

Arkansas Children's Research Institute  
**Funding Opportunity: ACRI/ABI Investigator-Initiated  
 Research Grant**



**Program Overview**

<p><b>Program Purpose</b></p>	<p>This grant mechanism is intended to encourage exploratory/developmental research by providing support for the early and conceptual stages of project development. Grant applications must focus upon novel, original research that is directly relevant to the development and/or health of infants, children, or adolescents.</p>
<p><b>Eligibility Requirements</b></p>	<p>Eligible candidates must have an academic faculty appointment in the UAMS College of Medicine, Pharmacy, Public Health or Nursing conducting pediatric research. Additionally, they must be fulltime employees of ACH, ACRI, or UAMS.</p> <p>Investigators that have active research support through an ACRI/ABI funded component (ABI Program Funds, or Recruitment Funds) are not considered eligible for support from this funding mechanism.</p> <p>Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate a clear benefit to children and the academic reputation of both the investigator, UAMS, and Arkansas Children's.</p> <p>Priority will also be given to new investigators, investigators who have not previously received grant support from ABI funds, proposals which require collaborations across scientific disciplines, and investigators, based on their record of scholarly achievement, have a high probability of success in acquiring extramural research support.</p>

**Key Dates**

<p><b>Letter of Intent Due Date</b></p>	<p>June 1</p>
<p><b>Application Due Date</b></p>	<p>August 1</p>
<p><b>Award Date</b></p>	<p>October 1 each year</p>

If a date falls on the weekend, documents will be accepted until 5pm the next business day.

**Award Information**

<p><b>Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards</b></p>	<p>Funds supporting this program are enabled by funds available to ACRI through the Arkansas Biosciences Institute (ABI). It is anticipated that ACRI will support up to five awards per cycle. Final funding decisions are contingent upon the institutional availability of funds to support the program.</p>
<p><b>Award Budget</b></p>	<p>\$75,000 total (\$37,500 per year)</p>
<p><b>Award Project Period</b></p>	<p>Up to 24 months</p>

## Application and Submission Information

### Application Characteristics

- Personnel costs will be limited to no more than 15% time / effort for overall principal investigator / program director.
- Personnel costs will be limited to no more than 5% time / effort for each co-investigator listed on the project.
- Personnel costs will be limited to no more than 20% time / effort for other personnel (nurse, research assistant, etc.) listed on the project.
- Investigators that have active research support through an ACRI/ABI funded component (ABI Program Funds, or Recruitment Funds) are not considered eligible for support from this funding mechanism.
- Extensions beyond the original award period of 24 months are not allowed.
- No preliminary data are required, but may be included if available.
- Successful applicants will receive 50% of the total award amount at the initiation of the project; remaining funds will become available upon evaluation of a formal progress report and demonstration that all study milestones have been met.
- The Research Plan will follow the NIH R21 format and should not exceed 6 pages. This format includes a detailed timeline for project conduct, completion, analysis and eventual publication.
- The proposed project must be of sufficient scientific rigor to support development of a larger, extramural grant application (e.g., R01 funding mechanism) or a mentored scientist career development award (e.g., K08 or K23).

### Scope

- Exploratory, novel studies that break new ground or extend previous discoveries toward new directions or applications.
- High risk high reward studies that may lead to a breakthrough in a particular area, or result in novel techniques, agents, methodologies, models or applications that will impact biomedical, behavioral, translational (T2 – T4), or clinical research.

## Review Criteria and Process for Prioritization for Funding

All proposals will receive scientific peer review by a Special Emphasis Panel (SEP) constituted by ACRI. This panel will be drawn from individuals within ACH/ACRI, UAMS and from other institutions as required to insure that appropriate scientific expertise is present for all applications reviewed by the SEP. The SEP will be chaired by the ACRI President or his appointed designee. Each application will have 2 reviewers. The NIH scoring system for R-series awards will be used. Each grant application will receive an overall priority score and ranked accordingly. Final funding decisions will be made by the ACRI President who will consider scientific merit and value of a given application to the strategic mission of ACH, ACRI and UAMS as it regards research.

### Letter of Intent

A LOI is due no later than 5 p.m. on June 1 of each year. The LOI should be submitted to Anne McMains (McMainsAM@archildrens.org) via email.

The LOI should be no longer than one page in length and include the following components:

1. Principal Investigator: Name/Title/Contact Information
2. Collaborators: Name/Title/Organization
3. Project Title
4. A brief description of the research conducted.
5. A history of the investigator's ABI funding (if applicable). List the source (grant or recruitment funds), date and amount awarded as well as any output that resulted from those funds (publications, extramural awards, etc).

Upon receiving the LOI, the information will be reviewed. Upon approval by the ACRI President, applicants will be contacted and invited to apply with a full submission.

Each applicant may only submit one Letter of Intent per grant cycle.

#### Application Package

Please see [Attachment 1](#) for a complete listing of the required forms and instructions for preparing the Research Strategy.

#### Application Review and Selection Process

Grants will be reviewed by a Special Emphasis Panel (SEP) using current NIH criteria. This SEP will be constituted by the ACRI President who will have oversight responsibility for the grant program. All proposals will be scored by the SEP and prioritized for funding by the ACRI President.

#### Award Notification

Applicants will receive a copy of reviewer comments related to their proposal. However, they will not receive the overall priority score assigned to the grant proposal. Notifications of funding will be made by the ACH President via a letter to the principal investigator / program director. ACRI will facilitate establishment of an account and provide oversight for all post-award functions.

#### Reporting Requirements

A final progress report is due upon completion of the award and upon request. Failure to submit a final report or respond to additional request for reporting may jeopardize future funding.

#### **Application Submission Contact Information**

Anne McMains, ACRI Grant Development Specialist

Telephone: 501-364-5143

Email: [McMainsAM@archildrens.org](mailto:McMainsAM@archildrens.org)

## Attachment 1 – Application Materials & Research Strategy Requirements

On or before 5 p.m. on the deadline date, an applicant must upload a PDF copy of their application to the Proposal Management System found here:

<https://apps.uams.edu/ClinicalTranslationalScienceAward/Account/Login.aspx>

### Application Materials

The final application should include the following items (please contact Anne McMains at [McMainsAM@archchildrens.org](mailto:McMainsAM@archchildrens.org) for packet information):

1. ACRI Intramural Funding Application Form
2. ACRI Intramural Research & Related Budget Form
3. ACRI Intramural Budget Justification Form
4. Study Summary Form (for applicants whose proposals include human subjects clinical trials)
5. NIH Biographical Sketch for all Key Personnel
6. Specific Aims (1 page)
7. Research Strategy (6 pages or less, not to include reference citations)
8. Relevant institutional resources necessary to support the research
9. Letters of support from collaborators (if applicable)

### Research Strategy Requirements

The research strategy should not exceed 6 pages (not including reference pages). Use at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. For font, use an Arial typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 points or larger. Do not include headers, footers or page numbers.

The research strategy should include the following sections:

- a. *Significance*
  - Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
  - Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capacity, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.
  - Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field will be changed in the proposed aims are achieved.
- b. *Innovation*
  - Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
  - Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or 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 or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
- c. *Approach*
  - Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how 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 any strategy to establish feasibility, 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.

- If research on Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs) is proposed but an approved cell line from the NIH hESC Registry cannot be identified, provide a strong justification for why an appropriate cell line cannot be chosen from the Registry at this time.
- Identify anticipated problems/pitfalls and proposed solutions/alternatives.

If an applicant has multiple Specific Aims, then the applicant may address Significance, Innovation and Approach for each Specific Aim individually, or may address Significance, Innovation and Approach for all of the Specific Aims collectively.

## **Attachment 2 – Approved and Not Approved Expenses**

This attachment provides guidance regarding expenses that this program will or will not cover. The list is not all inclusive; please contact Anne McMains ([McMainsAM@archildrens.org](mailto:McMainsAM@archildrens.org)) with any questions.

### **Approved Expenses**

Biostatistical Support/Data Analysis – no more than 20% of the biostatistician's effort  
Computer/Software (with clear justification they are needed for the proposed research)  
Equipment  
Office Supplies (research related only)  
Publication Costs of Publishers  
Salary/Fringe of Principal Investigator up to 15% effort  
Salary/Fringe of research personnel (coordinators, assistants) up to 20% effort  
Supplies for Research Project (actual research costs)  
Travel  
Personnel Costs for UAMS Faculty (base salary is not to exceed current NIH salary cap)

### **Not Approved Expenses**

Any Expense Not Directly Related to Research Activity  
Any Personal Professional Fee  
Board Exam Fees  
Board Review Courses  
DEA #  
Lab Coats  
Medical Licenses  
Membership Dues to Societies and Professional Organizations  
Periodicals  
Professional Liability Insurance  
Subscriptions  
Telephone and Pager