



Academy of Leadership and Innovation (ALI) Research Grant Program Guidelines and Instructions

Research Grant Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of the Academy of Leadership and Innovation (ALI) Research Grant Program is to stimulate, encourage, and support research activities by ALI members that enhance the body of knowledge related to one or more of ALI's mission and areas of focus to optimize the value of physical therapy and progress equity in health.

The ALI's mission is to: promote health equity and value in healthcare through best practices in advocacy, leadership, and innovation.

The ALI's areas of focus are: health policy, clinical administration, global health, use of technology in physical therapy practice, PT Proud (LGBTQ+), issues beyond clinical practice (non-clinical careers), and social justice in health.

The grant program is intended to support emerging investigators or senior investigators embarking on a new research agenda.

General Information

This grant is generously supported through ALI, a component of the American Physical Therapy Association. Guidelines for distribution of funds and criteria for selecting recipients are established and implemented by ALI's Research Committee. The committee is comprised of previous recipients of ALI grants.

Grant Amount

Maximum amount is \$15,000. Funds are available to ALI members only.

Deadline

Proposals are due December 31 of each year. Notification of the funding will occur by the end of March with a start date of May 1.

Grant Period

Proposed projects should have a Period of Performance of 1 year. The grant year will begin May 1 and end April 30 unless another Period of Performance has been requested and approved by the ALI Research Committee. Institutional Review Board documentation must be provided before the funding will be released.

No-cost extensions of the 1-year deadline must be requested at least 1 month prior to the 1-year period completion (May of the following year). Requests should be directed to the ALI Research Committee chair with copy to the ALI administrator. The request should include a

summary of progress to date on the project and funds spent, reason(s) for request of extension, and estimated additional time needed.

Use of Funds

Funds may be requested to meet any type of expense reasonably associated with the project, including salary support and fringe benefits, supplies, publication costs, printing or postage, and support services (e.g., research assistant, information technology).

Limitations of Use

No overhead or indirect costs are allowed. Please make your institution/organization fully aware of this restriction. In addition, no funds will be approved to finance the cost of overruns or deficits on existing projects or to finance projects already in progress.

Payment of Funds

Funds will be sent directly to the Principal Investigator or their designee.

Completion of Project, Dissemination, and HPA Service Expectations

It is expected that research findings will be disseminated through appropriate channels such as peer-reviewed publications or APTA-sponsored conferences within 18 months after funds are released. In addition, grant recipients will be expected to serve a 3-year term on the ALI Research Committee beginning in February of the following year.

Reporting

The Principal Investigator will be required to send a final report by July 1st of the year following the award to the executive director of ALI. The report should include: (1) a summary of the overall project and results, (2) Dissemination of results and products (abstracts, manuscripts, additional grants) and (3) how the grant assisted with research agenda, progression of degree or career. If a no-cost extension is received, a yearly update is required with the same in process information by July 1st each year.

Funding Priorities

One to two ALI Research Grants may be awarded each year for research that enhances the body of knowledge related to the ALI mission and areas of focus (listed below).

ALI Mission: Promote health equity and value in healthcare through best practices in advocacy, leadership, and innovation.

ALI Areas of Focus:

- health policy
- clinical administration
- global health
- use of technology in PT practice
- PT Proud (LGBTQ+)
- issues beyond clinical practice (non-clinical careers)
- social justice in health

Studies should also be in alignment with the most recent APTA Research Agenda for Physical Therapy and/or APTA Scientific Research Priorities for the Physical Therapy Profession. Emphasis will be placed on projects that demonstrate sound study design and potential to

optimize the value of physical therapy and progress equity in health.

Eligibility

All ALI members are eligible to apply. Collaborative research with non-section members is permissible as long as the principal investigator is a member of ALI. Eligible applicants may submit only one proposal per year in which they are listed as the Principal Investigator.

Investigators who submit a proposal that is not funded are eligible to resubmit one time at the next grant cycle if they believe they can adequately address issues raised by the review committee. Resubmissions are not reviewed separately, but rather are considered in the pool of applications for the grant cycle.

Acknowledgement

To ensure that support provided by ALI is adequately reflected, all publications, posters, and presentations prepared in connection with the proposed research must include an appropriate credit line as follows:

"This research has been supported in full/part with an APTA Academy of Leadership and Innovation Research Grant."

Criteria for Evaluation of Application

ALI's Research Committee has responsibility for reviewing applications and selecting which proposal(s), if any, qualify for funding. In evaluating applications, the ALI Research Committee will take into account the strengths and weaknesses of the application in regards to five areas: significance, approach, investigator readiness, innovation, and environment. The project's overall alignment with ALI's mission and areas of focus and the project's potential impact on the physical therapy field are key factors and will be heavily weighted in the review process. While relevance to the ALI mission and areas of focus is requisite for selection to receive an ALI grant award, an application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have a major scientific impact, and thus, deserve a high merit rating. For example, an investigator may propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to move the PT field forward or improve clinical decision or outcome.

During the review process, the following questions will be considered:

1. Significance

Does the project address a problem or critical barrier to progress that is relevant to ALI's mission and areas of focus? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will the field of PT and the people, communities, and populations we serve be changed?

2. Approach

Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analysis well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed? Is the sample size appropriate? Are the recruitment and retention plans well thought out? Are the assessment and outcome measures to be used appropriate? If the project involves human research, are there plans for: 1) protection of human subjects from research risks; and 2) inclusive and equitable study practices. Does the study have IRB Approval? If not, what is the plan for IRB review prior to the start of the funding period and how likely is this plan to be successful?

3. Investigators

Is/are the Primary Investigator, collaborators, and other researchers well-suited to the project? Do they have appropriate experience and training? If established, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)?

4. Innovation

Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of practice or novel in the broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?

5. Environment

Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment, and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, participant populations, or collaborative arrangements?

Application Instructions

Overview

All proposals must be submitted to the online portal by the December 31 deadline to be eligible for review.

Formatting

File format:

The Application form is provided in an editable Word document that applicants must complete and convert to .pdf format prior to submission. Application form should be submitted in .pdf format with the following file name:

- Lastname_Firstname_Research Grant Application

Font (size, color, type density) and Line Spacing

Adherence to font size, type density, line spacing and text color requirements is necessary to ensure readability and fairness. Text in your attachments must follow these minimum requirements:

- Font size: 11 points or larger. Smaller text in figures, graphs, diagrams, and charts is acceptable, as long as it is legible when the page is viewed at 100%.
 - Some PDF conversion software reduces font size. It is important to confirm that the final PDF document complies with the font requirements.
- Type density: Must be no more than 15 characters per linear inch (including characters and spaces).
- Line spacing: Must be no more than six lines per vertical inch.
- Text color: Black or other high-contrast text colors are recommended since they are legible to the largest audience. We recommend choosing fonts that maximize accessibility, including: Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, and Verdana.

Paper Size and Margins

- Use paper size no larger than standard letter paper size (8 ½" x 11")
Provide at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. No applicant-supplied information can appear in the margins.

Application Instructions by Section

A. Title Page: Complete the items in this section as listed. More than one Area of Research may be checked if the project is related to multiple areas.

B. Cover Letter: Submission of a cover letter is required, and it must be completed on institutional or organizational letterhead. The cover letter is limited to one page. At a minimum, the cover letter must include:

- Name, date, address, and signature of the applicant
- Project title
- Status of IRB approval

Please do not use the cover letter to summarize your proposal or to circumvent the line or space limits imposed in this application.

C. Project Summary/Abstract: The project summary is a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work and should be able to stand on its own (separate from the application). This section should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields

and understandable to a scientifically literate reader. Avoid both descriptions of past accomplishments and the use of the first person. Please be concise.

Format: Limited to 30 lines of text.

Content: State the study's rationale, long-term objectives, and specific aims, making reference to ALI's relevant research topics and the relevance of this work to the ALI mission and areas of focus. Describe the research design and methods for achieving stated aims and objectives.

D. Biosketches: (required for all key personnel)

Format: Use the current NIH biosketch format (Limited to 5 pages).

Content: Sections include: Education and Training; Personal Statement; Positions and Honors; Contributions to Science; Additional Information (Research Support/Scholastic Performance).

Templates, instructions, and examples are available online at

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>

E. Facilities and Other Resources:

Format: Limited to 2 pages

Content: Describe how the scientific environment in which the research will be done contributes to the probability of success (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport). In describing the scientific environment in which the work will be done, discuss ways in which the proposed studies will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment or from unique subject populations or how studies will employ useful collaborative arrangements.

If there are multiple performance sites, describe the resources available at each site. For early-stage investigators, describe institutional investment in the success of the investigator (e.g., resources for classes, travel or training, career enrichment, logistical support, financial support).

F. Specific Aims:

Format: Limited to 1 page.

Content: State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize expected outcome(s), including the impact that the findings will have on physical therapy practice, education, and/or research. List succinctly the specific aims of the research proposed (e.g., test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier, develop a new technology).

G. Research Strategy

Format: Limited to 6 pages (References are not counted towards page limit)

Content: Organize the Research Strategy in the specified order and use the instructions provided below. Begin each section with the appropriate heading - Significance, Innovation, Approach, References Cited.

1. Significance

Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses. Describe the scientific premise for the proposed project,

including consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of published research or preliminary data crucial to the support of your application. Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice within the field. Describe the impact that the proposed project will have relative to ALI's mission and areas of focus.

2. Innovation

Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms. Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions. Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

3. Approach

Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Describe plans for protection of human subjects from research risks and for inclusive and equitable study practices. Strong justification from the scientific literature, preliminary data, or other relevant considerations, must be provided for applications proposing to exclude participants from groups that have historically been underrepresented in research, for instance based on factors such as sex, race/ethnicity, disability status, and/or intellectual abilities. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any resource sharing plans as appropriate. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims. If the project is in the early stages of development, describe a strategy to establish feasibility and acceptability, and address the management of any high-risk aspects of the proposed work. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised. Discuss any preliminary studies, data, and/or experiences relevant to this application.

- a. Study Design. What kind of study is it? Describe the overall methodology and design. Does the design match or is it appropriate for the research question and objectives?
- b. Participants. Provide a complete description of participants that will be studied, the sampling and recruitment strategies. Comment on the feasibility of obtaining the desired number of participants.
- c. Instrumentation/Methods of Measurement. Describe your measurement tools, including the validity and reliability of proposed measurement tools. If secondary data are being examined, clearly define study variables and how these are or will be constructed. For qualitative or mixed method designs address the data gathering methods.
- d. Procedures. Describe the procedures that will be used to collect data. Discuss potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures. If secondary data are being examined, describe the data in regard to representativeness, comprehensiveness, and limitations in addressing the study questions. For qualitative studies or mixed method studies, describe the methods used to generate the data.
- e. Data Analysis and Interpretation. Describe how the data will be analyzed. For quantitative studies, describe how each variable will be treated in the statistical analysis. For qualitative or mixed method studies, address reflexivity, underlying research paradigm(s), procedural rigor, and analysis method/s planned to address

trustworthiness and triangulation of the findings; describe the decision trail and rules of analyses along with the plan for transforming data.

4. Timeline and Dissemination Plan

Please provide a timeline detailing proposed research activities for the duration of the award, as well as plans for disseminating research findings and applying for future grant support.

5. References

References should be listed in the order of appearance by numerical superscripts that appear consecutively in the text. Please follow AMA reference style. References should be limited to relevant and current literature. While there is no page limit, it is important to be concise and to select only those references pertinent to the proposed research.

H. Protection of Human Subjects: Answer the questions posed in the Application form.

I. Appendices:

1. Letter(s) of Support and Collaboration

Format: Limited to 6 pages total.

Content: Include any letters necessary to demonstrate the support of participants and collaborators such as Senior/Key Personnel and other significant contributors included in the grant application. Letters should stipulate expectations for co-authorship and the allocation of resources. For consultants, letters should include rates/charges and the level of effort anticipated.

2. Other

Format: Limited to 3 appendix items

Content: Do not use the Appendix to circumvent the page limits of the Research Strategy or any other section of the application for which page limit applies. The only allowable appendix items are:

- clinical trial protocols
- blank informed consent/assent forms
- blank surveys, questionnaires, data collection instruments

J. Budget:

1. Detailed Budget

Complete the budget table included in the application form, adding additional rows as needed. Please note full costs for the project, including dissemination plan, even if only a portion is being requested from ALI. Note other funding source(s) (e.g., additional grant, internal funding, in-kind support, etc.). When unknown factors prevent knowing exact costs, provide an informed estimate and provide reasoning for this estimate in the Budget Justification section.

Up to \$15,000 for the ALI Research Grant may be requested with appropriate justification. Applications requesting more than the maximum amount will not be considered.

2. Budget Justification

a. Personnel:

- Note full costs for personnel, even if being covered by other sources (stipend, teaching assistantship, other grant funding, internal support, in-kind support) with detailed breakdown in the budget justification.
- Note that any salary support cannot include indirect costs.
- Any hourly costs should be broken down into each type of personnel (research assistants, intervention delivery, outcomes measurement, etc). The number of anticipated hours and number of personnel in each category should be included.

b. Equipment

- Itemize the equipment with details of unit cost, number of units, and any additional costs associated (tax/shipping) in the Detailed Budget.
- Note how equipment (including software) will be used in the project.

c. Travel

- Specify if travel is to conduct the study/project, and/or to disseminate findings.
- Note details of how the amount was calculated (mileage with rate, air travel, hotel, etc.)

d. Participant Costs

- Participant costs can include cost associated with participants access or incentives.
- Participants may include people participating in the study or community program or an advisory panel.
- Itemize the details of these costs based on the estimated number of participants in each area.

e. Other Direct Costs

- Other costs associated with the project that do not fit in other categories may be included in this section. It may include items such as materials and supplies, publication/dissemination costs, consultation services, transcription services, subawards, equipment or facility rental/user fees, etc.
- Provide itemized details and justification for how these costs will be used.