

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



Program Overview

Program Purpose	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.
Eligibility Requirements	<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

Letter of Intent Due Date	June 1
Application Due Date	August 1
Award Date	October 1

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

Award Information

Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards	Funds supporting this program are enabled by funds available to ACRI through the Arkansas Biosciences Institute (ABI). Final funding decisions are contingent upon the institutional availability of funds to support the program.
Award Budget	\$75,000 total (\$37,500 per year)
Award Project Period	Up to 24 months

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.
- 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 proposed research
5. Scholarly Oversight Committee Members (if applicable; see below)
6. 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).
7. Two (2) Recommended reviewers based on ACRI's Conflict of Interest criteria:
 - a. The reviewer is not named on the application in any role

- b. The reviewer has no direct or indirect financial interest in the proposal
- c. The reviewer is not planning to collaborate with the PI or mentor in the next year
- d. The reviewer has not published, collaborated or mentored any of the proposed Key Personnel
- e. The reviewer is not providing a letter of support for the application
- f. The reviewer is not serving as a member of an advisory board/scholarly oversight committee for the project under review
- g. The reviewer has not served as a member of an advisory board/scholarly oversight committee for any proposed Key Personnel during the past one year
- h. The reviewer is not listed as Senior/Key Personnel, mentor, collaborator or Scholarly Oversight Committee member for a competing application

Upon review of the LOI, eligible applicants will be contacted and invited to apply with a full submission.

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

Scholarly Oversight Committee

The formation of a scholarly oversight committee is required for any new investigator who is within three years of their initial faculty appointment. The scholarly oversight committee will consist of the applicant's mentor(s) and at least two additional faculty members who are not direct mentors of the applicant, but have significant expertise to contribute to successful completion of the project and/or the career development of the applicant. The purpose of the committee is to provide additional guidance to the applicant in study design, project execution, approach to obtaining external funding, and career development. The committee is required to meet quarterly throughout the project period and must provide written reports detailing the applicant's progress on the project and career development goals as outlined in the mentorship plan and any recommendations by the committee.

Application Package

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

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. Notifications of funding will be made by the ACRI 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 progress report is due upon the completion of the first year and upon completion of the award. The release of year 2 funds is contingent upon review and approval of the year 1 progress report. Failure to submit a 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

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>

Forms will be provided at the time of invitation to submit a full application and are available on the ACRI website: <https://www.archildrens.org/research/resources-for-researchers>.

Application Materials

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. Captions on tables or figures must be no smaller than Arial 8-point font.

The final application must include the following items in order:

1. ACRI Intramural Funding Application Form
2. ACRI Intramural Research & Related Budget Form
3. ACRI Intramural Budget Justification Form
4. Study Summary Form (if applicable)
 - A Study Summary Form is required for applicants whose proposals include human subjects clinical trials
 - Please contact [Janet Stormont](#) for Study Summary Form review and approval
5. Project Summary/Abstract (limit: 30 lines of text)

State the application's broad, long-term objectives, making reference to the pediatric health relatedness of the project. Briefly describe the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals. Be sure that the project summary reflects the key focus of the proposed project.
6. Specific Aims (1 page)
7. Research Strategy (6 pages or less, not to include reference citations)

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.

D. Future Directions

- Describe how the completion of the project will support the development of the applicant as an investigator and career plans in next 3 to 5 years
- Describe the next set of investigations that is expected to emerge from the project
- Describe plans to obtain extramural funding

8. NIH Biographical Sketch for all Key Personnel

Section A of the biosketch should detail the expertise of the investigator relative to applicant's proposed project and the role they will serve in its execution.

9. Facilities and Resources

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 that 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.

10. Letters of Support

- Provide a LOS for non-key personnel collaborators/vendors/core laboratories, etc. (if applicable)

Application Checklist

✓	Item	Notes
	1. ACRI Intramural Funding Application Form	Form will be provided at the time of invitation to submit a full application
	2. ACRI Intramural Research & Related Budget Form	Form will be provided at the time of invitation to submit a full application
	3. ACRI Intramural Budget Justification Form	Form will be provided at the time of invitation to submit a full application
	4. Study Summary Form	Form will be provided at the time of invitation to submit a full application
	5. Project Summary/Abstract	Limit: 30 lines of text
	6. Specific Aims	Limit: 1 page
	7. Research Strategy	Limit: 6 pages
	8. Biosketches	Limit: 5 pages each
	9. Facilities and Resources	No page limit
	10. Letters of Support	

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) 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
Indirect Costs on Subawards beyond 10%
Medical Licenses
Membership Dues to Societies and Professional Organizations
Periodicals
Professional Liability Insurance
Subscriptions
Telephone and Pager