



The American College of Rheumatology Research and Education Foundation supports programs that promote rheumatology research and training, and that introduce medical students and other health professionals to the field of rheumatology.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL AWARDS

Application, format and submission requirement: All applications must be submitted electronically via the ACR REF Web site by 5:00 pm ET August 2, 2010. To submit your application, visit www.rheumatology.org/REF for a link to the online application. Please use 1 inch margins and Arial 11 point font for all documents submitted as part of your application and avoid jargon and abbreviations. Additional information concerning our awards and grants program is available at www.rheumatology.org/REF, or by contacting the REF at ref@rheumatology.org or (404) 633-3777.

Awards and Grants Policies: All applicants and award recipients must abide by REF Awards and Grants Policies at all times. A list of current policies is available at www.rheumatology.org/REF.

Review of applications: Applications will not be blinded for the review process. Any perception of conflict of interest for reviewers will be eliminated during this time. Only applications that are complete and received by the deadline will be reviewed. It is the applicant's responsibility to review their completed application for errors and to ensure that it adheres to the application instructions. Applicants are responsible for submitting all required application documents prior to the deadline noted below.

Notification and funding: Applicants will be notified as to the status of their award in December. If there is a citizenship requirement, proof of citizenship will be requested at the time of notification. Funding will begin in July 2011.

Application deadline is 5:00 pm ET August 2, 2010

Purpose

The purpose of the ACR REF Rheumatology Scientist Development Award is to provide support for a structured, formal, clinical or basic science research training program for rheumatologists or health professionals in the field of rheumatology. This award is designed for individuals in the early stages of their career or those without significant prior research experience who plan to embark on careers in biomedical and/or clinical research in arthritis and rheumatic diseases.

This mentored post-doctoral fellowship program provides support for salary as well as research and/or education costs for the early years of research training in an environment where trainees may interact with established investigators in a clinical unit involved in the care of rheumatic diseases. The goal of funding at this level is to provide an opportunity for young scientists to embark on focused research and research training that will allow them to be competitive for the next level of career development awards. Through this award, the REF provides a means for ensuring more qualified, highly-trained investigators in the field of rheumatology.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the award, the applicant must:

1. Be an ACR or ARHP member.
2. Have a doctoral level degree, including but not limited to MD, DO, or MD/PhD. ARHP members who are doctorally prepared (i.e., must have PhD, DSc, or equivalent doctoral degree) are eligible for this award. ARHP applicants may include post-docs or investigators new to the field of rheumatology.
3. Applicants must be clinician scientists (both physicians and non-physicians). Applicants who are not clinicians must have a clinician mentor, consultant or co-Investigator on the project. All proposed projects must involve patient-oriented research even if the PI is not a licensed clinician. PhD scientists proposing epidemiology, outcomes, and health services research projects qualify for funding. ***PhD basic scientists and MDs who are not licensed to perform clinical care may not apply.***

4. Be able to commit at least 75% full-time professional effort to research, career development, and other scholarly activities. Candidates may not spend more than 25% effort in clinical and/or teaching activities.
5. Receive acceptance by a mentor who will oversee the training and research experience. An applicant may have more than one mentor; however, at least one mentor must be a rheumatologist or rheumatology health professional and an ACR/ARHP member. This requirement does not exclude having a primary research mentor outside a rheumatology division, but does require that the trainee's academic career development has input from rheumatology faculty (e.g. rheumatologist as a co-mentor). Mentors must have sufficient independent research support to cover the costs of the proposed research project in excess of the allowable costs of the RSDA. The use of co-mentors to achieve the goals of the program is strongly encouraged.
6. Former or current principal investigators on mentored career development awards (e.g., K awards), NIH research grants (R01) or subprojects on a program project (P01) or a center grant (P50) are NOT eligible to apply. In addition, past or current recipients of VA or REF career development awards (PSDA, CIFA, JCD) and/or Institutional K recipients are NOT eligible to apply. *Individuals at the NIH or CDC are not eligible to apply.*
7. MD or DO applicants who are fellows must have completed one year of training by the start of the award term, and must be currently enrolled in an ACGME-accredited clinical training program. This training must lead to the applicant's eligibility to take the ABIM examination in rheumatology or the ABP examination in pediatric rheumatology. Health professional applicants must have completed at least one year of mentored research experience.
8. Applicants applying for this award may not apply for the **ASP Junior Career Development in Geriatric Medicine Award** or **Rheumatology Investigator Award** in the same funding cycle.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact the REF before preparing your application.

Citizenship

Applicant must be a citizen or non-citizen national of the United States, or be in lawful possession of a permanent resident card. Non-citizen nationals are generally persons born in outlying possessions of the United States (e.g., American Samoa and Swains Island). Individuals on temporary (J1, H1) or student visas are not eligible.

Award Terms and Funding

Recipients must devote at least 75% full-time professional effort to research, career development, and other scholarly activities with assurance that no more than 25% full-time professional effort will be spent on clinical and/or teaching activities. At least 50% professional effort must be devoted to the proposed project in year 1. This award may be transferred to another institution, and provided that the 75% scholarly effort, mentoring and benchmark requirements are maintained. Requests for transfer must follow REF guidelines and are subject to approval.

Award recipients cannot have ever received funding as principal investigator by any of the award mechanisms outlined in the Eligibility section at the time funding for this award begins. Should the recipient receive any of the awards mentioned above during the REF award period, they must return the remainder of the REF award.

Awards are funded for 2 years; however, there is a possibility for renewal in year 3. Renewal is contingent on submission of an annual progress report showing substantial accomplishment and progress toward benchmarks specified in the original application. In order to be considered for year 3 funding, recipients must also provide evidence of a submitted application for a career award (e.g., NIH K series award, VA, or REF Rheumatology Investigator Award).

Financial support will be provided as outlined below. Salary support will be provided up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year in years one and two; and up to a maximum of \$75,000 in year three. Salary will be based on levels set by the institution. Recipients may receive salary supplementation from other sources; however the extent of this supplementation must be stated on the application and the applicant must notify the REF if other support is received during the award term. Fringe benefits are allowed at a rate of up to 30 percent. Documentation of institutional fringe rates must accompany the proposed budget.

The award will be paid directly to the sponsoring institution and will be disbursed in two equal installments in July and January of each award year. The award must be directly applied to the individual recipient's salary and/or research and educational costs only as outlined in the approved budget.

Year 1: Up to \$50,000 total; all of which may be used for salary support, or a portion may be used for research costs as outlined below.

Year 2: Up to \$75,000 total; with up to \$50,000 toward salary support and up to \$25,000 for research costs as outlined below.

Year 3*: Up to \$100,000 total; with up to \$75,000 toward salary support and up to \$25,000 for research costs as outlined below.

**Renewal in year 3 is competitive, and subject to approval by the REF Scientific Advisory Council.*

Research Costs: Up to \$25,000 per year may be requested for research costs. Allowable research costs include the following types of expenses: (a) research supplies, equipment and technical personnel; (b) tuition and fees** and books related to degree programs, such as a MPH, MCR or other didactic courses appropriate for career development; (c) travel to research meetings or training; and (d) statistical services including personnel and computer time. These funds may not be used for salary support for the recipient.

***Payment for tuition and fees will be disbursed separately upon demonstration of course completion and a bill from the institution.*

Review Criteria

Applications are rated on the following criteria in this order of importance:

1. Relevance of the proposed research training plan to rheumatology, specifically to arthritis and rheumatic diseases.
2. The appropriateness of the proposed project as a mechanism for developing the applicant into an independent rheumatology scientist.
3. The environment in which the training program will be conducted, specifically the supervisor, the unit, the available facilities, and the potential for inter- and extra-departmental interactions.
4. The applicant's background, training and potential to develop into a productive research scientist.
5. The proposed research project's scientific merit.
6. The institutional commitment to protect applicant's time for research and continued education.
7. The applicant's submission of a strong methods section with clear statistical analysis and power analysis.

Prior experience and publications are not required, but will be considered as supportive qualifications of the applicant. Institutional commitment and plans for the advancement of the applicant toward becoming an independent investigator will be important in review of this award. Review committees will include both ACR and ARHP members well versed in areas of basic, translational and clinical science. ARHP applications are encouraged and the REF will make it a priority to fund competitive ARHP proposals.

Reporting Requirements

The recipient and mentor must provide the REF with annual reports on the progress of the research project(s). Progress reports must follow REF guidelines and be completed using a template provided by the REF. Renewal of award in year 2 is contingent on demonstration of substantial accomplishment and progress toward benchmarks. This information must be included in the progress report each year. In order to be considered for year 3 funding, recipients must ALSO provide the REF with evidence of a scored application, status on a pending submitted application, or plan for an application toward a career award (e.g., NIH K series award, VA career development, or REF Rheumatology Investigator Award) with their year 2 progress report. Renewal in year 3 is competitive, and subject to approval by the REF Scientific Advisory Council.

In addition to the annual progress report, the awardee must provide a final report at the end of the award term noting any unexpended funds and a description of project results and outcomes, such as abstracts, submitted or published articles, other grants obtained, and future career plans. In an effort to effectively evaluate the impact of this award, all recipients are required to complete online evaluations for up to ten years post-award. An e-mail link to the evaluation will be provided at least 30 days prior to the due date.

The division chief or program director must provide written documentation approving all reports. Failure to submit a progress report will hinder the awardee's eligibility to receive additional REF funding. Failure to comply by REF deadlines with award terms and conditions, reporting requirements, and proposed time/effort commitments may result in institutional penalties for future REF submissions.

Application Instructions

Only online applications submitted through the REF Web site will be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. It is the applicant's responsibility to review the application for completeness and errors, and to ensure that it adheres to all REF instructions. Applicants are responsible for submitting all required sections and documents prior to the deadline noted on page 1 of this application. **It is highly recommended that you begin preparing your application at least four (4) weeks prior to the grant submission deadline.**

Each item must be saved and uploaded to the online application separately. For example, item one of this application, institutional statement, must be saved as a MS Word or Adobe PDF file per the following instructions and uploaded when prompted in the online application.

- All files must be in either MS Word or Adobe PDF format and saved as '.doc' or '.pdf' files; Save all MS Word documents as '.doc,' **not** '.docx'
- All templates are available for download on the Web site
- Use one inch margins, Arial font and 11-point font size (does not apply to figures and tables)
- The header of each page must contain the applicant's last name and first initial (formatted as lastname, firstinitial)
- Filenames should be named according to section (e.g., "1InstiStmt.doc") and must not exceed 15 characters in length
- Additional file uploads should be numbered consecutively and named relevant to their content (e.g., '2PatientPop.doc')
- Avoid using jargon and abbreviations within your application
- Review all documents once uploaded and before final submission

You will be asked to provide the following:

1. Face Page

Download, complete and submit the Face Page template. See example of the template below. Applicants must designate whether their application should be reviewed by the basic science or translational/clinical science section. A final decision will be made by the Study Section Chairs.

Examples of applications that will be reviewed by the Basic Science Study Section:

- Animal models of disease
- In vitro characterization of normal cellular or molecular processes
- Studies of the genetics of rheumatic diseases

Examples of applications that will be reviewed by the Translational/Clinical Study Section:

- Biomarker development/validation using patient-derived material
- Studies to understand pathophysiology using patient-derived material
- Studies to improve diagnosis, prognosis or treatment using human subjects or patient-derived materials

2. Abstract page – to include the following:

- **Project Title:** Include your project title at the top of your abstract page. Make your title specific and detailed. It should clearly state the topic of your proposal and is limited to 56 characters, including spaces between words.
- **Abstract – limited to 300 words:** Succinctly describe the hypothesis to be tested, the specific aims or global objectives of the project, and the expected results.

- **Key Words:** At the bottom of your abstract page, please include **three key words** that accurately describe the project.

3. **Research proposal – limited to ten pages including references**

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:

- Specific aims:** State the overall research objectives and specific aims for the proposed project.
- Background:** Briefly summarize the background to the proposal. Include only key references to prior work that constitutes the foundation of the proposal and any preliminary background work by the applicant.
- 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
- Significance:** Include a statement– limited to one page– 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.
- Selected references** – limited to two pages

4. **Benchmarks of success***

Download, complete and submit the Benchmarks of Success template. See example of the template below. Benchmarks of success should be included for the formal coursework and the research project as outlined in the research proposal. Examples include: timeline for research proposal, submission of abstract(s) and/or publication(s). ***Timeline for other grant submission (e.g., NIH, VA, REF, etc. career development awards) is a required benchmark.**

5. **Statement of the mentors–limited to two pages for primary mentor and one page for secondary mentor**

Primary and secondary mentors are required to submit a signed statement that will include, but not limited to:

- 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
- Confirmation regarding availability of time to commit to the project

If more than one mentor; statements should be merged to create one file for upload.

6. **Research training plan – limited to two pages**

This item must be completed by the mentor and must describe the research training plan and the staff and facilities necessary to provide a suitable environment for high quality work. The mentor must describe in detail the applicant's role in the proposed project and outline other activities that will be used to aid the applicant's development into an independent investigator. Describe any coursework or other plans for obtaining specific research methodology training.

7. **Proposed budget**

Download, complete and submit the Proposed Budget Template. See example of the template below. Applications must indicate the expected amount of salary from the award, including fringe if requested. Fringe benefits are allowed at a maximum rate of 30%. A statement from the institution's contract office explaining the institution's maximum fringe benefit rates must be included. Applications without this supporting documentation will not be considered. Budgets must comply with the award terms as outlined on page 3 of this application. (Note: you can search your institution's website for its fringe rate.)

8. Distribution of time – limited to one page

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

Give the percentage of time to be spent on academic activities during the award period. List all research, clinical, teaching and/or administrative activities. Clinical work related to the proposed research may be considered part of the research activity, but typically this type of clinical activity would not generate revenue.

Award recipients must devote at least 75% full-time professional effort to research, career development, and other scholarly activities during the award term, with at least 50% percent to this award in the first year. Candidates may not spend more than 25% effort in clinical and/or teaching activities.

9. Other Support

Submit a list of the applicant’s other current and pending support. Other support includes all financial resources, Federal or non-Federal, commercial or institutional, available in direct support of an individual’s research endeavors, including but not limited to research grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and/or institutional awards. Information on other support should be provided in the format shown below:

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL

ACTIVE/PENDING

Project Number (Principal Investigator) Source	Dates of Approved/Proposed Project Annual Direct Costs	% Effort/Time
Title of Project (<i>or Subproject</i>)		
The major goals of this project are...		

OVERLAP

10. Research award assurances

Please provide a brief statement of assurance that your 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.

11. Applicant biosketch in NIH format – limited to four pages

12. Mentor biosketches in NIH format – limited to four pages each

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 CVs 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 CVs are not required for these individuals. Primary and secondary mentor biosketches should be merged into one file for upload.

13. Letters of recommendation

The primary and secondary mentors must provide letters of recommendation detailing the applicant’s qualifications. This letter should **not** include a description of the program or mentor’s qualifications. No additional letters of recommendation will be accepted. Letters should be merged into one file for upload.

14. Letters of institutional support

- a. The division chief and/or department chair must provide written assurance of the distribution of time/effort as outlined in the application. This letter should also provide assurance of the following:
 - Quality and relevance of the environment for scientific and professional development of the applicant including the adequacy of research facilities and the departmental commitment that applicant will be able to participate in educational opportunities.
 - Department's commitment to the scientific development of the candidate and assurances that the department intends the candidate to be an integral part of its research program beyond the duration of the proposed award.
 - Department's commitment to an appropriate balance of research and clinical duties, including a commitment of at least 75% effort to scholarly activities.
- b. If the applicant is currently a rheumatology fellow, the training program director or division chief must provide assurance of protected time as well as assurance that program requirements, as specified by the Residency Review Committee, will be fulfilled.
- c. If the applicant has a faculty appointment in a college of medicine, assurance should be provided in a letter signed by both the division chief and department chair.
- d. If the applicant is an ARHP member, assurance should be provided by the Dean or equivalent institutional official.

1. Face Page

ACR REF Rheumatology Scientist Development Award

Please check one: ACR or ARHP Member ID: _____

Basic Science or Translational/Clinical Science

1. TITLE OF PROJECT:	
2. APPLICANT/PI (NAME):	2A. DEGREE(S)
2B. POSITION TITLE:	2D. MAILING ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)
2C. DEPARTMENT:	
2E. PHONE AND FAX TEL: _____ FAX: _____	2F. EMAIL ADDRESS:
3. PRIMARY MENTOR	3A. PRIMARY MENTOR TITLE
4. HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Copies of Approved <u>Human Subject Assurances</u> will be required once application has been approved for funding and before any grant payments will be made.	5. VERTEBRATE ANIMALS <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Copies of Approved <u>Vertebrate Subject Assurances</u> will be required once application has been approved for funding and before any grant payments will be made.
6. PROPOSED PERIOD OF SUPPORT (MM/DD/YY): From: _____ To: _____	7. COST REQUESTED FOR PROPOSED PERIOD: DIRECT _____ TOTAL _____ COSTS (\$): _____ COSTS (\$): _____
8. APPLICANT ORGANIZATION: NAME: EIN OR TIN NUMBER:	9. ORGANIZATION ADDRESS:
10. OFFICIAL TO BE NOTIFIED IF AWARD IS MADE: NAME: TITLE: ADDRESS: PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ EMAIL:	11. OFFICIAL SIGNING FOR APPLICANT ORGANIZATION: NAME: TITLE: ADDRESS: PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ EMAIL:
12. APPLICANT ASSURANCE:	SIGNATURE OF PI (named in item 2) <i>(In ink. "Per" signature not acceptable.)</i> DATE:
13. PRIMARY MENTOR ASSURANCE:	SIGNATURE OF PRIMARY MENTOR <i>(In ink. "Per" signature not acceptable.)</i> DATE:
14. APPLICANT ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE:	SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL (named in item 10) <i>(In ink. "Per" signature not acceptable.)</i> DATE:

By signing in boxes above (12-14), signee certifies that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Signee agrees that they are aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. Signee agrees to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project and to provide the required progress reports if a grant is awarded as a result of this application.

4. 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 other grant submission (e.g., NIH, VA, REF, etc. career development awards) is a required benchmark.**

GOALS <i>(Should be listed in order of priority)</i>	Metrics for Success <i>(Projected end points)</i>	Expected completion

7. Proposed Budget

Applicant Name (Last, first initial):

DETAILED BUDGET – RSDA YEAR 1 <i>DIRECT COSTS ONLY</i>		FROM		THROUGH
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Basic or <input type="checkbox"/> Translational/Clinical Science		07/01/2011		06/30/2012
NAME	Fringe Rate*	SALARY REQUESTED	FRINGE BENEFITS*	TOTAL COST
<i>*Not to exceed 30%; Must provide institutional documentation of fringe rate</i>				
SALARY SUBTOTAL →				\$
OTHER EXPENSES (Itemize by category)**				
Justification:				
OTHER EXPENSES SUBTOTAL →				\$
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS FOR BUDGET PERIOD (NOT TO EXCEED \$ 50,000)				\$
<i>Applications must include an itemized budget indicating the expected amount of salary from this award, up to a maximum of \$50,000 annually (including fringe). Up to \$25,000 per applicant per year may be requested for research costs. Allowable costs include 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. These funds may not be used for salary support for the recipient or mentors.</i>				

**Payment for tuition and fees will be disbursed separately upon demonstration of course completion and a bill from the institution. (Note: you can search your institution’s website for its fringe rate.)

8. Distribution of Time/Effort

Give the percentage of time to be spent on academic activities during the award period. List all research, clinical, teaching and/or administrative activities. Clinical work related to the proposed research may be considered part of the research activity, but typically this type of clinical activity would not generate revenue.

Award recipients must devote at least 75% full-time professional effort to research, career development, and other scholarly activities during the award term, with at least 50% percent to this award in the first year. Candidates may not spend more than 25% effort in clinical and/or teaching activities.

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DURING AWARD</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
Research	_____	_____
Proposed Project	_____	_____
Clinical Duties	_____	_____
Teaching	_____	_____
Administrative	_____	_____
Other (explain below)	_____	_____
TOTAL*	_____	*Column must total 100%

Other Explanation:

Definitions:

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