



ACG CLINICAL RESEARCH AWARDS

2023 JUNIOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AWARDS Request for Applications

This is a three-year career development award to support 50% protected clinical research time for Junior Faculty.

 **DEADLINE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022 AT 11:59 PM EDT**

 **APPLY: gi.org/research-awards**

 **Award Amount: \$450,000** (150k per year, 100k for salary support and 50k for research costs)

 **Award period/length of award: July 1, 2023–June 30, 2026**

The ACG Institute for Clinical Research and Education and the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) are proud to support junior investigators working toward independent careers in clinical research in gastroenterology or hepatology, and invite eligible applicants to apply for a \$450,000, three-year career development award, to be funded from July 1, 2023–June 30, 2026. This award supports 50% research time and is only available to ACG members.

All applications must be submitted online. The grant site will open to submissions in early September 2022, and close on Monday, December 5, 2022, at 11:59pm (Eastern time).

The goal of the **Junior Faculty Development Award** is to assist promising clinical researchers in developing research careers that have a direct bearing on clinical gastrointestinal practice. This award provides the protected research time, and time dedicated to developing research and leadership skills in order to advance a junior faculty member's career with novel research.

This grant is designed to support research that is principally focused on digestive or liver diseases. The patient population or disease target should be principally related to the gastrointestinal tract, liver, biliary system, pancreas, or neuroenteric science, including any translational, clinical, social science, or health services research studies that pertain to managing such patients or conditions. For example, a study about microbiota would be appropriate if it pertains to a digestive disease. In contrast, a study that is principally about HIV would likely not be appropriate unless it directly relates to how HIV affects digestive health. (For questions on study relevancy, contact the grant administrator at research@gi.org.) Since its inception in 1997, the Junior Faculty Development Award has provided over 14.7 Million in funding to over 71 recipients.



GRANT OVERVIEW

A key mission of the ACG and its Institute for Clinical Research and Education is to fund innovative patient-oriented research awards. 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
3. Research on material of human origin, such as tissues and specimens
4. Research that is translational in nature; i.e., has direct applicability to clinical care

Note: Studies involving animals will not be considered unless the work cannot be done in humans.



The ACG Clinical Research Awards are a project of the ACG Institute and are supported by charitable contributions to the Institute's annual fundraising campaign – The G.U.T. Fund.



ELIGIBILITY

✓ **ACG Membership Requirement:**

***Important!** The Principal Investigator must be an ACG member in good standing. Applicants awaiting final approval of their applications are ineligible. ACG membership must be active no later than October, 2022. To Join ACG, [click here](#). For questions on ACG membership, please email membership@gi.org or call (301) 263-9000.

✓ **Applicants must meet all the following criteria:**

- ACG Member at time of application
- Physician (MD, MBBS, or DO)
- Junior Faculty less than 7 years post fellowship training
- Full-Time faculty position (Instructor or Assistant Professor) as part of a gastroenterology or hepatology department at a university, medical school or health care institution at the time of funding, should it be approved
- U.S. or Canadian-based
- Able to guarantee 50% protected research time for entirety of the three years. Candidates must devote at least 50% of their effort to clinical research related to gastroenterology or hepatology, and must have a Preceptor who can provide mentorship. A letter from the Division Chief must certify that the award will provide 50% protected time to the recipient in accordance with the terms of the award.

✗ **The following are not eligible for this award:**

- Established Investigators
 - Individuals who hold an NIH grant (e.g., R01, R29, K08, K23), a VA HSR&D Career Development Award, or who have been granted a career development award by another organization.
 - Individuals above the Assistant Professor level or who have held an academic position for greater than 7 years.
- Fellows-in-training.
- Projects that support laboratory or animal research projects.
- Award overlap: ACG does not provide duplicate funding.
- Applications utilizing the same science may not be submitted for two different ACG grant categories (for example the same project/science is submitted for both the Junior Faculty Award and Clinical Research Award) and if this occurs they will not be evaluated by the Committee.



PREPARING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

A complete application consists of two separate components:

1. A single Adobe PDF document comprising (but not limited to) the following: application checklist (include the list located at the end of this document as the first page of the submitted PDF), research proposal (limited to 8 pages), budget, Biosketches for Candidate and others involved in the proposed research, outside funding details, IRB forms, COI statement (if applicable), Candidate's statement, and letters from Division Chief and Preceptor.
2. Completion of required tasks via the online grant system: upload the completed research proposal PDF, which includes the application checklist; provide confirmation of ACG membership; provide full contact information for all Investigators; submit a 350-word abstract of the proposed research; indicate IRB approval status; list all Investigators and any potential conflicts of interest. See "Submitting the Application" below for instructions and requirements.

Required elements for the full research proposal document (i.e., the PDF that will be uploaded to the online grant system):

A. FORMATTING—Format all pages with ½" margins and use a font no smaller than 11 point. Eliminate or minimize the use of abbreviations. Define each abbreviation the first time utilized, and/or provide a glossary of terms if needed to assist reviewers and strengthen your submission. All pages must include a page number in the left header. All pages must include the PI name and grant type in the right header, in the following format:

Last name, First name
Award Type

B. CHECKLIST—Include the Application Checklist listed at the end of this document, as the first page of the PDF uploaded to the grant system.

C. RE-SUBMISSIONS—The Committee requires applicants who have applied previously to provide additional information and resubmit the application. For re-submissions, in addition to selecting "Yes" in the re-submission field of the online system, you must provide a cover letter responding to the reviewer's 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 to 2 pages.

D. RESEARCH PROPOSAL—Limit to 8 pages (excluding references). Outline the proposed research. In general, this should be a series of linked projects developed around a common theme, and should include the following sections:

- **Specific Aims**—Provide a clear description of each project's objectives. What are the hypotheses to be addressed? What are the immediate and long-term objectives? How will the proposed research help the Candidate reach his/her overall career goals?
- **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**—Provide a summary of pilot data/previous work.
- **Research Plan**—Provide a detailed research plan for each project, including the inclusion/exclusion criteria for enrollment, detailed methods, and how data will be analyzed. Provide detailed sample size estimates.

E. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT—Limit to 1 page. Describe the research environment, resources, and how this environment will provide enhanced support for the proposal. This section should describe how the research environment contributes to the success of the project and what type of institutional support, available equipment and other additional resources will be accessible to the investigators. Additionally, elaborate as to how this specific environment is conducive to the project in terms of access to patients, samples, knowledge, or any collaborative arrangements (e.g., additional skills or referrals provided by collaborators). This section should help the reviewers understand the feasibility of completing this project.

F. REFERENCES—Include a separate section for references. Be judicious in the use of references.

G. BUDGET AND JUSTIFICATION—Include a separate section for the budget and justification. Use the [ACG budget format](#). The budget should indicate all expenses for the each year of the award. The budget justification should be listed on a separate page, after the budget template, with an explanation for each budget item (for example: justification for the number of hours supported by the grant, how statistical support will be utilized, etc.). Funding for this award will provide salary support of up to \$100,000 a year for the candidate's salary and fringe benefits, and \$50,000 a year is intended to support other research costs.

Allowable costs:

- Salary support & fringes for PI
- Salary support for other personnel (biostatistician, computer programmer, research coordinator, research nurse, etc.) if adequately justified.
- Labs, supplies, and equipment
- Up to \$1,500 for travel to ACG 2024 to present to the Research Committee after the first year.

Costs not supported:

- Major equipment acquisition
- Manuscript preparation
- Travel
- Indirect costs (i.e., university overhead).
- Salary support for mentor, preceptor, or division chief



PREPARING THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL (Cont.)

- H. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) STATUS**—Include the IRB approval letter, or indicate if IRB approval is pending. 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 or where the project studies care outside of standard of care a copy of the IRB-approved consent form is required prior to funding as well.
- I. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**—Include, if applicable.
- J. BIOSKETCHES**—Provide these for the Candidate, Division Chief, Preceptor, and anyone critical to completion of the project. Use the NIH format and adhere to the NIH 5-page limit. (For sample format see the NIH webpage at grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm)
- K. OTHER RESEARCH SUPPORT**—List this information on separate pages. List the title, funding agency, total direct costs, dates, including expected dates of notification of pending applications for all current and pending funding for Candidate, Division Chief, and Preceptor. (Use NIH format: grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm)
- L. CANDIDATE'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN STATEMENT**—Include as a separate section. Describe the anticipated benefits of the award to your career development. Specifically, the applicant should outline a detailed career development plan for each year of the award. For example, the applicant should explicitly detail any relevant courses, conferences, and training specific to the applicant's proposal that will (1) Advance the applicant's career, and (2) Aid in completion of the proposal aims. Applicants should be aware that this is a critical component to the application and most often the section which fails to meet the criteria set forth by the research selection committee. The selection committee places very heavy weight on a well-developed, logical, supported career development plan. Limit to 3 pages.
- M. INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT**—There must be a strong commitment from the Candidate's division to support the Candidate by protecting time for research and providing adequate access to needed resources, such as patients, endoscopic facilities, and computers. In addition, the Candidate must have a letter of support from his/her Preceptor who will Mentor him/her in the research.
- Letter of Commitment from Division Chief—This letter should indicate strong commitment from the division to support the Candidate by protecting time for research and for providing adequate research facilities. The letter must certify that the award will provide 50% protected time to the recipient in accordance with the terms of the award. The letter should summarize the Candidate's attributes and assess the impact of the training at the Institution on his/her career development. This letter should also indicate that the requirements of the sponsoring institution in applying for and receiving such funds have been met. Limit to 2 pages.
 - Letter from Preceptor—The Preceptor is the individual who will mentor the Candidate in his/her research and assist in career development. This letter should provide an overview of plans for the career development of the Candidate. It should also state that the Preceptor is prepared to devote the necessary time and effort to training and supervising the Candidate. Limit to 2 pages.
- N. OTHER LETTERS OF SUPPORT (optional)**—These may be included to demonstrate the other investigators' involvement and support of the project (example: other research sites providing patients, specialists who will provide specialized training).

 **All applications must be submitted online.** The online grant application site will open in early September; a link to the site will be available at gi.org/research-awards. The submission **deadline is Monday, December 5, 2022, at 11:59 pm Eastern Time.** This deadline will be strictly enforced, and no exceptions will be made.

Once you begin the online application process, you will be able to save your work and return to complete it until the submission deadline. As part of the online application process, applicants are required to provide information about others, such as institutional addresses and potential conflicts of interest for Co-Investigators, the Preceptor etc. We encourage applicants to gather all the necessary information early and not wait until the last minute.



SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

The following tasks must be completed via the online grant system to successfully submit an application for grant consideration:

- A. INDICATE PROPOSAL TITLE AND SELECT GRANT TYPE**—The title should be concise and clearly reflect the proposed research. Select the "Junior Faculty Development Award" grant type. (Please note, the same project should not be submitted for multiple ACG grant types, and will not be considered if this occurs, i.e., do not submit the same proposal for the Junior Faculty Development Award and for the Clinical Research Award.)
- B. ACG MEMBERSHIP VERIFICATION**—You must provide your ACG member ID. To look up your member ID number, log into gi.org/membership then click "My ACG" from the menu on the top right. Member ID is listed below Date of Birth.
- C. ADD INVESTIGATORS**—List the PI, Co-Investigators, Preceptor, and Division Chief. Enter their names, ACG member status (and year joined if available), titles, email address, role (PI, Co-Investigator, Preceptor, Division Chief), and institution names and addresses.



SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (Cont.)

- D. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**—Indicate agreement to abide by the grant requirements, if awarded grant funding.
- E. INVESTIGATOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**—Provide PI's academic position, medical school information, and information about involvement in any other research.
- F. RESEARCH PROPOSAL ABSTRACT**—Provide an abstract of no more than 350 words that summarizes the proposed research.
- G. RE-SUBMISSIONS**—For re-submissions, select “Yes” in the re-submission field of the online system.
- H. IRB STATUS**—Verify current IRB status.
- I. RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL PDF UPLOAD**—Format the file as required in the “Preparing the Research Proposal” section, including all required elements, and upload the file as directed. The file name should include the Candidate's first and last name.
- J. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**—A potential conflict of interest (COI) exists when research involves a device from which any Investigator(s) or a company may benefit. It also exists when 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 shareholder in a company involved in the research. If applicable, select “Yes” and include a detailed explanation within the grant system, including the names of each Investigator and their potential COIs.

👁 **Immediately following the application submission period, all applications are reviewed and scored by the ACG Research Committee**, following its standardized process. Each application is reviewed by 3 reviewers who will present the grant at the Research Committee Grant Review meeting.

Reviewers consider the following when scoring applications: feasibility, scientific and clinical significance of the research proposal, attributes of the Candidate including potential for independence, a well-defined career development plan for the award period based on the project(s) proposed, and strength of the institutional environment and commitment, including a well-developed mentoring plan by the Preceptor and statement from the Division Chief assuring 50% protected time if the proposal is funded.

In evaluating the merits of an application, the Committee will consider two categories of criteria, each comprising 50% of the overall assessment: 1) Project Merit, and 2) Individual Credentials / Institutional Support / Career Development Plan.

1. Project Merit—50% of score:

- Scientific and clinical significance (12.5%)
- Feasibility (including availability of adequate resources, personnel, and facilities) (12.5%)
- Methods (25%)
 - Availability of preliminary data (6.25%)
 - Study design (12.5%)
 - Power, sample size and statistical analysis (6.25%)

2. Individual Credentials/Institutional Support/ Career Development Plan—50% of score:

- Applicant's Credentials
- Institutional Environment, Mentor Credentials and Commitment
- Career Development Plan for the award period

In general, the proposed research should be a series of linked projects developed around a common theme. The description of a proposed project should provide enough detail to assess the scientific merit, feasibility, and analytic strategy.

An applicant may submit multiple applications if these applications each utilize different science and are submitted to different grant categories. Each applicant may only receive funding for a single submission each grant cycle. If more than one submission from a single applicant is selected for funding, the Research Committee will determine which of the projects to fund.



APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS



AWARD NOTIFICATION AND GRANT REQUIREMENTS

Notification of Awards will be completed by April 1, 2023. Please do not contact ACG prior to this date to inquire about the status of your application.

- **Funding:** Awards consist of \$150,000 per year (\$100,000 for salary support and \$50,000 for research costs) for three years, for a total award of \$450,000. Funds are to be used for related expenses of the proposed research, including salary, supplies, and equipment. Funds are not to be used for: major equipment acquisition; travel and manuscript preparation; indirect costs (i.e., university overhead); or salary support for Mentors/Preceptors.
- **Required Progress Reports:** Awardees must file a progress report, including Division Chief certification, on completion of the first and second years. A final progress report that includes a financial statement is required on completion of the third year. Progress reports will be submitted to research@gi.org, unless required to be presented in-person.
- **Required In-person Progress Report:** Awardees are required to report to the ACG Research Committee in person after Year 1 of the grant, and up to \$1,500 of the award is reserved for travel costs related to attending the 2023ACG Annual Meeting to make this report.
- **Abstract Presentation at an ACG Annual Scientific Meeting:** ACG encourages the selected Awardee to submit any abstracts to the ACG Annual Scientific Meeting for presentation (see ACG abstract submission details for requirements). During the final year of the award, Awardees are required to submit an abstract detailing their work for presentation consideration at the October ACG Annual Scientific Meeting.
- **Publication:** All publications arising from work funded by this award must acknowledge support of an ACG Junior Faculty Development Award.
- **Award overlap:** ACG does not provide duplicate funding.



QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE

For any questions about grant requirements, please refer to the [FAQs](#).

Prior grant application submitters must create a new login for the grant system each year, even if you have applied for an ACG grant previously.

Technical support questions about the online submission system: Contact CadmiumCD Technical Support using the **Technical Support link on the upper right corner** of the submission site's screen, via email at Support@cadmiumcd.com, or via phone at **(877) 426-6323**.

For any questions not answered in the RFA or [FAQs](#), or reporting questions, contact us via email at research@gi.org.



IMPORTANT DATES

September, 2022	Application submission period opens
September 16, 2022	ACG Membership application deadline (only for applications who are not ACG members—see the Eligibility Section for further details)
Monday, December 5, 2022	Application submission period closes (11:59 pm Eastern time)
By/before April 1, 2023	Award notifications are sent
July 1, 2023	Year 1 of award period begins / disbursement check provided, once report approved.
June 30, 2024	Year 1 progress report due (upon completion of first year)
July 1, 2024	Year 2 of award period begins / disbursement check provided, once report approved.
October, 2024	Attend the ACG Annual Meeting to deliver in-person progress report to the ACG Research Committee
June 30, 2025	Year 2 progress report due (upon completion of second year)
July 1, 2025	Year 3 of award period begins / disbursement check provided
June 30, 2026	Final report with financial statement due (upon completion of final year)
Spring, 2026	During the final year of the award, awardees are required to submit their work for presentation consideration at the October ACG Annual Scientific Meeting

✓ APPLICATION CHECKLIST: Junior Faculty Development Awards

All grant applications must include this completed and signed Application Checklist as the **first page of the research proposal PDF that is uploaded to the grant system**. Submissions received without a signed and completed Application Checklist will be considered incomplete and will be disqualified. **Check each box to indicate completeness or check the box marked N/A for items not applicable for your submission. All boxes on the checklist must be reviewed and marked accordingly. Please sign this document before submitting.**

☉ Eligibility – double check full criteria, listed in eligibility section, prior to applying

- You are a current ACG member. Confirm you are an ACG member in good standing prior to applying and you must have an ACG member number. Please note that this is different than applying for membership—all new member applications must be submitted by September 16, 2022
- Your ACG Member ID is _____.
- You are an MD or DO based in the United States or Canada.
- You hold a junior faculty position (Instructor or Assistant Professor) as part of a gastroenterology or hepatology department at a university, medical school, or health care institution.
- You have completed GI fellowship less than seven years ago.
- You will have guaranteed 50% protected clinical research time for the entirety of the three years of the award and have a letter from your Division Chief that certifies 50% protected time.
- You have a Preceptor who will provide mentorship.
- You have NOT been granted a career development award by another organization (if you have, you are ineligible).
- You have NOT received an NIH grant (e.g., R01, R29, K08, K23), or a VA HSR&D Career Development Award.
- You are NOT a fellow-in-training.
- Your submission does NOT involve animal research.
- The science for this award is NOT submitted for another ACG award category.
- There will NOT be award overlap: ACG does not provide duplicate funding.

☉ Completion

- You have created an account in the ACG grant system (gi.org/research-awards)
- You have a complete combined PDF, containing all necessary elements in the correct order, with this signed Application Checklist as the first page of the PDF to be uploaded to the grant system.
- You have completed all necessary and relevant tasks required as part of the online grant system for this award application, including investigator information (ACG member number, title, email, role for project, institution, and address of institution); a 350-word abstract of the proposed research; listing research topics; a list of any potential conflicts of interest for investigators; indication of IRB approval status; re-submission status.

☉ Format of Submitted PDF

- All pages must use 11-point font with minimum ½” margins.
- The use of abbreviations and acronyms has been eliminated or minimized. A glossary of terms, if needed, has been added to assist reviewers and strengthen the submission.
- The upper right header of each page must include your name and the award type, in the following format:
Last name, First Name
Award Type
- The upper left header of each page must include the page number.
- The sections of the PDF are numbered to match the Required Order of Submission as indicated on the checklist, with bold headers for each required section, and the section starts on its own page.

☉ Required Order of Submission

- 1. Application Checklist**—This checklist is complete, signed by the PI, and included as the first page of the submitted PDF.
- 2. Resubmission Response Letter**—If you are resubmitting this grant ^{N/A} proposal, a 2-page (maximum) letter is included that responds to the reviewer’s critiques and outlines how you have updated the application. Do not include this item if not applicable.

- 3. Research Proposal**—Your research proposal project description should be a maximum of 8 pages (excluding references). It should include the following sections at a minimum: Specific Aims, Background/Significance, Pilot Data/Previous Work, and Research Plan.
- 4. Description of Research Environment**—Describe the research environment, resources, equipment, and support and access to patients, samples, referrals, knowledge, or any collaborative arrangements which will support successful completion of this project. Limit to 1 page.
- 5. References**—Include a list of all necessary and relevant references as well as citations in the project description.
- 6. Budget and Justification**—Use the [budget template](#) and include a separate budget justification after the budget table. The budget justification should include an explanation for each budget item, including facility fees if funds are requested for this purpose. By submitting the budget, you verify there will be adequate resources to complete the project.
- 7. IRB Status**—An IRB approval letter or indication that IRB approval is pending is included. Informed consent documents must be provided where appropriate, such as projects where patient costs are reimbursed or if studying an intervention that is not part of routine care. If selected to receive the award, funds will not be released until ACG receives a copy of IRB approval.
- 8. Conflict of Interest Statement**—Include a COI statement or indicate that none exist.
- 9. Biosketches**—A biosketch for each investigator (Candidate, Co-Investigator, Division Chief, Preceptor) is included, all in the NIH format, maximum of 5 pages each. (grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm).
- 10. Other Research Support**—List the title, funding agency, total direct costs, dates, including expected dates of notification of pending applications for all current and pending funding for Candidate, Division Chief, and Preceptor. (Use NIH format: grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm).
- 11. Career Development Plan Statement**—Included a 3-page (maximum) statement describing the benefits of the award to your career development, and a detailed career plan for each year of the award. For example the applicant should explicitly detail any relevant courses, conferences, and training specific to the applicant’s proposal that will (1) Advance the applicant’s career, and (2) Aid in completion of the proposal aims. Applicants should be aware that this is a critical component to the application and the selection committee places very heavy weight on a well-developed, logical, supported career development plan.
- 12. Letter of Commitment from Division Chief**—The Division Chief must provide a 2-page (maximum), signed letter that certifies the Candidate has 50% protected clinical research time and adequate research facilities. The letter summarizes the Candidate’s attributes and their access to training from the home institution and how this may impact their career development. The letter should also indicate that any requirements the institution has with regards to applying for and receiving such funding have been met.
- 13. Letter from Preceptor**—The Preceptor / Mentor must provide a 2-page (maximum) letter that gives an overview of their assessment of the career development plans and confirms that they are prepared to devote the necessary time and effort and will provide training and supervision.
- 14. Other Letters of Support** (Optional)—Included any optional ^{N/A} letters of support that demonstrate involvement and support from additional Investigators (for example: other research sites providing patients; specialists who will provide specialized training).

I certify that I have reviewed the Application Checklist and that all portions of my application are accurate and in the required order and format.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Name (Printed)