



Memo

DATE: July 1, 2009
TO: REF Award Applicants and Recipients
FROM: REF Scientific Advisory Council
RE: REF Policies

A. Definitions

1. The term "SAC" refers to the REF Scientific Advisory Council, the governing body of the REF Awards and Grants program and council responsible for peer review and oversight of grant administration and polices.
2. The "Conditions of Award" is the document issued to and signed by all award recipients and their sponsoring institutions. It outlines the specific award terms and conditions.
3. "Award application" refers to the official REF document available as a PDF on the Web site which outlines the award terms and application instructions and requirements.
4. The term "Grantee Institution" as used in this policy shall mean the tax-exempt sponsoring institution by which the Awardee is employed or its assignee or the for-profit employer of the Awardee or its assignee, which is responsible for administering the award, and is signatory for all matters relating to the award including use of human subjects, animals, recombinant nucleic acid, safety, and this policy.
5. The term "Awardee" as used in this policy means the principal investigator or primary recipient identified in a Foundation award, grant or contract.

B. Policies

The following REF policies remain in effect until further notice.

1. Eligibility

Each award application includes detailed Eligibility criteria. Please read this section carefully prior to preparing an application and contact staff with any questions. Individuals may apply for one award per cycle. Applications from individuals who have received equivalent REF awards will not be accepted. This means that PSDA, CIFA or HPNIA recipients may not apply for the Rheumatology Scientist Development Award. Likewise, recipients of the AIA or HPIA may not apply for the Rheumatology Investigator Award.



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2. Membership

Applicants for all REF awards must be ACR or ARHP members at the time of application and if/when the award is made. This membership must be maintained during the award term defined on the Conditions of Award document.

3. Administrative Review

In an effort to assist applicants in submitting complete and correct applications for final peer review, all applications undergo administrative review by REF staff. This means you may be contacted for additional information or clarification after submitting your final application. You will also be notified if for some reason your application was not submitted for final peer review. However, all applicants are ultimately responsible for the application as it was submitted online.

4. Citizenship

Unless otherwise noted in the application instructions, the 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.

5. Resubmissions

The REF does not allow formal resubmission of grant applications. This means responses to previous year's critiques will not be accepted. Applicants may apply as many times as they'd like, however all grant applications will be reviewed as new applications.

6. Indirect Costs

Unless otherwise stated in the award application and/or Conditions of Award document, REF award funds cannot be used to provide institutional support. No indirect costs or overhead will be provided. Please see below for our policy regarding fringe benefits.

7. Fringe benefits

Fringe benefits are allowable at a maximum rate of 30%. For all applications requesting allocation to fringe, supporting documentation in the form of a statement explaining the institution's fringe benefit rates must be included. Applications without this supporting documentation will not be considered.

8. Award Deferral

Award recipient must submit a formal request in writing addressed to the SAC, requesting to defer their award until specified date (maximum deferral of 1 year from original award date), outlining the reason for deferral and listing all other support during this time. Requests will be granted or denied at the discretion of the SAC.

9. Carry-over

REF policy does not restrict the amount of yearly carryover on multi-year awards; however restrictions apply for carryover on those awards with extended terms. Carryover is not allowed on single year awards unless an extension has been granted.



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10. No-cost extensions

A no-cost extension gives the PI extra time to complete the scope and objectives of the project without additional funds being provided by the sponsor. Although requests may not be made for the sole purpose of spending remaining funds, you may request to expend remaining funds during the no-cost extension period. Requests for no-cost extension must be submitted in writing at least 30 days prior to the end of the award term and may be granted at the discretion of the REF. Only awards with carryover of 20% or less of the original award amount are eligible and extensions may not exceed 12 months.

11. Unexpended funds

All unexpended funds must be returned to the REF at the close of the award. Recipients must submit a final report at the end of award term outlining how award monies were spent, including a financial closeout statement to be completed and signed by the Office of Grants & Contracts/Sponsored Projects.

12. Travel reimbursement

Travel reimbursement to award recipients will be allowed only if specifically outlined in the original award. A completed reimbursement form with original receipts must be submitted to the REF within 60 days of travel.

13. Termination of employment

Should the award recipient's employment with the supporting institution be terminated at any time during the award term, the recipient must notify the REF within 30 days of termination. The award will be suspended pending review of a formal request to defer payment or transfer the award to a new institution. If the recipient fails to notify the REF within 30 days, the award may be terminated at the discretion of the REF.

14. Award Transfers

Awards may not be transferred between individuals. Transfers between institutions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests should be made using the Award Transfer Request Checklist and submitted to the REF along with the required supporting documentation. Requests are reviewed and granted at the discretion of the Scientific Advisory Council, the governing body of the REF's Awards and Grants Program. If your request is granted, the REF will send a revised Conditions of Award document, which must be signed and returned to REF in order to complete the transfer.

15. Training Director changes on Fellowship Training Awards

The following items should be submitted by the institution and included in the file as an addendum to the original application:

- a. Letter from new Program Director agreeing to assume the role designated and to adhere to the goals and objectives stated in the original application.
- b. New Program Director's Biosketch
- c. Letter from Division Chief verifying the appointment of new Program Director
- d. Documents will then be reviewed by SAC Chair and a revised COA with new Program Director's name must be signed and returned within 90 days.



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16. Rebudgeting

All requests for rebudgeting must be submitted to the REF immediately for approval. Rebudgeting requests will be approved at the discretion of the REF. Original approved budget submitted, award terms and REF policy will govern the decision of the REF.

17. Award Evaluation Metrics

In an effort to help the Foundation track the outcomes and impact of all awards, awardees will be asked to complete an online metrics survey. This information will be vital to help improve and modify the existing award structure for future awardees. An electronic link will be provided under a separate cover.

By acknowledging acceptance of any REF award, the recipient agrees to participate in all efforts to track the outcomes of this award and any, if applicable, trainees that participate in your activities/research during the time of the award and for a reasonable time (3 years) after the award end date. This data is essential to measure the success of this award and this agreement is required to accept the award.

18. Progress Reports

The awardee must provide the REF with a progress report identifying progress towards benchmarks of your proposal on or before April 1 of each year. The awardee and mentor will provide the REF with reports on the progress of the research project at 12-month intervals for multi-year awards. The awardee must provide a final report at the end of the award term noting the project outcome including abstracts, submitted or published articles, other grants obtained, or invited reviews. 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.

19. Scientific Conduct and IRB Approval

The ACR Research and Education Foundation does not assume responsibility for the conduct of the investigation or the acts of the investigator, since both are under the direction and control of the Grantee Institution and subject to the institution's medical and scientific policies.

Ethical Standards: All research involving human subjects, laboratory animals, and recombinant DNA techniques must show documented compliance with NIH guidelines, the same as provided by the Grantee Institution's clinical and research review board. Awardees must assure compliance with regulations promulgated by the US Department of Agriculture under amendments of the Animal Welfare Act, public law 99-198. In addition, all activities supported by a REF research award must comply with all applicable U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations with respect to the rights and welfare of human subjects.

Malpractice Disclaimer: The REF is not responsible for any malpractice suit arising from any activity supported by the award. The awardee and Grantee Institution agreed to hold the REF harmless from any claims arising from such programs.



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20. Awardee Assurance

Research performed under REF grants is the sole responsibility of the Awardee and the Grantee Institution. The Awardee and Grantee Institution are both responsible for ensuring that all research activities are conducted in a safe, responsible, and ethical manner.

21. Award Cancellation

Any grant may be terminated or cancelled by the REF upon written notice to the Awardee and the responsible Administrative Official at the Grantee Institution if in the sole discretion of the REF: (1) the Awardee is unable to carry out the research for any reason, (2) the Awardee or any member of his or her research team is found by an institutional investigation to have committed scientific misconduct or fraud, (3) the Awardee has failed to comply with any of the terms and conditions of this award, (4) the REF concludes that the Awardee has received overlap funding for the award or that the funds are not being used for the purposes originally outlined in the research protocol or (5) the IRB approval for the grant has been rescinded.

22. Patent

The REF relinquishes rights to the awardee and the grantee institution to whom the award is made, with the following exception: the REF reserves the right to obtain access to all information regarding work that it supports and to make public any scientific information produced through its support.

23. Disclosure

For disclosure purposes, any relationship with industry that the applicant/recipient or sponsoring institution might feel would be a potential conflict of interest should be noted in a letter from the institution and included with the original application.

24. Publications

It is expected that the results of research supported by the Foundation shall be published as quickly as possible in the open literature, consistent with the high standards of scientific excellence and rigor. The responsibility for publication of results lies exclusively with the Awardee and his or her collaborators, and may be published without prior review of the REF.

Any publication arising in whole or in part from a research grant funded by the REF shall acknowledge funding support by the Foundation. Please use the following language in conjunction with our logo (available upon request, and must appear 2" or larger in width according to REF logo guidelines): *Funding for this project was provided by the American College of Rheumatology Research and Education Foundation _____ Award.* Please contact REF staff with any questions regarding this language.

As soon as a manuscript is accepted for publication—whether during the term of the grant or after it has expired—a copy of the publication along with the name of the journal and expected date of publication should be forwarded to the REF. As soon as reprints are available, two copies of the reprint should also be forwarded.