



Rheumatology Research Foundation

Advancing Treatment | Finding Cures



MENTORED NURSE PRACTITIONER/ PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT AWARD FOR WORKFORCE EXPANSION

Request for Applications
FY2027



Issued
April 1, 2026



Foundation@rheumatology.org



RheumResearch.org



OUR MISSION

Advance research and training to improve the health of patients living with rheumatic diseases.

Purpose

The purpose of the Mentored Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant (NP/PA) Award for Workforce Expansion is to increase the supply of rheumatology healthcare providers to better meet the needs of people with rheumatic diseases across the United States, particularly in geographically underserved areas as defined by [IDeA](#) and [HRSA](#) programs. This award provides resources and the framework of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed by NP/PAs, new to rheumatology, to facilitate their integration into a rheumatology practice under the supervision of a rheumatologist.

This award is intended to support clinical training activities and is not meant to support research projects. A list of award requirements is listed on page 3.

AWARD AMOUNT

\$25,000

AWARD TERM

One year

All applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm ET on the deadline day through [ProposalCentral](#).

Questions about your eligibility or submitting your application? Please contact Award & Grants staff at 404-365-1373 or foundation@rheumatology.org.

Timeline

Application Open	Application Deadline	Award Term Begins
March 1, 2026	May 1, 2026	July 1, 2026
October 1, 2026	December 1, 2026	February 1, 2027

Notice(s) of Special Interest (NOSI) or Highlighted Topics

Supplemental Award for Education & Training in Metabolic Bone Health

The purpose of this supplemental award is to provide funding to enhance fellows' or advanced practice providers' knowledge and training in osteoporosis and metabolic bone health. Rheumatologists at a clinical practice applying for the Mentored Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Award for Workforce Expansion may also elect to receive additional funds to provide rheumatology specific training to a newly hired nurse practitioner (NP) or physician assistant (PA). These supplemental funds are made possible through the Andrew J. Laster, MD Fund for Education and Training in Metabolic Bone Disease.

For more information, please visit the Request for Applications (RFA) [at this link](#).

Award Eligibility and Guidelines

All award recipients must abide by Foundation [Awards and Grants Policies](#) at all times.

Eligibility

- Eligible applicant ("Mentor") must be a board-certified rheumatologist employed in clinical rheumatology practice. The NP or PA does not have to be identified at the time of application but must be identified at the time of acceptance to the award's conditions. Eligible NP/PA must be new to the field of rheumatology (employed in a rheumatology practice setting for fewer than 18 months).
- Mentor must meet citizenship and other eligibility requirements as outlined in the [Awards and Grants Policies](#).
- Mentor must be an [ACR](#) member at the time of submission and for the duration of the award.
- Mentors are eligible to receive the award once per calendar year; however, the mentor must work with a new NP or PA each time. The mentor may have only one active NP/PA award at a time. Applications for this award are limited to one application per practice per year.

- NP or PA must be a graduate from a program accredited by either the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant.
- NP or PA must have a current state licensure.
- NP or PA must have national Board certification by one or more of the following:
 - American Nurses Credentialing Center
 - American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
 - Pediatric Nursing Certification Board
 - National Certification Corporation
 - National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants
- NP or PA must be a member of the [Association for Rheumatology Professionals](#) for the duration of the award.

Award Requirements

The NP/PA is expected to meet the competencies outlined in the [ACR/ARP Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Rheumatology Curriculum Outline](#) by the end of a 12-month training period. **(In order to access the curriculum, you must log-in with your active ACR/ARP online account):**

Required activities to help achieve this include:

- Completion of the [Advanced Rheumatology Online Course](#). (Members pay \$1,999)
- Attendance of a minimum of two face-to-face or virtual rheumatology-focused regional or national conferences (e.g. [State-of-the-Art Clinical Symposium](#), [The Training Rheum](#), CME Meetings and/or State Society Meetings), one of which must be the [ACR Convergence](#).
- Attendance at a Joint Injection Workshop, MSK Exam Workshop and/or two Meet the Professor sessions at the ACR Convergence.

The mentor is expected to:

- Participate in ARP-hosted mentorship webinars
- Complete progress and final reports as outlined below

Review Criteria

Each application will be reviewed by a group of your peers and ranked based on the following criteria:

- Quality of training/clinical environment
- Quality of training plan
- Quality of recruitment plan (if applicable)
- Mentor commitment to training
- Potential to increase the rheumatology workforce, particularly in an area that has been designated as "underserved". If necessary, priority will be given to applications in an underserved area as defined by [IDeA](#) and [HRSA](#) programs.

Award Terms and Funding

Recipients will be allowed to delay the start of the award up to 6 months until they have identified and hired (if applicable) an eligible NP or PA. Specific starting and ending dates should be provided by the applicant with the understanding that the total time commitment for training activities must total 12 months.

At the close of the award term, the recipient must provide the Foundation with a final report describing completion of award requirements, any additional accomplishments, and the final financial reconciliation. This report will include components for both the mentor and the NP/PA to complete. Failure to submit required reports by the deadline may result in penalties.

The applicant must present a detailed budget not to exceed \$25,000 in direct costs.

Funds may be used for the following:

- Conference fees for rheumatology-specific conferences such as the ACR Convergence, The Training Rheum, ACR State of the Art or Pediatric Rheumatology Symposium.
- Travel costs to rheumatology-specific conferences
- ARP and/or other professional society membership fees
- Educational tools, including:
 - Advanced Rheumatology Online Course
 - Textbooks
 - Online journal access
- Salary support for the mentor and/or NP/PA (to ensure protected time for “on-the-job” training)

Application Instructions

Before starting the online application, you will be required to create a Professional Profile in ProposalCentral, if you have not already. To do so, visit [this link](#) to begin creating your account.

All files must be saved as a PDF. Documents that do not have a required template should be formatted with ½ inch margin, 11-point Arial Font, and single-spacing (does not apply to figures and tables). All applications and documents must be written in English and avoid use of jargon. If terms are not universally known, spell out the term the first time it is used and note the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses. The acronym may be used thereafter.

Project Information

Award Details and Logistics

You will be asked to provide details on the following:

- Proposed start and end date
- Practice/Institution where clinical training will take place
- Will this award be used to train an NP or a PA?
- Will this award be used in adult or pediatric practice or both?

Applicant/Mentor Information

You will be asked to confirm your eligibility and provide contact information in this section. In addition to the applicant information requested above, you will be asked to upload the following document:

Applicant Biosketch or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Applicants must submit a Biographical Sketch or CV using the provided template. A [SciENCv-generated biosketch](#) will also be accepted. The biosketch is limited to five (5) pages, regardless of format.

NP/PA Information

Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Biosketch or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

If an NP/PA has already been identified, you will be asked to provide that individual's contact information and biosketch or curriculum vitae. A [SciENCv-generated biosketch](#) or CV using the provided template will be accepted. The CV or biosketch is limited to five (5) pages, regardless of format.

Budget & Justification

Applications must include an itemized budget with budget justification detailing how the \$25,000 will be spent. In the budget form and justification, please indicate what fraction (percent effort) of the mentor's total salary and NP/PA's total salary that will be supported by this award.

Required Documents

Project Proposal

Provide a project proposal addressing the following points (5-page limit):

1. Description of clinical environment. Examples that may be referred to in this section may include:

- Description of patient population such as demographics and diagnoses seen in office, number of unique patients seen annually, and total number of annual "new" and "return" patient visits. Use of a table is acceptable.
- Description of physical environment (e.g. Community practice or academic center? Infusion center? Lab/x-ray onsite? Etc.).
- Other staff in the office who would contribute to the NP/PA's training.
- Other trainees (e.g. students, residents, fellows) in the training environment, if applicable, and how both the mentor and NP/PA will interact with these individuals. Evidence that the mentor and practice have adequate time, resources, and patient volume to support all the trainees in the practice environment.
- Interest in and capacity to keep NP/PA employed in the practice after completion of training.
- Other support systems within your healthcare environment to facilitate the professional development of the NP/PA (i.e. advanced practice counsels/committees).
- Areas of clinical strength.

2. Description of training plan:

- Description of clinical and training activities planned for the 12-month training period, including how specific clinical and procedural skills will be taught.
- A block diagram of a typical week in the practice, with clinical time and dedicated teaching/mentoring time indicated.

3. Description of geographic location. Evidence that your practice is in a geographically underserved area should be included here, if applicable. Examples that may be referred to in this section include:

- Number of practicing rheumatologists within a 50-mile radius, a ratio of providers to potential patients and/or wait times in your practice for a new patient visit.
- Catchment area, typical distance and time traveled by patients to see a rheumatologist.
- Reference to [IDeA eligible states](#) (A list generated via the NIH's Institutional Development Award).
- Reference to [HRSA shortage areas](#) (A list generated by the Health Resources and Services Administration).

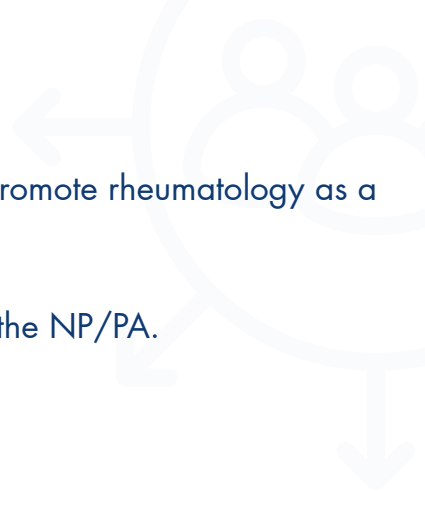
4. If an NP/PA has not yet been identified for this award, please delineate your recruitment plan for this candidate in order to have him/her hired within 6 months of receipt of the award.

Mentor Statement

The role of the mentor is to facilitate on-the-job training, provide resources, as well as giving constructive feedback and guidance in professional development for the NP/PA. During the training period, the mentor will help the NP/PA stay on track with regard to meeting the competencies outlined in the [ACR/ARP Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Rheumatology Curriculum Outline](#) **(In order access the curriculum, you must log-in with your ACR/ARP online account).**

The participating NP/PA may have more than one mentor; however, the primary mentor (applicant) must be a Board-certified rheumatologist and a fellow member of the ACR. A multi-disciplinary team of mentors may include other physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, or nurses.

The mentor should provide a statement (2-page limit) that includes:

- Details of prior experience as a mentor
 - Description of how the mentor will provide mentoring to the NP/PA and promote rheumatology as a career path
 - Percent of total weekly work effort/time the mentor will devote to training the NP/PA.
 - The role any additional mentors may play
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MENTOR CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME:

CURRENT POSITION:

EDUCATION/TRAINING (Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	COMPLETION DATE MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY

- A. Employment History
- B. Board Certification
- C. Membership in Professional Societies
- D. Prior Mentorship Experience
- E. Honors and Awards (if applicable)
- F. Publications (if applicable)
- G. Oral Presentations - Continuing Medical Education, Local, Regional or National Meetings (if applicable)

NURSE PRACTITIONER/PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME:

CURRENT POSITION:

EDUCATION/TRAINING (Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	COMPLETION DATE MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY

A. Employment History

B. Licensure

C. Board Certification

D. Membership in Professional Societies

E. Honors and Awards (if applicable)

F. Publications (if applicable)

G. Oral Presentations - Continuing Medical Education, Local, Regional or National Meetings (if applicable)

CONTACT US



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