

# Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027

## About Us

The Rheumatology Research Foundation is the largest private funding source of rheumatology research and training in the United States with a mission to advance research and training to improve the health of people with rheumatic diseases. Established by the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) in 1985, the Foundation provides funding to help recruit the best and brightest into the field, train rheumatology professionals in all career stages and support investigators conducting research that will lead us to more options for people with rheumatic disease.

The goal in supporting rheumatology education and training is to ensure patients have access to the doctors and professionals best suited to treat them. In all, the Foundation has committed more than \$192 million to the field of rheumatology through more than 3,700 individual research and training awards.

## Our Mission

The mission of the Rheumatology Research Foundation is to advance research and training to improve the health of patients living with rheumatic disease.

## Our Plan

Central to its mission, the Foundation's leadership has worked to build strong programming. The plan proposes an expansion of the research portfolio, while maintaining a balance between funding workforce development and innovative research. In addition, the plan includes a goal and strategies related to expansion of our donor base and increased brand awareness. These will be central components of the Foundation's work throughout the next five years to keep us poised for the continued growth of our programs and positioning us to have an even greater impact on the health of patients living with rheumatic disease.

*The areas outlined in this plan are intended to complement existing programs, not replace them.*

# Accelerating Discoveries

## **New and expanded efforts to encourage research collaboration.**

- + Increase the number of collaborative grants funded.

## **Expanded efforts to increase mentorship.**

- + Increased number of mentorship opportunities available that complement and/or expand on efforts being driven by the ACR

## **New opportunities for targeted grants (not limited to disease) via the R2C pathway.**

- + Broad funding portfolio that is not limited to disease-targeted research initiatives.

## **Support, expand and evolve research of interest to our diverse groups of key stakeholders including community rheumatologists, ARP members, and patients.**

- + Increased integration of funded research incorporated into clinical practice and health care systems.

## **Expanded efforts to support investigators to disseminate their research results to the rheumatology community.**

- + Increased understanding within the general public of the breadth and success of the work being funded by the Foundation

# Expanding the Rheumatology Pipeline to Improve Patient Outcomes

## **New and expanded recruitment and retention efforts aimed towards future and current rheumatologists and rheumatology professionals.**

- + Diverse representation of professionals choosing to pursue rheumatology as a career (MDs and interprofessional team).

## **New and expanded training opportunities in underserved areas.**

- + Highly trained and qualified professionals providing patients with rheumatology referrals and care in underserved areas (Rheums, PCPs, NPs, PAs, etc).

- + Continued strategic commitment to the rheumatology research career development pipeline.

## **Increase support for fellowship training programs.**

- + Continued strategic commitment to the rheumatology research career development pipeline.

- + Increased number of fellows and new training slots supported by the Foundation.

# Leveraging Relationships to Grow Rheumatology

## **Increased efforts to pursue new partners (e.g. pharma, non-pharma corporate, patients, nonprofits etc.).**

- + Grow the Foundation through new and expanded sources of funding.

## **Expanded efforts (when appropriate) to partner (DonorDirect/R2C) to fund mutual areas of interest.**

- + Increased opportunities for targeted support.

## **Expanded efforts to increase brand awareness and translate funded research to all stakeholders.**

- + Increased visibility and brand awareness.

- + Increased knowledge of and engagement with the Foundation's mission and the impact we are achieving in our mission priority areas, leveraging our relationship with ACR.

## **Expanded efforts to include diverse stakeholders in rheumatology as well as in Foundation volunteer and leadership roles.**

- + Increased representation of diverse stakeholders in Foundation funded research, donors, volunteers and leaders.