



Serving the Spondyloarthritis Community

Our Mission: "To be a leader in the quest to cure ankylosing spondylitis and related diseases, and to empower those affected to live life to the fullest."

Spondyloarthritis Research Funding Opportunity Announcement

SAA's Commitment to Research

Since its beginning, SAA has been committed to research, from funding scientific meetings to launching the first genetic research study in the United States on ankylosing spondylitis and related diseases. Our commitment remains strong and ongoing to funding and supporting cutting edge science in the United States.

Research Funded by SAA

SAA prides itself on being a world leader in spondyloarthritis support, education, awareness, and research. Ultimately our vision is a world free from the pain and disability of ankylosing spondylitis and related diseases. Research funding by SAA seeks to find a cure for spondylitis, and information so that people living with SpA are able to live their lives to the fullest.

Research Funding Requests

I. Purpose:

SAA receives funding requests from outside sources to support research related to axial spondyloarthritis. It is imperative that any research proposals make optimal use of SAA's limited resources. SAA is cognizant that there are very few organizations that fund SpA research and therefore SAA funds a broad range of studies. Proposals may advance SpA through basic/translational &/or clinical science. Novel &/or proof of concept research that addresses gaps in understanding or are likely to lead to further funding by larger sources such as NIH are welcomed. SAA is motivated to support SpA researchers at all levels of their career from relatively early career though seasoned senior investigators.

Note: The Bruckel Early Career Research Award has a different application process. Please see <https://spondylitis.org/early-career-investigators-award/> for information.

II. Process:

Proposals must be submitted, with appropriate documentation, to the Chief Mission Delivery Officer research@spondylitis.org on or before August 1 (for a decision by January 1) and on or before February 1 (for a decision by July 1). Study start date begins within 6 months of the award date.

Proposals are reviewed by an Ad Hoc Research Task Force and then funding decisions are made by the governing Board.

Members of the task force shall have the option of reaching out to external experts for their assistance in evaluating proposals.

III. Submission Requirements for Awards Under \$100,000.

Researchers interested in applying for research grants with SAA must submit the following:

- Summary cover letter
- Research proposal (up to 5 pages) from the lead researcher including amount of funding requested, to whom the funds will be directed (entity or individual), how the funds will be used and general time frame for completion of the project.
- CV or NIH biosketch of researcher(s)
- Detailed budget and budget justification
- Timeline for project and proposed milestones
- At least one recommendation from an appropriate expert in the field via a one-page letter in writing
- Appendices as needed

IV. Submission Requirements for Awards Over \$100,000.

- Summary cover letter
- Research proposal of 'NIH quality' (up to 12 pages) from the Principal Investigator including amount of funding requested, to whom the funds will be directed (entity or individual), how the funds will be used and general time frame for completion of project.
- CV of researcher(s)
- Detailed budget and budget justification
- Timeline for project and proposed milestones
- At least one recommendation from an appropriate expert in the field via a one-page letter in writing
- Appendices as needed

V. Additional Guidelines for All Proposals

- Indirect costs are allowed up to 15%.
- SAA does not wish to limit research. There is not a pre-existing maximum amount. Contact research@spondylitis.org for any proposal over \$250,000. The budget limit is at the discretion of the CEO and the board of directors based on the scope and importance of the project or study and SAA's available funds.
- Projects are to be completed in one to two years from the start of the project. Any study requiring more than two years will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For studies more than two years, please include a contingency plan addressing any potential change in the PI's circumstances or changes to the project.
- Once the study is initiated, 1-2 page progress reports are required at six months after the start of the study and then annually. A final report is to be submitted one month following the completion of the study.
- Studies must acknowledge SAA financial support on all submitted abstracts, posters, manuscripts, presentations. Send links &/or PDF copies of the published and presented work to research@spondylitis.org
- Payments for approved funding of research grant are as follows: For studies under one year of duration, 50% at the start of the grant and the remaining 50% is paid after SAA receives the six-month project report. For studies over 1 year in duration, 50% at the start of the grant and 50% after the one-year progress report is received.
- Proposals will be scored in the following areas: Overall impact/significance, Innovation, Investigator, Approach, Environment, Relevance to SAA mission, and Budget rationale. See SAA scoring template for more information.

Round (submitted on or before)	Decision By	Start By	Progress Report	Final Report
August 1	January 1	July 1	February (annually)	One month following conclusion
February 1	July 1	January 1	August (annually)	One month following conclusion

VI Review Criteria:

Reviewers use a scoring scale of 1 (highest priority) to 9 (lowest priority) for each of the items:

Investigation Team:

Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out the planned studies? If the investigator is in the early stages of an independent career, do they have appropriate experience and training? If established, has the investigator demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced the field?

Relevance to SAA Mission:

Is the proposed project relevant to SAA's mission and applicable to the strategic plan? Specifically, will this project: A) increase patient access to care, B) lead to future treatments and/or cures, C) demonstrate or improve the value of spondyloarthritis care; D) Does this study address an important problem? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive the field of spondyloarthritis disease research forward?

Novelty:

Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches, or methods? Are the aims original and innovative?

Feasibility:

Does the scientific environment in which the work will be performed contribute to the probability of success? Do the experiments proposed take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support? Is the proposed research feasible within the term of the award? For extended terms of longer than two years, is there a contingency plan for changes in the PI circumstances?

Methods:

Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

Budget:

Is the budget fiscally responsible and adequately justified?

Overall Impression:

Reviewers compose a few sentences describing their scores and overall impression of the proposed study.

VII. Submit proposals to research@spondylitis.org

*updated 11/11/2023