



**Rheumatology Research Foundation**

Advancing Treatment | Finding Cures



# FELLOWSHIP TRAINING AWARD FOR WORKFORCE EXPANSION

**Request for Applications**  
**FY2028**



Issued  
April 1, 2026



[Foundation@rheumatology.org](mailto:Foundation@rheumatology.org)



[RheumResearch.org](http://RheumResearch.org)



# OUR MISSION

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

# Purpose

The purpose of this workforce expansion award is to help ensure an adequate supply of rheumatology providers meeting the needs of children and adults with rheumatic diseases in all areas of the country, particularly those currently underserved. The Fellowship Training Award for Workforce Expansion may be used to support the salary of any fellow in an ACGME-accredited rheumatology fellowship training program meeting any of the criteria below:

- The program has been unable to fill all its ACGME-approved slots due to funding constraints,
- An existing program that is creating a new slot,
- A new ACGME-accredited program (prepared to participate in the NRMP match for the first year of funding)

## AWARD AMOUNT

\$50,000 per year  
(\$100,000 max adult programs,  
\$150,000 max for pediatric programs)

## AWARD TERM

2 years for adult training programs  
3 years for pediatric training programs

All applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm ET on the deadline day through Proposal Central.

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

# Timeline

| Application Opens | Application Deadline | Notification      | Award Term Begins |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| April 1, 2026     | June 1, 2026         | September 4, 2026 | July 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' knowledge and training in osteoporosis and metabolic bone health. Program Directors applying for the Fellowship Training Award or the Fellowship Training Award for Workforce Expansion may elect to receive additional funds to support their fellow(s)' participation in approved training opportunities. 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.

The *Fellowship Training Award for Workforce Expansion* may be used to support the salary of any fellow in an ACGME-accredited rheumatology fellowship training program meeting any of the criteria below:

- Program has been unable to fill all its ACGME-approved slots due to funding constraints,
  - An existing program that is creating a new slot,
  - A new ACGME-accredited program (prepared to participate in the NRMP match for the first year of funding)
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- Applicant (Program Director) must be an [ACR](#) or [ARP](#) member at the time of submission and for the duration of the award.
  - Only Program Directors at ACGME-accredited institutions in good standing may apply.
  - The rheumatology fellowship training Program Director at the institution will be responsible for the overall direction, management and administration of the program.

- By submitting an application, the Program Director and sponsoring institution agree funds will be used for salary support of one fellow in their first or second year (or third year fellow in pediatric rheumatology). The name of the fellow supported during the grant period will be requested to be provided in your final award report.
- Multiple applications from a single institution will not be permitted unless they are for separate training programs (e.g., adult and pediatric rheumatology). Med/peds fellows are typically trained, supported, and funded by adult and pediatric divisions, and hence we recommend applying for this award in one of these existing tracks to support potential med/peds trainees. The Foundation will not allow an institution to apply for 3 awards in a single cycle.
- Programs may not apply for the Fellowship Training Award and the Fellowship Training Award for Workforce Expansion within the same application cycle.
- The FTA WE and FTA are multi-year awards (**two years for adult and three years for pediatric**). A program can only apply in a new award cycle, if the current award is complete, or in its final year.
- If there is no fellow available to appoint to this award between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027, the recipient may request a one-year deferral.
- There are no citizenship restrictions for supported fellows.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please inquire by email to [foundation@rheumatology.org](mailto:foundation@rheumatology.org) or 404-365-1373 before preparing your application.

## Foundation Strategic Plan

The Foundation seeks to support funding and strategic support for rheumatology fellowship training programs to expand fellow positions and strengthen the research career pipeline. Applications directly addressing the current [Strategic Plan](#) are particularly encouraged.

## Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on all components of the proposal, including:

- Program is filling a previously unfilled slot (due to funding constraint or creation of a new slot or program)

- Programs within a geographically underserved area
- Academic and/or clinical quality
- Success in achieving the goals of the training program
- Demonstrated financial need

All applications undergo rigorous peer review in their assigned study section and are scored and ranked according to the review criteria and overall merit of the proposal. All study section recommendations are sent to the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Council for review before being presented to the Foundation's Board of Directors for final approval.

## Award Terms and Funding

This is a multi-year award. No trainee may be appointed for less than 12 months during the period of appointment. Upon receipt of this award, the institution will be asked to provide assurance that funds will be used to fill an ACGME-approved slot that has previously gone unfilled (due to funding constraint or creation of a new slot or program) and the funds will be allocated to salary support of one fellow. Funding will not be released until the Foundation receives these documents.

Recipients will receive \$50,000 per year to support the salary and fringe benefits of one trainee. The award is paid directly to the sponsoring institution in two equal installments in July and January as outlined below. Other trainee costs are to be incurred by the recipient's institutional program.

|           |              |              |                                           |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Payment 1 | July 2027    | July 2028    | July 2029<br>(Pediatric Programs Only)    |
| Payment 2 | January 2028 | January 2029 | January 2030<br>(Pediatric Programs Only) |

At the close of the award term, the recipient must provide the Foundation with a final financial reconciliation and the name of the fellow(s) supported during the duration of the award period. All unexpended funds must be returned to the Foundation.

This award is supported in part by the *Andrejeski Fund for Fellowship Training* and the *Audrey M. Nelson, MD, Pediatric Rheumatology Fellowship Endowment*.

# 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.

## Program Information

You will be asked to list the Institution name, program type (pediatric/adult), and confirm eligibility in this section. You will also be asked to indicate which years your institution has received a Rheumatology Research Foundation Fellowship Training Award or Fellowship Training Award for Workforce Expansion in the last 5 academic years.

## Current & Pending Support

Applicants should list all current and pending financial support, including but not limited to grants and contracts. Indicate any current startup funds. For each entry, specify the overlap between the other awards, applications, and/or sources listed in this application.

## Applicant/Program Director

You will be asked to provide contact information in this section, and to upload the Program Director's biosketch using the provided template. A [SciENCv-generated biosketch](#) will also be accepted. The biosketch is limited to five (5) pages, regardless of format.

# Program Details

## Program Description

Describe the fellowship training program, including the following:

- Goals of the training program (**limit 3,500 characters including spaces**):
  - For each goal, please specify your success in achieving the goal. For example, if one is to ensure clinicians are well trained, cite your board pass rate; if another goal is to train physician scientists, cite how many graduates are still engaged in research.
- Description of program (**limit 8,000 characters including spaces**) including:
  - Program structure by training year (including number of outpatients clinics, inpatient consult times, electives, research, and training/participating institutions)
  - Curriculum; including didactics, journal clubs, board reviews, ultrasound training, QI experiences, etc.,)
  - Program's strengths: examples of what your program does best
  - Program's weaknesses: explain them and what you or the institution are doing to mitigate them
- Number of ACGME-approved training slots, number of slots entered into the NRMP match, fill rates for the past 5 years, and any plans for future growth/support (**limit 1,500 characters including spaces**)
- Evidence that you are in a geographically underserved area (**limit 3,500 characters including spaces**). Examples that may be referred to in this section include:
  - Proximity to next nearest training program
  - 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 travelled 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)
- Brief statement of financial need and the impact the award will have on the training program, as well as certification that the fellowship has an ACGME-approved slot that has gone unfilled due to lack of funding (if applicable) (**limit 1,500 characters including spaces**); there is no need to duplicate information here that you have included in the "fellowship positions questionnaire" application-included in the online application.)



# Fellowship Positions Questionnaire

Complete the Fellowship Positions Questionnaire by entering information directly into the application. The percentages of funding sources for the upcoming year must add up to 100%.

## Required Documents/Uploads

### Publications List

List publications that include rheumatology fellows among the authors within the last five years. **Please bold each fellow's name in the author listing.** Only include publications from work done primarily during the fellowship training (work originated or happened primarily as a fellow). Papers and abstracts should be separated. **If applying as a new ACGME-accredited program, publications list may not be applicable.**

### Faculty Information Table

Download, complete and submit the Faculty Information Table for all faculty members who will have significant interaction with the fellows. See an example of the table below.

### Fellows Graduate Table

Download, complete and submit the Fellow Graduates Table. See an example of the table below. **If applying as a new ACGME-accredited program, Fellow Graduates Table may not be applicable.**

### Letter of Institutional Support

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

- The quality of the training program
- Clear support for the program, Program Director and trainees
- Means of funding remaining salary (how the remaining funding for the trainee will be covered in the award cycle)

## Additional Uploads

Additional documents which support the application may be uploaded. Limit 10 pages. Means of funding and population information should NOT be in the appendix.



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# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Applicants should provide the following information. This information may also be requested for Co- Principal Investigator, Key Personnel, Other significant contributors, and mentors. Follow this format for each person.  
DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES.

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NAME:

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POSITION TITLE:

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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<br>(if applicable) | COMPLETION<br>DATE<br>MM/YYYY | FIELD OF STUDY |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
|                          |                           |                               |                |

- A. Personal Statement
- B. Positions and Honors
- C. Contributions to Science
- D. Additional Information: Research Support and/or Scholastic Performance

# Faculty Information Table

Please use the template below and add/delete rows as needed. Include a detailed description of each faculty member's involvement in the training program and their specific contributions.

| Full Name with Credentials | Role in training program | Description of involvement |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1.                         |                          |                            |
| 2.                         |                          |                            |
| 3.                         |                          |                            |
| 4.                         |                          |                            |
| 5.                         |                          |                            |
| 6.                         |                          |                            |

# Fellows Graduates Table

Provide the requested information on fellow graduates from the last five years. Please use the template below and add/delete rows as needed.

| Fellow's full name with credentials | Career choice and current location                                             | Years in training program | Rheumatology ABIM/ABP status                                                                         | First time pass? (Yes/No) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Joseph A. Fellow, MPH, MD        | Rheumatology<br>(Adult or Peds) and Clinical Immunology, University of Florida | 2012-2014                 | Rheum. Boards 2014/<br>Did Not Pass<br>Rheum. Boards 2014 / Passed<br>Certified<br>2015/Expires 2025 | No                        |
| 2.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |
| 3.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |
| 4.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |
| 5.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |
| 6.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |
| 7.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |
| 8.                                  |                                                                                |                           |                                                                                                      |                           |

# CONTACT US



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Website:  
[RheumResearch.org](http://RheumResearch.org)



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