



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

TREATING OUR FAMILY AND YOURS

# Request for Applications Physicians-in-Training Research Program

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## THE AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION (AOA)

**AOA's Mission:** To advance the distinctive philosophy and practice of osteopathic medicine.

**AOA's Vision:** To be the professional home for all physicians who practice osteopathically.

**About the AOA:** Serving as the professional family for more than 145,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) promotes public health and encourages scientific research. In addition to serving as the primary certifying body for DOs, the AOA is the accrediting agency for all osteopathic medical schools.

Continually striving to advance the distinctive philosophy and practice of osteopathic medicine, the AOA stands for the following universal principles:

- Enhancing the value of AOA membership
- Protecting and promoting the rights of all osteopathic physicians
- Accentuating the distinctiveness of osteopathic principles and the diversity of the profession
- Supporting DOs' efforts to provide quality, cost-effective care to all Americans
- Collaborating with others to advance the practice of osteopathic medicine

The AOA stands firmly behind osteopathic physicians' ethical and professional responsibilities to patients and the medical profession. We offer an in-depth look at our ethical standards in our official Code of Ethics. Our policies and positions also outline the AOA's stance on major health issues affecting all areas of society.

### AOA RESEARCH PRIORITIES

AOA will support the development of research projects grounded in osteopathic medicine that have the most promising potential to impact both individual patient outcomes and evidence-based medicine; facilitate collaboration within and outside the osteopathic community, and enhance the visibility of the osteopathic profession.

AOA has identified two areas of emphasis to help focus funding opportunities and develop collaborative research studies. The two recommended areas of emphasis cover topics in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine and Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMM/OMT). These topics include fall prevention, vestibular problems, and concussions, and topics in Acute and Chronic Pain Management emphasizing various treatments and patient outcomes. These categories reflect the concept that while OMM/OMT remains a strong tradition of the osteopathic profession, osteopathic medicine encompasses a broader philosophy that includes patient-centered care, empathy, and the mind/body/spirit approach. The osteopathic philosophy embraces an approach that while seeking and promoting health, it also addresses disease states, as well as the spectrum of patient care (e.g., primary, secondary, and tertiary).

## **OVERVIEW OF THE AOA PHYSICIANS IN TRAINING PROGRAM**

This program is designed as a mechanism for supporting the research training of the applicant and will enable the applicant to conduct a basic science, clinical, or health services research project that will make a significant contribution to osteopathic medicine. Additionally, this program seeks to encourage physicians in training to contribute to osteopathic research throughout their career.

The program involves the completion of a grant proposal under the direction of a mentor. The mentor should be an active investigator in the area of the proposed research and be committed both to the career development of the applicant and to the direct supervision of the applicant's research. Both the mentor and the applicant must accept responsibility for the conduct of the project and the reporting of the scientific results. A portion of the research-training program may be conducted at an institution other than the sponsoring institution. The sponsoring institution, however, must have obtained the services of a consultant who will offer on-site supervision of that portion of the grant proposal, which is not completed at the sponsoring institution.

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITY & REQUIREMENTS**

The AOA, with the guidance from the Bureau of Osteopathic Clinical Education and Research (BOCER), has available funding for projects designed to assess the osteopathic approach on the two research priority areas.

### **1. All proposals must incorporate and address the osteopathic approach.**

The Osteopathic Approach is based on the tenets of osteopathic medicine. The osteopathic tenets are a foundation of the osteopathic profession from which emerges the osteopathic philosophy of the holistic approach to care by helping patients be truly healthy in mind, body and spirit — not just free of symptoms. The tenets of osteopathic medicine are defined as follows:

- (1) The body is a unit; the person is a unity of body, mind, and spirit.
- (2) The body is capable of self-regulation, self-healing and health maintenance.
- (3) Structure and function are reciprocally interrelated.
- (4) Rational treatment is based upon an understanding of the basic principles of body unity, self-regulation and the interrelationship of structure and function.<sup>1</sup>

### **2. Specific requirements for topic and scope of project per research focus area.**

Proposals submitted must comply with the specific requirements for topic and scope of research projects as set forth in the respective RFAs for the larger research grants.

#### **1. Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine and Treatment on the Prevention and Management of Musculoskeletal Injuries (OMM/OMT)**

Proposals in response to this RFA should improve the scientific basis of the mechanics and impact of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) and Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT) on the prevention and management of

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<sup>1</sup>H622-A/13 TENETS OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE – AOA Policy Compendium, <http://policysearch.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/H617-A2018-TENETS-OF-OSTEOPATHIC-MEDICINE.pdf>

musculoskeletal injuries through clinical, in vitro, or basic science research. Proposals should show clear relevance to disease states in one of the two following areas:

1. Use of OMM/OMT for fall prevention and/or vestibular problems.
2. Use of OMM/OMT in concussions, either mechanistic or efficacy, including outcome measures such as cognition, recovery time, biomarkers, lymphatic drainage, functional MRI, etc.

[Download Research Priority Area OMM/OMT RFA](#)

## 2. **Acute/Chronic Pain Management Grant (ACPM)**

Proposals in response to this RFA should explore the osteopathic approaches to acute and chronic pain management with an emphasis on treatments and patient outcomes. Proposals should address one or more of the following:

1. The role of OMM/OMT, as well as other osteopathic modalities such as touch and communication in surgical recovery.
2. The role of the effects of OMM/OMT on reducing opioid prescribing (consumption). Studies should measure acute pain control.
3. The identification and investigation of the role of biomarkers in substantiating that OMT works mechanistically and defining how biomarkers can be used as a more reliable measurement of pain reduction than the use of traditional pain scales.

[Download Research Priority Area ACPM RFA](#)

Preference will be given to proposals that: (1) use novel approaches; and (2) lead to results/outcomes that could be translated to physician practices. Please note that while the AOA has a preference for novel projects, it will also support supplemental projects of existing research studies. Supplemental projects must have research questions and specific aims distinct from the existing (parent) study. Applicants will be required to provide information regarding the parent study.

## **DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS**

January 31, 2020 - All applications must be submitted via the AOA online application system by 5:00 pm (CST). Awards will be announced on June 15, 2020.

## **GRANT PERIOD**

18 months (beginning September 1, 2020)

## **FUNDS AVAILABLE**

Up to \$20,000

### **The AOA does not fund:**

1. Physical plant renovations or improvements.

2. Professional development activities, including dues for professional society memberships, tuition for continuing education activities, and tuition for continuing medical education activities.
3. Indirect costs to the applicant's institution, or any other participating institutions.
4. Development and/or engineering of equipment.
5. Provider payments for treatment.

*If an applicant or an applicant's institution is uncertain whether a particular expense is allowable, he/she should contact the Department of Research and Development prior to preparing the final budget for submission.*

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

1. Applicants must be a DO or MD in a program of osteopathic recognition and fulfilling residency, internship, or fellowship requirements at an AOA or ACGME accredited institution at the time of the award.
2. Applicant must have a Preceptor/Mentor that meets the following criteria:
  - a. Possess a DO, MD, or equivalent doctoral degree and be affiliated with an osteopathic institution or program of osteopathic recognition.
    - i. If not affiliated with an osteopathic institution or program of osteopathic recognition, must have a DO on the research team as key personnel.
  - b. Possess a strong record as a researcher, an ongoing record of osteopathic research, recent publications in peer reviewed journals, and successful track record of securing research funding in the area of the proposed research topic.

### **Ineligible to apply:**

- Medical students.
- Osteopathic Physician (DO) or Allopathic Physician (MD) who have completed their residency, internship, or fellowship requirements at an AOA or ACGME accredited institution by the time of the effective grant period.
- An investigator with an active AOA grant who is in the first year of his/her existing grant period.
- A previous or current AOA investigator that has failed to meet milestones and/or submit timely progress and financial reports.
- Investigators conducting research outside of the United States.
- Investigators conducting research on non-US populations.

### **NOTE:**

An unsuccessful applicant can resubmit the same proposed project twice, for a total of three (3) submissions (original submission plus two resubmissions whether the resubmissions are identical or revised).

## **GRANT REVIEW CRITERIA**

1. **Scientific Significance:** Reviewers will assess the scientific significance of the research project. Specifically, they will assess the purpose of the study, specific aims/

hypothesis(es) quality of the scientific literature and how it supports the specific aims and hypotheses; and the potential for external funding.

2. **Osteopathic Significance:** Reviewers will assess the osteopathic significance of the research project. The proposal must address the tenets of osteopathic medicine. Specifically, they will assess whether the investigator articulates an osteopathic significance, the quality of the osteopathic literature and how it supports the research proposal, and how the research project will advance the field of osteopathic medicine.
3. **Approach:** Reviewers will assess the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses (including power analysis, timelines, and milestones) to ensure that it is logical and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Also, they will assess whether the proposal discusses the potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success. If the project is in the early stages of development, reviewers will assess whether the strategy established is feasible and addresses the management of potential adverse effects.

For projects involving human subjects, reviewers will assess whether the proposed plan addresses: (1) the protection of human subjects from research risks; and (2) the inclusion (or exclusion) of individuals on the basis of sex/gender, race, and ethnicity, as well as the inclusion (exclusion) of children.

4. **Scientific Environment:** Reviewers will look at the scientific environment in which the work will be done to determine if the environment will contribute to the probability of success. Specifically, reviewers will assess the institutional support, mentorship, equipment and other resources available to the applicant and determine if they are adequate for the proposed project.
5. **Career Development and Training Plan:** Reviewers will assess if the plan provides structured, career development advising and learning opportunities. Through such opportunities, will the applicant obtain a working knowledge of various potential career paths that would make strong use of the knowledge and skills gained during research training and the steps required to transition successfully to the next stage of their chosen career and continue to participate in osteopathic research actively.

Reviewers will also assess the PI's "Statement of Career Goals" including the summary of past accomplishments in research, commitment to research, and how successful completion of the grant proposal will enhance the PI's potential for future large-scale funding.

6. **Preceptors/Mentors:** Reviewers will assess if the preceptor/mentor has the appropriate experienced to support the applicant. Does the preceptor/mentor have a strong record as a researcher, including recent publications and securing research funding in areas directly related to the proposed research topic? Does the preceptor/mentor have a strong record of training individuals?

7. **Overall Impact:** Reviewers will provide an overall impact score to reflect their assessment of the likelihood for project findings contribute to the literature and lead to future research studies. The budget and budget justifications will be reviewed. Finally, the impact score will also reflect the quality of the proposal (i.e., clarity, conciseness, organization and presentation.)

## APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Prior to beginning the application process, applicants should read the Request for Application thoroughly and confirm their organization and project qualify for the funding being offered.
2. All applicants must electronically submit:

Form	Name	Instructions
A	Application Face Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete all sections keeping in mind that the project title must contain a reference to the clinical relevance of the project.</li> <li>• Indicate if this is a new or resubmitted application, and enter specific titles, departments, addresses, telephone and e-mail addresses, where requested.</li> <li>• Ensure all required signatures are provided. Signatures are required for the applicant, department chair, other investigators associated with the project (if applicable), the financial officer/grant administrator and the official authorized to sign for the institution. No “per” signatures are permitted.</li> <li>• Indicate the type of project (basic, clinical or health services), the research focus areas and the keyword descriptors. In addition, please indicate all other relevant categories.</li> </ul>
B	Key Personnel	Provide information on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Physician in Training (Applicant/PI)</li> <li>• Preceptor/Mentor</li> <li>• Individuals whose effort is central to the project, including experts in the field of this study that should be included on the project as well as other contributors.</li> <li>• Biostatistician whose effort is central to the project, either salaried or unsalaried.</li> </ul> <b>NOTE:</b> Include a biosketch for each individual listed.
C	Biosketch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information for all personnel on the Research Team.</li> <li>• Follow the format on the form for each person.</li> <li>• <b>DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES</b> per person.</li> </ul>
D	Statement of Career Goals	Provide a statement describing the PI’s career goals, including a summary of past accomplishments in research, future research goals and how successful completion of the grant proposal will enhance the PI’s potential for future large-scale funding.
E	Budget Worksheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a specific budget for the proposed expenditures. The budget should show the items and the amounts requested from the AOA. Only direct costs will be funded.</li> <li>• Each budget item should be itemized and justified.</li> </ul> <b>NOTE:</b> See document entitled, “Budget Worksheet Instructions” for detailed guidelines.
F	Budget Justification	Provide detailed justifications on all expenditures listed on the budget worksheet.
G	Resources (Facilities and Other)	Describe facilities and resources to be used to conduct the research.

Form	Name	Instructions
H	Project Summary/Abstract	Provide a summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. The abstract/summary is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work when separated from the application. <b>DO NOT EXCEED 7,500 CHARACTERS</b>
I	Statement of Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a statement describing the relevance of the project to the AOA's mission.</li> <li>• Provide a statement that explicitly and clearly describes how the research will impact the field of osteopathic medicine and addresses the tenets of osteopathic medicine.</li> </ul>
J	Career Development and Training Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide details on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The training program structure.</li> <li>○ The career development advising and learning opportunities (e.g., classes, seminars, and opportunities for interaction with other groups and scientists) as well as grant-writing and making effective presentations extended to PI to enhance research knowledge and skills.</li> <li>○ Specific role of Mentor/Preceptor (e.g., instruction plan)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>DO NOT EXCEED 9,000 CHARACTERS</b>
K	Parent Studies <b>ONLY APPLICABLE IF SUBMITTING A SUPPLEMENTAL PROJECT</b>	Provide the parent study's research question, specific aim, research design and methods, power analysis (if applicable), and outcomes. <b>DO NOT EXCEED 7,500 CHARACTERS</b>
J	Resubmissions <b>ONLY APPLICABLE IF YOU ARE RESUBMITTING AN APPLICATION</b>	Provide a report that acknowledges the previous comments and note whether or not any changes were made to the proposal. Applicants must indicate what action they took or did not take regarding each comment. <b>DO NOT EXCEED 9,000 CHARACTERS</b>
<b>The Research Plan</b>		<p>Complete each section on continuous pages. Begin each section with the section headers below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Question(s)/Specific Aims (Max. 1 page)</li> <li>• Background &amp; Significance (May include Preliminary Studies <i>if applicable</i>) (Max. 3 pages)</li> <li>• Research Design &amp; Methods (including power analysis) (Max. 7 pages)</li> <li>• Human Subjects (<i>if applicable</i>) (Max. 2 pages)</li> <li>• Vertebrate Animals (<i>if applicable</i>) (Max. 2 pages)</li> <li>• Bibliography (Max. 2 pages)</li> <li>• Prepare a proposed timeline for each of the project's specific aims, demonstrating progress expected at 6, 12, and 18 months</li> <li>• Set forth two to three specific milestones to be achieved per reporting period (Complete chart)</li> <li>• Describe your dissemination plan of the study findings (1/2 page)</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> See document entitled, "Physicians in Training Research Program Instructions" for detailed guidelines.</p>
K	Required Reports <b>ONLY APPLICABLE IF YOU RECEIVE A FELLOWSHIP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports should be a brief presentation of the accomplishments of the research project during the reporting period, in language understandable to a biomedical scientist who may not be a specialist in the project's research field. Progress reports are due semi-annually (every six (6 months)).</li> <li>• A final report on the study is due at the end of the grant period.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> See document entitled, "Physicians in Training Research Program General Guidelines" for detailed guidelines.</p>



Form	Name	Instructions
	L	Budget Report Worksheet <b>ONLY APPLICABLE IF YOU RECEIVE A FELLOWSHIP</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed financial reports should be an itemized listing of expenditures used. Financial reports are due semi-annually (every six (6 months)).</li> <li>A final financial report for the study is due at the end of the fellowship period.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> See document entitled, “Physicians in Training Research Program General Guidelines” for detailed guidelines.</p>

Submit your proposal via the AOA online submission software program at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=AmericanOsteo>.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/QUESTIONS

Questions should be directed to the AOA Department of Research and Development at:

Gloria Dillard, MPH, Research Manager  
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 Chicago, IL 60611-2864  
**Toll Free:** (800) 621-1773 x8006  
**Phone:** (312) 202-8006 | **Fax:** (312) 202-8306  
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