

RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

I. METHODS/CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Applications will be reviewed by independent reviewers with expertise relevant to each proposed project. AFSA will provide a brief summary of the review to both successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Each proposal will be evaluated using the criteria below. Applicants are encouraged to address these key points within the project description, especially how the proposed research is relevant to people with fibromyalgia and how completion of the project could ultimately benefit patients.

1. The applicant's past performance, scientific competence, and institutional environment.
2. The originality, timeliness, and importance of the proposed research.
3. The strength of the experimental design, including methodology, feasibility, documentation of the hypothesis, relevance to the field of fibromyalgia (FM), sample-size justification, and appropriateness of the budget.
4. The patient relevance of the project, including how the findings could improve understanding, diagnosis, treatment, symptom management, quality of life, or future research for people with fibromyalgia.
5. The investigator team's ability to recruit study participants in a timely manner.

II. INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE PDF APPLICATION FORMS

The first part of the application consists of six fillable PDF pages. **Bolding** and underlining are not possible when using this PDF form. These pages include the following four sections:

1. **Application Cover Sheet.** Please make sure all contact information is current and complete.
2. **Scientific Abstract.** Provide a brief overview of your study aims or hypotheses, the methods you will use to test them, and the significance of your proposed research. Please explain how your project is relevant to people with fibromyalgia and how completion of the project could ultimately benefit patients. A general description of fibromyalgia is not necessary.
3. **Proposed Budget.** Provide itemized costs, a list of active and pending support, and a justification for each budget item. If any single item, such as equipment or salary support, exceeds 25% of the total budget, please include a brief explanation. Please note that AFSA does not pay institutional overhead.
4. **Human Subjects Form for Compliance with Government Requirements.**

III. MAIN BODY OF YOUR APPLICATION

You may use the word processing program of your choice to complete this section. The page size must be 8½ x 11 inches, and the final document must be converted to a PDF.

1. **Research Project Description.** This section is typically six to eight pages, not including figures, although the length may vary depending on the project. Please include the following subsections:
 - A. **Specific aims/study hypotheses.** Clearly state the study aims, research questions, or hypotheses your project is designed to address.
 - B. **Background information.** Include any preliminary studies, if available, and describe published studies that support the scientific rationale for your project.
 - C. **Methods.** Describe the tests, evaluations, assays, or other procedures to be conducted; the experimental design; subject-selection criteria; and sample-size justification. Please

describe the fibromyalgia patient sample pool your team can access for recruitment purposes.

D. **Project timeline.** Provide a time schedule for the project, including participant recruitment, assessments or assays, data analysis, and other major project milestones.

E. **Significance and justification of the proposal.** Explain the importance of the proposed research, its relevance to fibromyalgia, and how completion of the project could ultimately benefit people with fibromyalgia.

F. **Literature citations.** Include the references used to support your proposal.

2. **Biographical Sketches/CVs.** Provide a biographical sketch or CV for each key person involved in the project. Education should be listed first, followed by a chronological list of employment positions. Then list publications from the past three years, along with representative earlier publications that are relevant to this application. Please try not to exceed two pages per person.
3. **Compile into a PDF.** Combine the Research Project Description and all Biographical Sketches/CVs into one document, then convert the document to a PDF.

IV. CONDITIONS OF AWARD

Please review AFSA's Conditions of Award to confirm that you qualify as an applicant and can comply with the funding requirements before completing an application. This separate form must be completed, signed, converted to a PDF, and submitted as part of your application.

V. SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

A completed application should be submitted as **one PDF file** that includes the following three components:

1. **Six-page PDF application forms.** Include the Application Cover Sheet, Scientific Abstract, Proposed Budget, Active and Pending Support, Budget Justification, and Human Subjects Form.
2. **Main Body of the Application.** Include the Research Project Description and the Biographical Sketches/CVs for key personnel and collaborators, beginning with the principal investigator.
3. **Conditions of Award.** Include the completed and signed Conditions of Award form.

If you have an approved IRB for the proposed project, please include it as a separate document with your application submission.

Tag-on proposals: If you are requesting funding for a portion of a larger project, please include a brief summary of the full study and explain how the AFSA-funded portion fits within the overall scope of the larger project. Please also explain how the proposed AFSA-funded portion is relevant to people with fibromyalgia and how completion of this work could ultimately benefit patients.

Please submit your completed application to:

Kristin Thorson
President, AFSA
kthorson@afsafund.org

If you have questions about completing any part of the application or would like to inquire about the status of your application review, please email me.

Award notifications: AFSA expects to notify applicants of funding decisions approximately four months after receiving a completed application (i.e., by July 31, 2027).