**Rheumatology Research Foundation**

Advancing Treatment | Finding Cures

# Investigator Award

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

This award is intended to support junior investigators (with a faculty appointment) during the period that they are developing a project that will be competitive for NIH funding.  It is not intended to be a second postdoctoral fellowship. The purpose is to provide support for basic science, translational, and clinical investigators engaged in research relevant to the rheumatic diseases for the period between the completion of post-doctorate fellowship training and establishment as an independent investigator.

Successful candidates will have:

➢ A developed project with preliminary data that they have generated themselves

➢ A track record of academic productivity in the form of publications

➢ Outline in their application how successful completion of their project will lead to NIH K grant funding (or equivalent) and/or independence over the term of the award

**Award Amount:** Up to $375,000 for up to 3 years

**All applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM ET on the deadline day through WizeHive at http://app.wizehive.com/apps/ia.** It is highly recommended that you begin preparing your application at least four (4) weeks prior to the grant submission deadline.

| Application Deadline |
|---|
| July 3, 2017 |
| **Notification** |
| December 1, 2017 |
| **Award Term Begins** |
| July 1, 2018 |

All award recipients must abide by Foundation Awards and Grants Policies at all times. A list of current policies is available at www.rheumresearch.org.

**Eligibility**

➢ Applicant must meet citizenship and other eligibility requirements as outlined in the Awards and Grants policies.

➢ Applicant must be an ACR or ARHP member at the time of submission and for the duration of the award.

| ACR members<br>must meet the following criteria: | ARHP members<br>must meet the following criteria: |
|---|---|
| • Have earned a DO, MD, or MD/PhD degree who have **completed** a Rheumatology fellowship<br>• Individuals more than 8 years from the beginning of fellowship (or 9 years for pediatric rheumatologists) at the time of award start may not apply<br>• MDs and Dos who are not licensed to perform clinical care may not apply | • Have earned a PhD*, DSc, or equivalent doctoral degree<br>• Must be within 6 years of terminal degree at the time of award start |

➢ The Foundation does not currently support PhD's working on basic science grants.

➢ Applicant must have a faculty appointment (e.g. instructor, assistant professor) at the time of application, and a firm institutional commitment to support the applicant's academic career for the duration of the award.

➢ Applicant must be able to commit a minimum of 75 percent full-time professional effort to research (including at least 50 percent effort to the proposed project), academic career development, and other research related activities.

➢ Former or current principal investigators of research grants (at the K level or higher, including institutional K) and past awardees of this or equivalent Foundation grants are NOT eligible to apply.

➢ Individuals at the NIH and CDC are NOT eligible to apply.

➢ Applicant may not apply for the **Scientist Development Award** in the same funding cycle.

**If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact the Foundation at 404-365-1373 or Foundation@rheumatology.org, before preparing your application.**

**Review Criteria**

Applications are rated on the following criteria:

➢ Relevance of the proposal to the Foundation's mission to improve the health of people with rheumatic disease.

➢ The proposed research project's scientific merit.

➢ The appropriateness of the proposed project as a mechanism for developing the applicant into an independent rheumatology investigator.

➢ The environment in which training will be conducted, specifically the mentor, the unit, the available facilities, and the potential for inter- and extra-departmental interactions.

➢ The applicant's background, training and potential to develop into a productive research scientist.

➢ The institutional commitment to protect applicant's time for research and continued education.

➢ The applicant's submission of a strong methods section with clear statistical and power analyses where appropriate.

**Award Terms and Funding**

The institution must agree to protect at least 75 percent of the applicant's full-time professional effort for research, academic career development, and other research-related activities. **The applicant must devote at least 50 percent full-time professional effort to the proposed project.** Award funds may be used for purposes of the Investigator Award project only. Funds may not be used to compensate clinical or teaching efforts.

Awardees cannot have ever received funding as principal investigator by any of the award mechanisms outlined in the Eligibility section at the time that funding for this award begins. Should the awardee receive any of the awards mentioned above during the Foundation award period, they must notify the Foundation immediately.  Should the Awardee receive a K award during the term of the award, the awardee will be required to return the portion of the award funding budgeted towards salary, but may be allowed to keep the research costs budgeted as additional funding throughout the award term.

Awards are funded for up to three years; however, funding in Years 2 and 3 is contingent upon evidence of a reviewed application, status on a pending submitted application or a detailed resubmission plan toward independent (e.g. NIH, VA) research funding. This information must be included in the Year 1 Progress Report.

Funds will be used to support a $75,000 annual salary—including fringe, if requested. In addition, an amount of up to $50,000 per year will be provided for supplies and other justified research costs—including salary support for technicians, coordinators, and statisticians, or advanced tuition. Total costs per year may not exceed $125,000, including eight percent indirect costs. Award payments will be distributed in two equal installments in July and January of each award year.

**Annual Investigator's Meeting:** The Foundation sponsors an annual Investigator's Meeting in June where all current investigators share progress updates on their funded projects. **Attendance is required for this event, and travel costs should be included as a line item in the grant budget.** Failure to attend the meeting may result in grant cancellation.

## Application Instructions

**Before starting the online application, please read the [Instructions for All Awards](#).**

### Applicant 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 documents:

### Biosketch in NIH Format

Limit to five pages; should include any pending support.

### Mentor Information

You will be asked to identify your primary mentor and provide contact information in this section.

An applicant may have more than one mentor; however, at least one must be a rheumatologist or rheumatology professional and a fellow member of the ACR or ARHP. Qualifications of the mentor will be judged based on the biosketches and the specific commitment of the mentor to the applicant's proposal. Applicants with two or more mentors need only to identify the primary and secondary mentors. Additional mentors may be listed in the application; however, biosketches are not required for these individuals.

### Mentor Applicant Biosketch in NIH Format

Limit to five pages; should include any pending support.

### Project Information

The information in this section is general information about the grant submission.

➢ **Project Title (limited to 200 characters)**
Make your title specific and detailed. It should clearly state the topic of your proposal.

➢ **Abstract (limited to 300 words)**
Succinctly describe the hypothesis to be tested, the specific aims and global objectives of the project and the hypothesized expected results.

➢ **Project Narrative (2-3 Sentences)**

Briefly describe how your proposed project is relevant to the Foundation's mission to improve the health of people with rheumatic disease. Specifically, please explain how your project will address at least one of the following:

- Increase patient access to care
- Develop future treatments and cures
- Demonstrate or improve the value of rheumatology care
- Expand the impact of rheumatology

In this section, be succinct and use plain language that can be understood by a lay audience. The Project Narrative is made public for all awarded grants and used by the Foundation for marketing efforts.

➢ **Science Category**
Please select one of the dropbox options in the online application. This will be used to assign your application to the appropriate study section.

➢ **Primary Study Material and Method**
Please select one or more of the checkbox options in the online application. This will be used to assign your application to the appropriate study section.

➢ **Research Category and Classification**
Information provided in this section will help to ensure each application is assigned to the most appropriate study section.

➢ **Keywords**
Choose three keywords that accurately describe the project. If the application focuses on a specific disease, please include it as a keyword.

**Research Award Assurance**
By checking this box, the applicant assures that the proposal is in compliance with institutional guidelines as provided by the sponsoring institution's clinical and research review boards. All research proposals including human subjects, laboratory animals and recombinant DNA techniques must show documented compliance with institutional guidelines. Copies of approval notices by the institutions IRB, IACUC and/or biosafety committees must be provided as appropriate once awarded.

## Required Documents

## Research Proposal

Limit to 12 pages including figures, tables and references. Please see Instructions for all awards for details.

The applicant is solely responsible for writing the proposal. This section should be presented in such a way that it is clear that the applicant understands the project. The following questions should be addressed: What do you intend to do? Why is the work important? What has already been done? How are you going to do the work? Describe in detail:

A. **Specific aims (limit one page)**: State the overall research objectives and specific aims for the proposed project.

B. **Background (limit three pages)**: Briefly summarize the background to the proposal. Include only key references to prior work that constitutes the foundation of the proposal and preliminary background work. Preliminary data produced by the applicant is essential.

C. **Experimental design and methods**: Summarize the essential features of the experimental design and methodology. Include a specific plan for data and statistical analysis as well as a clearly defined power analysis where appropriate. Preliminary data may also be included in this section.

D. **Significance (limit one page):** Include a statement on the relevance of the proposed project to the prevention, control or cure of rheumatic diseases. Describe how the successful completion of the proposed project will add to a better understanding of rheumatic diseases. State the importance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to the broad, long-term objectives.

E. **Future Direction:** Include a statement summarizing the potential impact and outcomes that this project may have on your career and the field of rheumatology. Please outline how successful completion of the aims outlined in this award will position you for future independent funding.

F. **Selected references**

## Benchmarks for Success

**Download, complete and submit the Benchmarks for Success Template. See example of the template below.**

These benchmarks should be applied to all relevant aspects of the proposal and must be measurable. Suggested examples include: time table for research proposal, submission of abstract(s) and/or publication(s). **Timeline for other grant submission is a required benchmark.**

## Budget

**Download, complete and submit the Proposed Budget Template. See example of the template below.**

The budget should indicate the expected amount of salary from the award, including fringe if requested. Budgets must comply with the award terms and funding as outlined in this document.

## Distribution of Time

**Download, complete and submit the Distribution of Time Template.** See example of the template below.

Indicate the percentage of time to be spent in any academic activity for each year of the award. List all clinical, research, teaching or administrative activities. Clinical work related to the proposed research is considered part of the research activity, but routine clinical duties are not. Clinical work related to the project must be clearly justified.

The institution must agree to protect at least 75 percent of the applicant's full-time professional effort for research, academic career development, and other research-related activities. The applicant must devote at least 50 percent full- time professional effort to the proposed project.

## Research Training Plan

This item must be completed by the mentor. The mentor must provide a plan that details activities that will be used to aid the applicant's development into an independent investigator. The role of the mentor or mentors should be clearly outlined. Describe any coursework or other plans for obtaining specific research methodology training. If the applicant is appointed at the level of instructor—or equivalent—an assessment of the likelihood of promotion to assistant professor must be included.

Limit to two pages.

## Mentor Letters of Support

The primary and secondary mentors must provide letters of support detailing the following (as applicable):

➢ Details of their previous experience as mentors

➢ Features of their training program and the institutional environment that will be relevant to the application

➢ Financial and other resources available to support the applicant specific to their project

➢ Description of how they will provide mentoring to the applicant

➢ The roles of any additional mentors mentioned in the application

➢ Agreement to participate in the project and confirmation regarding availability of time to commit to the project (if specific methodological support, reagents, patients or other resources are critical to the project, they should also be addressed in the statement)

➢ Description of applicants qualifications and track record of productivity

While this is not a "training" award, there must be a clear plan for the career development of the applicant by the mentor.

**Limit to two pages for primary mentor and one page for secondary mentor,** if more than one mentor; statements should be merged to create one file for upload.

## Letter of Institutional Support

The purpose of this award is not to make an investigator "suitable" for employment, but to provide support for those individuals to whom the institution has made a firm commitment as an academic rheumatologist.

The division chief, department chair, or equivalent institutional official must provide written assurance of the following:

➢ Institution must agree to protect at least 75 percent of the applicant's professional effort for research.

- Applicant must devote at least 50 percent of their total professional effort to the proposed research project.
- Award funds may only be used for purposes of the Investigator Award project. Funds may not be used to compensate clinical or teaching efforts.

## Additional Uploads

Limit to 20 pages. Additional documents which support the grant application may be uploaded.

**Note:** The Foundation does <u>not</u> require official signature from an authorized institutional research office at the time of application. However, many institutions require an application to be reviewed prior to submission. Please check with your research office for your institution's requirements.

## Checklist of Uploads
**Use this for reference when finalizing application materials.**
*Note: after a document is uploaded, you will not be able to view. Please double check all documents prior to upload. A PDF of your complete application will be emailed to you following the submission deadline for your reference.*

- ☐ Applicant Biosketch

- ☐ Mentor Biosketch

- ☐ Research Proposal

- ☐ Benchmarks

- ☐ Budget & Justifications

- ☐ Distribution of Time

- ☐ Research Training Plan

- ☐ Mentor Letters of Support

- ☐ Letter of Institutional Support

- ☐ Additional Uploads (optional)

**Benchmarks for Success**

The benchmarks (expected status of the project at various points in time) included in your original application will be used to evaluate progress. The milestones should reflect the specific aims of the proposal and be presented within the context of measurable outcomes. **Timeline for grant submission (e.g., NIH, VA) is a required benchmark.**

| BENCHMARKS *(Should be listed in order of priority)* | Metrics for Success *(Projected end points)* | Expected completion |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

| DETAILED BUDGET – IA YEAR 1 **DIRECT COSTS ONLY** | | | | FROM: 07/01/2018 | THROUGH: 06/30/2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **APPLICANT NAME:** | **INSTITUTIONAL BASE SALARY:** | **FRINGE RATE:** | **SALARY REQUESTED:** | **FRINGE BENEFITS:** | **TOTAL COST:** |
| | | | | | |
| REQUESTED SALARY (not to exceed $75,000)→ | | | | | $ |

**RESEARCH COSTS** *(itemize by category)*\*

| | |
|---|---|
| Supplies: | $ |
| Coordinators/Statisticians: | $ |
| Other (Please Specify): | $ |

**Justification:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **RESEARCH COSTS →** | $ |
| **TOTAL DIRECT COSTS→** | $ |
| **TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS (NOT TO EXCEED 8% OF YEAR 1 BUDGET)→** | $ |
| **TOTAL (DC + IDC) REQUESTED FOR YEAR 1 (NOT TO EXCEED $125,000)** | **$** |

*Applicants should outline an itemized budget not to exceed $125,000. Funds may be used for supplies, awardee salary and the salaries of technical personnel, but may not be used to acquire administrative or clerical support. \*Requires justification. Up to $50,000 per year may be requested for the following types of expenses: (a) research supplies, equipment and technical personnel; (b) tuition and fees and books related to didactic courses or career development; (c) travel to research meetings or training; and (d) statistical services including personnel and computer time. Indirect costs are permitted at a rate of 8%.*

Investigator Award                                                                                   *Issued March 1, 2017*

| DETAILED BUDGET – IA YEAR 2  *DIRECT COSTS ONLY* | | | | FROM: 07/01/2019 | THROUGH: 06/30/2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **APPLICANT NAME:** | **INSTITUTIONAL BASE SALARY:** | **FRINGE RATE:** | **SALARY REQUESTED:** | **FRINGE BENEFITS:** | **TOTAL COST:** |
| | | | | | |
| REQUESTED SALARY (not to exceed $75,000)→ | | | | | $ |
| **RESEARCH COSTS** *(itemize by category)\** | | | | | |
| Supplies: | | | | | $ |
| Coordinators/Statisticians: | | | | | $ |
| Other (Please Specify): | | | | | $ |
| **Justification:** | | | | | |
| RESEARCH COSTS → | | | | | $ |
| TOTAL DIRECT COSTS→ | | | | | $ |
| TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS (NOT TO EXCEED 8% OF YEAR 2 BUDGET)→ | | | | | $ |
| **TOTAL (DC + IDC) REQUESTED FOR YEAR 2** (NOT TO EXCEED $125,000) | | | | | **$** |

*Applicants should outline an itemized budget not to exceed $125,000. Funds may be used for supplies, awardee salary and the salaries of technical personnel, but may not be used to acquire administrative or clerical support. \*Requires justification. Up to $50,000 per year may be requested for the following types of expenses: (a) research supplies, equipment and technical personnel; (b) tuition and fees and books related to didactic courses or career development; (c) travel to research meetings or training; and (d) statistical services including personnel and computer time.  Indirect costs are permitted at a rate of 8%.*

| DETAILED BUDGET – IA YEAR 3  *DIRECT COSTS ONLY* | FROM: | THROUGH: |
|---|---|---|

Investigator Award                                                                                   *Issued March 1, 2017*

| APPLICANT NAME: | INSTITUTIONAL BASE SALARY: | FRINGE RATE: | SALARY REQUESTED: | 07/01/2020<br>FRINGE BENEFITS: | 06/30/2021<br>TOTAL COST: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| REQUESTED SALARY (not to exceed $75,000)→ | | | | | $ |
| **RESEARCH COSTS** *(itemize by category)\** | | | | | |
| Supplies: | | | | | $ |
| Coordinators/Statisticians: | | | | | $ |
| Other (Please Specify): | | | | | $ |
| **Justification:** | | | | | |
| RESEARCH COSTS → | | | | | $ |
| TOTAL DIRECT COSTS→ | | | | | $ |
| TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS (NOT TO EXCEED 8% OF YEAR 3 BUDGET)→ | | | | | $ |
| **TOTAL (DC + IDC) REQUESTED FOR YEAR 3 (NOT TO EXCEED $125,000)** | | | | | **$** |

*Applicants should outline an itemized budget not to exceed $125,000. Funds may be used for supplies, awardee salary and the salaries of technical personnel, but may not be used to acquire administrative or clerical support. \*Requires justification. Up to $50,000 per year may be requested for the following types of expenses: (a) research supplies, equipment and technical personnel; (b) tuition and fees and books related to didactic courses or career development; (c) travel to research meetings or training; and (d) statistical services including personnel and computer time. Indirect costs are permitted at a rate of 8%.*

**Distribution of Time/Effort**

Investigator Award                                                                          *Issued March 1, 2017*

The institution must agree to protect at least 75 percent of the applicant's full-time professional effort for research, academic career development, and other research-related activities. The applicant must devote at least 50 percent full-time professional effort to the proposed project.

| **ACTIVITY** | **DURING AWARD** | **DESCRIPTION** |
|---|---|---|
| Research | | |
| Foundation Project | _____ | _____ |
| Other Research Activities | _____ | _____ |
| Clinical Duties | _____ | _____ |
| Teaching | _____ | _____ |
| Administrative | _____ | _____ |
| Other (explain below) | _____ | _____ |
| **TOTAL*** | _____ | ***Column must total 100%*** |

Other Explanation:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Definitions:**

| | |
|---|---|
| *Foundation Project* | Time applicant will spend on activities related to the proposed project |
| *Other Research* | Time applicant will spend on other research projects |
| *Clinical* | Clinical activities including clinical teaching activities, such as ward rounds and clinics |
| *Teaching* | Teaching activities in a non-clinical setting |
| *Administrative* | Administrative duties |