

Clinical Research Network Seed Grant Mechanism FAQs

ASNR Clinical Research Network

In response to the last call for applications to conduct a research project with the ASNR Clinical Research Network, we realized that in anticipation of a project (observation study, pre-clinical trial etc.), people were looking for ways to connect with potential collaborators for multi-site clinical research projects. To address this need, the Clinical Research Network has established a listserv through which ASNR members can interact with other members of the ASNR community interested in joining or initiating clinical research projects.

Application to conduct a research project with the ASNR clinical research network

ASNR is seeking to facilitate neurorehabilitation research projects that are low cost and easy to implement in clinical practice across multiple sites. The goal of this program is to enhance evidence-based clinical practice as well as to provide training opportunities for junior researchers to work with more experienced researchers. To this end, ASNR solicits seed funding proposals from investigators who wish to conduct either descriptive-epidemiological or interventional research that easily fits within normal clinical practice and can be scaled up for follow-on external funding applications. Examples of experimental designs include: small sample proof-of-concept study, single-group development-of-concept, or pre-clinical/phase 1 randomized control trial. ASNR will review these proposals and will provide the successful applicants with the infrastructure (see link above for the listserv) to identify collaborative sites for their follow-on project. More information on the benefits, application process, and review criteria is found below.

Considerations for applicants:

Why apply for this research opportunity when there is only \$5,000 funding available?

These seed funds are enough to make your follow-on external proposal more competitive by demonstrating that your team can effectively organize, budget, and carry out a smaller scale clinical research project, that generates preliminary data and evidence that your research approach is feasible and your findings are promising.

Some of the general benefits for junior and senior investigators are the opportunity to collaborate and develop your research skills while at the same time, advance the field of Neurorehabilitation.

If you have a research interest, but know you do not have the patient population at your institution, this might be an opportunity to find appropriate sites and collaborators for your clinical research ideas.

Some specific benefits include:

- Access to a peer review process to refine your ideas
- Access to ASNR programming for network and research refinement
- ASNR may help connect feasible ideas for research projects to other ASNR members who might wish to join.
- Guaranteed dissemination venue to an audience with interest in your work
- Opportunities for collaboration with ASNR members (i.e., those with expertise)
- Opportunities for capacity building of junior investigators and non-research sites
- Opportunities to acquire pilot data that can be useful for follow-on external grant applications.
- Access to a to-be-developed ASNR database with information on investigators (interests and expertise) and specific patient populations

FAQs

1. Why do I want to participate when there is only \$5,000 in funding support?

If you have an idea for either a descriptive-epidemiological or interventional research project that easily fits within normal clinical practice and you need collaborators from other sites to work with, the ASNR Clinical Research Network would be the perfect place to start. It would be an excellent launching pad for a development-of-concept or demonstration-of-concept project. The results from these projects will provide preliminary evidence and data that would form the basis for a scaled-up, follow-on external application for research funding.

2. I am not thinking about a clinical trial but rather an observational study of standard clinical practice. Would this be an appropriate mechanism for such a design?

Absolutely, this would be an appropriate mechanism for that kind of a study. In fact, we changed the name of this mechanism to Clinical Research Network so as not to imply that the only acceptable design would be a clinical trial design. A few examples are provided.

[Example 1](#)

[Example 2](#)

You can also see abstracts of previously supported projects [HERE](#).

Do I need an approved IRB protocol to apply?

It is highly recommended that you have an approved protocol before applying. You will then be able to share your protocol with other potential collaborators with whom you can apply to the network. If IRB approval at the proposing site is pending, the most the review committee can provide is a conditional approval. An IRB approved protocol at the proposing site is eligible for full consideration by the review committee. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to assure that all participating sites receive IRB approval before engaging in any study related activities.

3. I am somewhat inexperienced, is there a mentor available to assist me?

There is very likely someone who is a member of ASNR and the listserv who could mentor you in the development of a project and who might also have the patient population for a multi-site project.

4. I already have a clinical trial dataset but want to find people with interest and expertise who I can work with to analyze and publish the study. How can I find colleagues from the ASNR Clinical Research Network?

This might be an excellent question to put out to the listserv. There is likely someone with expertise who you can work with or at least someone can refer you to someone who might be able to help you.

5. I would like to collaborate with others in the Clinical Research Network, how do I connect with others that may be interested?

Send a message out using the link to the listserv explaining your project, your patient population and clinical setting.

6. What is the deadline for submission?

We are accepting applications beginning now until September 15th for this cycle.

7. What is the process for review?

A three-member review panel will evaluate each proposal on a 5-point scale. Outstanding (5), Excellent (4), Good (3), Fair (2), or Poor (1). See clinical research review criteria for details.

8. Where do I find the application, instructions and review criteria?

[Click here for instructions](#)

[Click here for application](#)

[Click here for review criteria](#)

9. Do I have to be a member of ASNR to submit an application?

Yes, the submitter has to be a member, but you can have collaborators who are not ASNR members.

10. Does the budget include indirect costs?

There are no indirect costs. The total amount of the award is \$5000.

11. Can participant payments be included in the budget?

Yes, payment to compensate participants is an allowable expense and should be explained in the budget justification.

Allowable expense categories include: travel between sites (e.g., car mileage, train); catering (excluding alcoholic beverages) for collaboration meetings; fees for specific services are acceptable, but salary costs are not, (e.g., 10 hours of work on a justifiable task is allowed); focus group meetings; online meeting services (e.g., WebEx or Go-to-Meeting); conference call services etc.; training and start-up costs; and IRB costs for additional sites. See below for a full list of eligible expenses.

Non-allowable expense categories include: salary for PI or co-PI, salary for research assistants or students; excessive travel costs; alcoholic beverages.

12. Whom do I contact if I have questions about the application process?

For administrative or website questions contact Leslie Thomas at lthomas@asnr.com For feasibility or project-related questions, contact Prue Plummer at prue@med.unc.edu. Make sure to put 'ASNR Clinical Research Network Query' in the subject line.