



# AAR Research and Education Foundation Strategic Alignment Grant

## Guidelines and Application Instructions

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### **Purpose**

To advance the long-range strategic organizational goals of the AAR by awarding one year length grant(s) to applicants who address identified strategic priorities.

### **Research and Education Foundation Mission**

The Association of Academic Radiology Research and Education Foundation advances the interests of individual academic radiologists and of the academic radiology community through consistent financial support of academic programming, scholarship, and innovation.

### **Nature of Projects**

Proposals that are aligned with any of the AAR strategic priorities are encouraged. Additionally, the AAR Research and Education Foundation has identified the following focus areas for the 2025 grant.

1. Creating educational resources to meet an unmet need (e.g., addressing competency-based education)
2. Qualitative/mixed methods research to understand barriers/facilitators of academic productivity in the era of high clinical demand.
3. Developing reliable metrics to assess resident competency or academic productivity.
4. Testing the use of AI to enhance academic (research or education) productivity.
5. Gathering data on how / why mentorship is valuable to AAR members and exploring barriers/facilitators of mentorship using qualitative/mixed methods research.
6. Creating resources to promote conducting sustainability research

We require the grantee to present their work at the AAR Annual meeting. (Please note report deadlines and reference these requirements in conjunction with programming and scheduling of the AAR Annual Meeting).

### **Amount**

One or more grants, up to \$20,000 (USD) in aggregate will be awarded for the 2025-2026 year. Funds may or may not be granted, depending on the quality of the received proposals. The maximum individual award may not exceed \$10,000 for a one-year project.

- The award may be used for project costs and/or salary support of study personnel. Funds may not be used toward salary support for the primary investigator or to support non grant related affinity group or association costs. The grant will not fund institutional indirect costs or overhead costs, or tuition.
- Travel expenses for the AAR Annual Meeting may not be paid by this grant's funds.
- Unexpended funds must be returned to the AAR Research and Education Foundation.

The award can be renewed at no cost for a second year by request and upon approval of the AAR Research and Education Foundation. If additional funding is requested for the second year, a full application should be submitted which will undergo a formal review process.

### **Payment Schedule**

Grants begin on July 1. Payments will be made to the sponsoring institution in two installments on July 1 and January 1 in

the award year. Funds are expected to be spent within the annual cycle of the grant and materials presented at the following AAR Annual Meeting.

### **Deadline for Letter of Intent**

Letters of intent must be completed and submitted electronically as a PDF file by 12:00 pm Central Time [via SurveyMonkey](#) on **August 15, 2024**. Letter of intent should include the following information:

- Descriptive title of the proposed project
- Name, address, telephone number and email address of the principal investigator(s)
- Participating institution(s)
- A 500-word abstract describing background, objectives, project plan, evaluation, and dissemination plan.

Applicants will be invited to submit a proposal by **September 30, 2024**, based on their letter of intent.

### **Deadline for Application**

Applications must be completed and submitted electronically as a PDF file with a scanned signature page by 12:00pm Central Time on **December 16, 2024**. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline date. Applications that are not complete, do not comply with the instructions, or do not have properly executed signatures, will not be reviewed

### **Eligibility**

- Applicant (primary investigator) must be a full member of the AAR at the time of submitting application. Although all full AAR members are eligible, preference in selection will be given towards projects submitted by applicants earlier in their academic careers.
- Applications by Residents and Fellows are encouraged but must list a single co-principal investigator (mentor) who is a full AAR member. The full AAR member who is the mentor should be an individual with expertise in academic radiology or other area related to the proposed project. This mentor will serve to guide the project and must be willing to take responsibility for its performance and completion. A letter of support from the mentor detailing the program should be submitted with the application.
- For each application, no more than one primary investigator (applicant) and one co-principal investigator (or mentor) are allowed.
- Applicant/co-principal investigator must not be agents of any for-profit, commercial company in the radiologic sciences; however, these entities may act as consultants (examples might include a software or imaging company vendor).
- Applicant (the primary investigator and/or co-primary investigator) may only submit one grant application to the AAR Research and Education Foundation per year and should not receive funding through other AAR grant funding mechanisms during any month of the award fiscal year.
- Supplementation of funding from other grant sources must be approved by AAR Research and Education Foundation staff if not described in the original research plan. Awards from other sources may be approved by AAR Research and Education Foundation staff if the investigator submits a satisfactory plan to address any budgetary overlap.

### **Requirements for Applicant and Sponsoring Institution**

Applicants must hold an M.D. degree (or equivalent), be board eligible or certified in radiology, and have received sufficient research training at pre- and/or postdoctoral levels to be capable of independent research. Candidates should hold, or have been offered, an academic appointment in a radiology department of an accredited medical school or research institute in the United States or Canada.

Applicants who hold any of the AAR Research and Education Foundation awards, the RSNA Research Scholar, Research Fellow, or Research Seed Grant Award, CERRAF or ARRS Grant Award will not be eligible for another award or fellowship in that same year.

At the time of the application, the sponsoring institution must provide a budget and letter of support, approved by the department chair, clearly specifying the anticipated direct costs and academic time required supporting the Strategic Alignment Grant. Indirect costs cannot be paid from the grant funds. An itemized budget is required as part of the award proposal submission. Funds (up to the maximum amount of the award) may be apportioned as required by the investigator but must be briefly justified in the application. Examples of fund use might include: (i) salary support for associated staff (e.g. research assistants and/or PhD collaborators), (ii) appropriate equipment and/or scanner time access, (iii) software and biostatistical support, and combinations of the above.

A sponsoring institution may only submit one application per grant cycle and will only be permitted to accept one award sponsored by the AAR Research and Education Foundation at any time. Strong consideration will be given to applicants from departments and institutions that show a commitment to the applicant's proposal. The parent institution must demonstrate adequate resources and facilities to carry out the terms of the project. Specific involvement by experts outside of Radiology will be looked upon favorably. A letter of support from the department Chair is required.

### **Selection Criteria/Review Process**

The review process will be administered by the AAR Research and Education Foundation Grants Committee. Final decisions will be subject to the approval of the AAR Research and Education Foundation Board of Directors. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications by email not later than March 3rd. Announcements of grant awardees will be made by the Research and Education Foundation Board President at the following AAR Annual Meeting and via email announcements.

The following guidelines will be applied in the review process:

Education Plan: Evaluate the proposed educational activity. Are the purpose and goals clear and well developed? If the plan involves a research component, are the experiments well designed and appropriate to test the hypothesis? Will the results have scientific value? Is there appropriate statistical analysis? Is any advanced training in education described in terms of its impact on the future education of others in the radiologic sciences? Are the required educational resources available? Is there a reasonable chance of completion within the proposed time frame? Does the activity utilize novel theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, instrumentation or interventions? Does the activity fill a current need in radiology education? Will it advance the science of radiologic education? Is the budget realistic and well justified? Does the project have high value (potential educational impact relative to total budget dollars)? Are the metrics used to measure the impact of the proposed project appropriate? Is there a described method of evaluation that will judge success or failure of the goals of the activity?

Proposed Distribution/Dissemination Plan: Identify materials and items that can be disseminated. Who is the target audience? What is the format of dissemination of results? How the results will be disseminated? Who will be the dissemination partners helping with executing the dissemination plan?

Applicant: Evaluate the training and experience of the applicant as they relate to the proposed educational activity. Does the applicant have a demonstrated interest in education? If an early career applicant, does he/she have adequate experience and training? If established, has he/she demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced radiology education? Is the applicant's time commitment realistic?

Department Commitment: Evaluate the commitment of the applicant's institution and department to provide adequate support for the educational activity. Does the applicant have access to appropriate educational resources, including equipment, other materials, space, assistants, and mentors? Does the department allow appropriate time? Will the educational and scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Will the activity benefit from unique features of the educational and scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

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## **Conditions of the AAR Research and Education Foundation Strategic Alignment Grant**

### **1. Progress Reports**

Grant recipients are required to submit an interim report half-way through the funding period (January 1), and a more detailed final report upon completion of the project (July 1). Reports are to be submitted electronically (MS-Word) by email to the AAR Research and Education Foundation.

The interim report should summarize the specific aims and the progress achieved, explain any significant changes to the specific aims, new directions to be undertaken due to those changes, and expenditures to date. These are not to exceed one page. Any publications, patents, or other material related to the funded research should be included on a separate page and submitted separately.

The final report should include the above with the additional summary if a publication, patent, or grant is being or will be prepared using the results obtained from this grant. In the final report, a second page should be submitted separately describing the impact of the results, the strengths and weakness of the grant program, and the role that

the AAR Research and Education Foundation or AAR had, has, or might have in their future.

**2. Educational Material**

For projects that result in educational materials for distribution and/or electronic publication (World Wide Web content, printed materials, etc.), such distribution will be coordinated between the AAR and the primary investigator. A proposed distribution/dissemination plan should be included as part of the application, that is subject to modification once the application is accepted. Educational materials *must be made* available to the AAR and their respective members at no cost with the work product will be branded as the product of AAR. Any net funds generated directly or indirectly from the sale, lease or distribution of the final product will be donated to the AAR Research and Education Foundation to help fund other projects. The final product may be reviewed and evaluated by the AAR Education Committees for quality, need and educational value. The final product will contain an acknowledgement of funding in part by the AAR and AAR Research and Education Foundation.

**3. Publications**

Scientific and educational manuscript results from AAR Research and Education Foundation funded projects should be submitted to *Academic Radiology* for consideration for publication (right of first refusal) over alternate publications. However, if the manuscript is not accepted for publication by *Academic Radiology*, the manuscript may be submitted to a reputable peer-reviewed journal(s) of the authors' choice.

**4. Acknowledgment**

Institutional restrictions will be taken into consideration on an individual basis by the Research Committee, Academic Radiology's Editor-in-Chief, and the AAR Research and Education Foundation. Otherwise, AAR has the first right of refusal for publication of research papers generated from this award. The awardee is expected to present his/her results at the AAR Annual Meeting. All posters, publications, oral presentations and educational materials of work funded by the AAR Research and Education Foundation must contain appropriate acknowledgment.

**5. Extension**

A no-cost extension of the terms of this grant may be requested to extend the budget period up to 12 months beyond the original ending date. Approval of an extension will not include awarding additional funds. A request for an extension along with a progress report must be made in writing to the chair of the Grants Committee at the AAR Research and Education Foundation's address before the expiration of the original grant period. The request must state the reason(s) for the extension, length of the extension requested, and an explanation of how the reason(s) for the delay has been rectified. Requests must be co-signed by the organizational representative. Interim reports must be submitted every six months during the extension period. Other requests for changes to the terms of an award should be addressed to the chair of the Grants Committee with similar documentation and institutional approvals.

**6. Modification or Termination of Support**

The AAR Research and Education Foundation Board of Directors reserves the right to modify or terminate the amount of any funds granted under the terms of the Strategic Alignment Grant program. If the support level has to be modified by the Board of Directors for any reason, the grant recipient will be notified in writing at least 90 days prior, and the grantee will have the option to modify the project plan or terminate the grant.

## Application Instructions

### I: Summary of Proposed Project

This page, when separated from the rest of the application, should serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed project. The summary should include the long-term goals of the proposed project as it applies to the applicant and to the radiologic community. Abstract not to exceed 300 words.

#### A. Title

#### B. AbstractII: Applicant (primary investigator)

##### A. Applicant Data Complete applicant personal and professional data.

- Institution
- Department
- Conflicts of interest must be disclosed and addressed.
- Time allocated to the proposed project, and to other duties. Specify percent and time frame.
- Contact Information.

##### B. Biosketch (only for primary investigator)

NIH-style, limited to 5 pages. A template can be downloaded at (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>)

##### C. Priority Statement: Describe your area of professional/scientific interest(s) and your long-term career goals and objectives. Explain how the opportunity of Strategic Alignment Grant relates to the personal plans and ambitions of the applicant, to the priorities of the host institution, and to the radiologic community in general. Not to exceed 1000 words.

##### D. Other Participants (if any)

Co-principal investigator, other participants/investigators/scientific advisors/consultants who will contribute significantly to the project should be listed. Include a description of the role they will play in the proposed research project, and a brief summary of their qualifications and suitability for the proposed role.

### III: Project Plan

#### A. Detailed Project Plan:

The description of the plan should be thorough but focused. Not to exceed 5 pages. Use 0.5" margins and size 11 Arial font. Additional pages may be included for the bibliography.

##### Introduction:

- Rationale and Purpose: General statement of purpose. Describe why the project should be undertaken. For research projects, state theory and a brief literature review.

- Objectives: Specific statements of intended outcomes or expected results. Research hypotheses are appropriate for research studies.
- Population: What learner group(s) will be served by the project?
- Previous Experience: Relevant preliminary work/prior experience of investigator.

**Project Plan:**

- Activities: What specifically will be done to achieve the above objectives? How? Where? etc.
- Deliverables: What deliverables will result from the project? How are they related to the project goals?
- Annual meeting presence: what presence will the project have at the AAR annual meeting? How will it enhance the experience of the attendees? How will it contribute to the project goals?
- Enduring materials: what enduring materials will result from the project? How will they contribute to the project goals? How will AAR members access them?
- Time Schedule: To the extent possible, present a schedule of dates when various aspects of the project will be completed.
- Outcomes: What are the desired outcomes of the project? How will they be assessed?

**Evaluation:**

- How will the outcomes of the project be assessed in terms of the purpose and objectives? What metrics will be used and how will they be collected?

**Dissemination Plan:**

- How will the results of the project be distributed/disseminated to the larger target audience.

**B. Research Assurances**

Will the project involve any of the following?

- human subjects (Y/N)
- vertebrate animals (Y/N)
- ionizing radiation/radioactive isotopes (Y/N)
- other, requiring institutional research assurance approval (recombinant DNA, etc.) (Y/N)

While institutional review board (IRB) approval is not required at the time of award proposal submission, no funds will be disbursed before such approval is documented, if necessary.

**C. Resources and Environment**

Describe major equipment, laboratory, clinical, animal, office/computer, support services, education resources, study populations, and other facilities (simulation centers, survey cores, etc.) that will be available for this project.

**IV: Budget**

**A. Detailed Budget:**

Since plans differ, no specific format is required for this section. However, a complete description of the projected use of funds will assist the study section reviewers in determining the project's scope and feasibility. The budget should be a complete and detailed listing of the costs associated with the proposed program, including part-time salary support, tuition, supplies and materials, etc. Specify the total project budget and the amount requested (if different than the total project budget). Explain how costs not covered by this grant will be paid (departmental funds, etc). If the project involves effort from AAR staff or resources from AAR, it is highly encouraged to allocate budget to cover the costs. Contact [info@aar.org](mailto:info@aar.org) if you need assistance with hourly rates. Through this grant program, the AAR Research and Education Foundation does not pay institutional overhead costs, indirect costs, or tuition.

**B. Other Sources of Support (pending and received):**

Other non-conflicting sources of support for the proposed activity are encouraged and should be identified.

**C. Award Payment Information:**

To facilitate fund disbursement if the grant is approved, please supply the payee information and mailing address. This information is available through the institution’s research administration office. The institution will serve as the fiscal agent.

- Grant checks payable to:
- Grant checks sent to: Include contact name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail.

**V: Letters**

Letters of recommendation/support are not required or accepted; however, a letter of intent/agreement should be provided for any of the following:

- If the project will involve a significant amount of the applicant’s time and/or departmental resources (including other personnel), provide a letter of support from the department chair;
- If equipment or supplies for the proposed activities will be provided by a source other than the applicant’s department (such as a commercial company);
- If the study involves significant collaboration with individuals outside of the applicant’s department or home institution.

**VI: Signatures**

Enter the names and contact information for each individual that will sign the completed application. Scanned signatures are required on the PDF copy.

- Department Chair
- Grant Administrator
- Grant Applicant

**VII: Submission**

Create and submit your application electronically as a PDF document. The electronic file must be received in the AAR Research and Education Foundation office [via this link](#) on or before the deadline.

**Questions?**

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