



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 1, 2011. 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 2012.

Application deadline is 5:00 pm ET August 1, 2011

Purpose

The purpose of the ACR REF Rheumatology Investigator Award is to provide support for basic science 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. The award is intended to support junior investigators 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.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the award, the applicant must:

1. Be a member of the ACR or ARHP.
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.
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. 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.**
5. Be able to commit a minimum of 75% full-time professional effort to research (including at least 50% effort to the proposed project), academic career development, and other research-related activities.

6. Former or current principal investigators of 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. Past recipients of this grant or the Arthritis Foundation Arthritis Investigator Award as well as Institutional K recipients are not eligible to apply. **Individuals at the NIH and CDC are not eligible to apply.** (Applicants may serve as principal investigators for industry-sponsored trials, or serve as co-investigators for other research awards.)
7. Previous recipients of the ACR REF Rheumatology Scientist Development Award are encouraged to apply.

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

Review Criteria

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

1. Relevance of the proposed research to rheumatology, specifically to arthritis and rheumatic diseases.
2. The proposed research project's scientific merit.
3. The applicant's background, training and potential to develop into a productive research scientist.
4. The environment in which the research will be conducted, specifically the suitability of the mentor, the unit, the available facilities, and the potential for inter- and extra-departmental interactions.
5. The institutional commitment to support the applicant's academic career for the duration of the award.
6. The appropriateness of the proposed project as a mechanism for development of applicant into an independent rheumatology investigator.

This program is extremely competitive with reviews and funding decisions comparable to NIH K-series awards going to junior faculty members. Successful candidates will be those who have completed at least a two year post-doctoral fellowship and have a mature project with preliminary data that they have generated themselves with preference given to those who have demonstrated recent productivity in the form of publications.

Citizenship

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.

Award Terms and Funding

The institution must agree to protect at least 75% 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% full-time professional effort to the proposed project. Award funds may be used for purposes of the Rheumatology Investigator Award project only. Funds may not be used to compensate clinical or teaching efforts.

Award recipients 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 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 up to three years; however, funding in Years 2 and 3 is contingent upon evidence of a scored application, status on a pending submitted application or a detailed resubmission plan toward federal (e.g. NIH, VA) 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—as well as eight percent overhead to the institution. 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.** Award payments will be distributed in two equal installments in July and January of each award year.

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

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. Each report MUST include a description of the recipient's efforts to obtain federal funding, including evidence of a scored application, status on a pending submitted application, or resubmission plan toward a NIH K series award.

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., `-HnstiStmt.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:

Project/Abstract Title

Please type the name of your project or abstract title in this space.

1. Face Page

Download, complete and submit the Face Page Template. See example of the template below.

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 12 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.

- a. **Background:** 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.
- b. **Experimental design and methods:** Summarize the essential features of the experimental design and methodology.
- c. **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.
- d. **Selected references** – limited to two pages

4. 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 grant submission is a required benchmark.*

5. Statement of the mentor – limited to two pages

Each mentor must provide a letter detailing his or her part in the project and agreeing to serve in that capacity. The mentor must also outline his or her past training record. If specific methodological support, reagents, patients or other resources are critical to the project, they should also be addressed in the statement. While this is not a “training” award, there must be a clear plan for the career development of the applicant by the mentor. *If multiple mentors are providing statements, each is limited to two pages, and all documents must be merged into one file for upload.*

6. Research training plan - limited to two pages

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.

7. Proposed budget

Download, complete and submit the Proposed Budget Template. See example of the template below. All applications must include an itemized budget. The budget should indicate the expected amount of salary from this award, up to a maximum of \$75,000 annually including fringe. Fringe benefits are allowed at a maximum rate of 30 percent. 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. (Note: you can search your institution’s Web site for fringe rate.)

An amount of up to \$50,000 per year is allotted for supplies and other justified research costs—including salary support for technicians, coordinators, and statisticians, or advanced tuition. Amounts allocated for research support personnel, supplies and equipment must be justified. An amount equal to eight percent of the total yearly budget can apply to overhead to the institution.

8. 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% 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% full-time professional effort to the proposed project.

9. Other Support

Submit a list of 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)	Dates of Approved/Proposed Project	% Effort/Time
Source	Annual Direct Costs	
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’s curriculum vitae in NIH format - limited to four pages

12. Mentor’s curriculum vitae in NIH format - limited to four pages each

If providing CVs for more than one mentor, files must be merged into one file for upload.

13. Letter of institutional support from the Department Chair

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.

This letter should provide clear support for the candidate, and should also describe the quality of the academic research environment. This letter must also provide evidence of adequate institutional support and adequate protected time to allow completion of the proposed work.

A signed letter from the department chair must guarantee protected time as detailed below as well as appropriate space and access to research support, e.g., common equipment, core facilities, biostatisticians, etc.

- 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 Rheumatology Investigator Award project. Funds may not be used to compensate clinical or teaching efforts.

14-16. Additional Uploads

Additional documents which support the grant application may be uploaded for Items 15-17 and should have relevant file names and be numbered consecutively, beginning with 9 (e.g., 9TraineeCV.doc”). All uploaded files must meet the formatting requirements as specified on page 3 of this application.

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) (In ink. "Per" signature not acceptable.) DATE:
14. APPLICANT ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE:	SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL (named in item 10) (In ink. "Per" signature not acceptable.) 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 grant submission (e.g., NIH, VA) is a required benchmark.**

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

Applicant (Last, first initial):

DETAILED BUDGET – RIA YEAR 1 <i>DIRECT COSTS ONLY</i>			FROM		THROUGH
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Basic or <input type="checkbox"/> Translational/Clinical Science			07/01/2012		06/30/2013
NAME	Institutional Base Salary	Fringe Rate*	SALARY REQUESTED	FRINGE BENEFITS*	TOTAL COST
<i>*Not to exceed 30%; Must provide institutional documentation of fringe rate</i>					
REQUESTED SALARY (not to exceed \$75,000)					\$
RESEARCH COSTS (Itemize by category)**					\$
Supplies Coordinators/Statisticians Other (please specify): Justification:					
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> RESEARCH COSTS → </div>					\$
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)					\$
<p><i>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. 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. (Note: you can search your institution's website for its fringe rate.)</i></p> <p><i>**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. Tuition must be direct billed to the REF; (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%.</i></p> <p><i>***Note that payment for tuition and fees will be disbursed separately upon demonstration of course completion and a bill from the institution.</i></p>					

Applicant (Last, first initial):

DETAILED BUDGET – RIA YEAR 2 <i>DIRECT COSTS ONLY</i>			FROM		THROUGH
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Basic or <input type="checkbox"/> Translational/Clinical Science			07/01/2013		06/30/2014
NAME	Institutional Base Salary	Fringe Rate*	SALARY REQUESTED	FRINGE BENEFITS*	TOTAL COST
<i>*Not to exceed 30%; Must provide institutional documentation of fringe rate</i>					
REQUESTED SALARY (not to exceed \$75,000)					\$
RESEARCH COSTS (Itemize by category)**					\$
Supplies Coordinators/Statisticians Other (please specify): Justification:					
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> RESEARCH COSTS → </div>					\$
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS					\$
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS (NOT TO EXCEED 8% OF YEAR 2 BUDGET)					\$
TOTAL (DC+IDC) REQUESTED FOR YEAR 1 (NOT TO EXCEED \$125,000)					\$
<p><i>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. 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. (Note: you can search your institution's website for its fringe rate.)</i></p> <p><i>**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. Tuition must be direct billed to the REF; (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%.</i></p> <p><i>***Note that payment for tuition and fees will be disbursed separately upon demonstration of course completion and a bill from the institution.</i></p>					

Applicant (Last, first initial):

DETAILED BUDGET – RIA YEAR 3 <i>DIRECT COSTS ONLY</i>			FROM		THROUGH
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Basic or <input type="checkbox"/> Translational/Clinical Science			07/01/2014		06/30/2015
NAME	Institutional Base Salary	Fringe Rate*	SALARY REQUESTED	FRINGE BENEFITS*	TOTAL COST
<i>*Not to exceed 30%; Must provide institutional documentation of fringe rate</i>					
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 1 (NOT TO EXCEED \$125,000)					\$
<p><i>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. 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. (Note: you can search your institution's website for its fringe rate.)</i></p> <p><i>**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. Tuition must be direct billed to the REF; (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%.</i></p> <p><i>***Note that payment for tuition and fees will be disbursed separately upon demonstration of course completion and a bill from the institution.</i></p>					

8. Distribution of Time/Effort

The institution must agree to protect at least 75% 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% full-time professional effort to the proposed project.

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

Other Explanation: _____

Definitions:

- Clinical* Clinical activities including clinical teaching activities, such as ward rounds and clinics.
- Teaching* Teaching activities in a non-clinical setting
- Current* Time applicant spends on activities now
- During award* Time applicant would spend on activities if award is received
- Post award* Readjusted time applicant to spend on activities following award cycle