient-oriented research is defined as: (1) Research conducted with human subjects, (2) Research on new diagnostic and therapeutic interventions, and (3) Research on material of human origin, such as tissues and specimens. While research that explores mechanisms of human disease is highly encouraged, the research projects should be translational in nature with direct applicability to clinical care. In general, studies involving animals will not be considered unless the work cannot be done in humans.

Eligibility

The principal investigator **must be an ACG member at the time of submission** of the grant proposal. Eligible applicants will have faculty appointments at the assistant professor or clinical instructor level at a “qualifying academic institution.” Senior fellows may apply with a commitment in writing from the institution of a faculty position in the upcoming year. This award is not intended for former or current principal investigators funded by R01, P01, U01, VA Merit Awards or Hughes grants, or to those who hold the position of full professor or associate professor at an academic institution.

The principal investigator must identify a mentor who will oversee the academic development of the investigator. A formal letter of commitment by a suitable mentor must be included with the application. The mentor should be proficient in the field of investigation proposed in the application. Because small institutions may not have appropriate mentors in all areas, for the purposes of this application, the identified mentor need not be on faculty at the institution of the applicant (i.e., “e-mentoring” is permitted). However, it is incumbent on the applicant and the mentor to describe in detail the mentoring plan, and demonstrate a true commitment to the academic development of the applicant.

“Qualifying academic institutions” for this program include those with **15 or fewer full-time academic Faculty FTEs** in the Gastroenterology and Hepatology Sections **throughout the healthcare system (Pediatric programs with 7 or fewer FTEs within the Pediatric department may apply)**. All faculty within the system count, even if located at different hospitals (e.g., a potential applicant from an academic institution with six faculty at the VA and 10 at a university hospital would be ineligible for the program.) The academic institution is defined as an institution that includes all the sites listed in the ACGME application for the site's fellowship program, or for sites without a fellowship program, all facilities where any faculty member in gastroenterology or hepatology works.

Selection Criteria

In evaluating the merits of an application, the Committee will consider its scientific and clinical significance (25%), feasibility (including the mentoring plan and the availability of adequate resources, including personnel and facilities) (25%), and methods (50%). The methods component is comprised of the availability of preliminary data, if applicable (25%), the study design (50%), and power, sample size and statistical analysis (25%). If an individual submits more than one grant proposal, only one award can be made for a given Principal Investigator. If a given investigator submits both a project under this RFA and a larger clinical research grant under another ACG RFA that is also deemed worthy of funding, the larger grant will be funded. The same project should not be submitted for multiple grant types, and will not be considered if this occurs.

Review Process

The ACG Research Committee will review the grant proposals using its standardized process.

Requirement

Successful applicants must agree to acknowledge ACG support in any publications that result from the research, and to submit a final report to the ACG Research Committee within 18 months of receipt of funding.

Deadline

Submit the application online by the **DEADLINE: Friday, December 6, 2019**. Submission instructions and a link to ACG's Online Grant Submission System will be available on the College's Web site at gi.org/research-awards in early September. Applicants will be notified by April 1, 2020. The award one-year award period will begin July 1, 2020.

Application Overview

Applicants are required to submit a single Adobe PDF document comprising the complete grant submission. The single PDF document must be uploaded through the online application portal. This includes all required sections of the grant, in the order listed below. Format all pages with 1" margins and a font no smaller than 11 point. Type your name (last name, first name) and the name of the award in the upper right hand corner of each page. Type the page number in the upper left hand corner of each page. FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THESE INSTRUCTIONS WILL CAUSE THE GRANT APPLICATION TO BE RETURNED UNREVIEWED.

You will be required to provide the following information through ACG's online grant system:

- **Membership:** You will be required to enter your ACG member ID number in the online application form.
- **List the Principal Investigator and all Co-Investigators,** and indicate their ACG member status (e.g., Member, Fellow "FACG") and the year in which each investigator joined the ACG.
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB) status** — Include the IRB approval letter in the application (section D below). If IRB approval is pending at the time of submission and the grant proposal is subsequently approved for funding, funds will not be released until the IRB approval letter is received by the ACG. If the proposal is requesting funds for reimbursement of human subjects, a copy of the IRB approved consent form is required prior to funding as well.
- **Conflict of interest**— A potential conflict of interest exists when the research involves a device from which any investigator(s) or a company may benefit. It also exists when the research involves a pharmaceutical agent that is not FDA-approved for any indication. A conflict of interest exists if any investigator holds or has submitted a patent on a device or pharmaceutical agent or is a major share-holder in a company involved in the research. If applicable, select "Yes" and include a detailed explanation within the grant system, including names of each investigator and their COI.
- **Abstract:** You will be asked to submit an abstract of no more than 350 words in the online system. Use the abstract to summarize the proposed research.

Application Components

A. RE-SUBMISSIONS: For re-submissions, in addition to selecting "Yes" in the re-submission field of the online application, you must submit a cover letter responding to the reviewers critiques/outlining how you have updated your application. This should be included as the first section of your Research Proposal, as part of the PDF upload to the grant system. Limit 2 pages.

B. RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL — Limit to 5 pages (excluding references and budget).

- **Specific Aims** — Provide a clear description of the study objectives. Consider the following questions: What is the hypothesis to be addressed? What are the immediate objectives? What are the ultimate objectives? How does the proposed research fit into an overall research program?
- **Background/Significance** — State how the proposed work bears on prior work and indicate how it will extend the boundaries of current knowledge.
- **Pilot Data/Previous Work** — No preliminary data are required, but should be included if available.
- **Research Plan** — Give the details of the research plan, including the inclusion/exclusion criteria for enrollment, methods to be used, the kinds of data that are to be collected, and how these data will be analyzed. Provide detailed sample size estimates. Grants without a statistical analysis section or sample size justification are unlikely to be successful. Include a discussion of the mentorship arrangements that have been made.
- **References** — Include a separate section for references (not included in the page limit). Be judicious in the use of references.
- **Budget & Budget Justification** — Include a separate section for the budget (not included in the page limit). This should include a budget table listing each expense for the grant period, followed by a budget justification, a written explanation of each expense and how it supports the work of the proposal. Indicate how the funds will be allocated and **justify each budget item**, including facility fees if funds are requested for this purpose. The budget of \$35,000 allows up to \$30,000 in direct research costs. Additionally, ACG will provide up to \$5,000 for support costs, which should be itemized and may include travel to work with mentor (but no other travel), statistical consultation and secretarial support. Note that salary support for the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators will not be provided. Salary support will be provided for other personnel (research nurse, computer programmer) if adequately justified. Support will be provided for supplies and equipment. In general, major equipment acquisitions (such as laptop computers) will not be supported. Travel, other than mentoring-related travel described above, and manuscript preparation costs are not supported. Indirect costs (i.e., university overhead) are not provided.

C. OTHER SUPPORT: For each investigator list the title, funding agency, total direct costs, dates (including expected dates of notification) of all active awards and pending funding. Use **NIH format**. (To learn more see: grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm) Indicate whether any scientific or budgetary overlap exists, and if so, indicate how this will be addressed.

D. IRB APPROVAL LETTER: Include any available information (see above).

F. CURRICULUM VITAE: Provide for each investigator. **Use NIH format and adhere to the NIH 5-page limit.** For sample format see the NIH Web page: grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm

G. SUPPORTING LETTERS: Provide a letter from the mentor about the candidate which also describes the mentoring plan and commitment to the academic development of the applicant. Provide letters from collaborators, such as those supplying patient referrals, if applicable.

H. FACULTY ROSTER: Provide a current roster of academic FTEs in the Gastroenterology and Hepatology sections throughout the healthcare system of the principal investigator. See "qualifying academic institutions" above.

I. APPENDICES: Use (if needed) for data collection forms. Do not use to expand Research Proposal - Section B (above).

Applications Must Be Submitted Electronically

DEADLINE: FRIDAY DECEMBER 6, 2019 | gi.org/research-awards

QUESTIONS Phone: 301-263-9000 or email: research@gi.org