



## *The 2023 AFS Research Grant Application is now OPEN!*

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**Applications Open: February 10, 2023**

**Applications Close: April 15, 2023**

### **Purposes & Guidelines**

The AFS Research Grant is open to any young principal investigator (within 5 years of completion of training) who is a current AFS member. Please read all the guidelines carefully. AFS hopes that funding through this research grant will lead to additional extramural funding.

Awards are conferred on a competitive basis by submission of a grant application, which is assessed by the AFS Research Committee, in a **blinded** fashion, free of conflict of interest. Ultimately the recommended grantees are approved by the AFS board

### **Eligibility Criteria**

The principal investigator (surgeon or gastroenterologist) must be a current AFS member in good standing at the time of the application submission deadline. If your AFS membership application is currently under review, please contact Rosaleen Tully ([rosaleen@affinity-strategies.com](mailto:rosaleen@affinity-strategies.com)) or Kate Freeman ([kate@foregut.org](mailto:kate@foregut.org)).

A co-investigator (preferable also an AFS member) must be included on the grant proposal, such that the research team comprises both a surgeon and a gastroenterologist at the same institution. Both investigators should be within 5 years of completion of surgery or GI training or currently a resident or fellow. If a resident or fellow is one of the investigators, the other team member **MUST** be a junior surgeon/GI within 5 years of completion of training.

### **Available Research Grants**

The purpose of these grants is to stimulate original research in foregut disease. The study may be either “bench” research, clinical or education.

- Grants are limited to no more than \$10,000 each, for 1-year period following the award funding date
- Made to the Institution

In the spirit of supporting the goals of our membership, applicants are encouraged to include, but not limited to, the top research questions listed by AFS members on the 2019 AFS Research Committee Survey:

- Long-term outcomes after anti-reflux surgery and hiatal hernia repair
- LINX vs fundoplication
- Prospective randomized controlled trial of QOL and long-term outcomes of laparoscopy vs robotic foregut surgery
- Mesh vs no mesh to decrease hiatal/paraesophageal hernia recurrence
- Use of EndoFLIP to gauge adequate hiatal hernia repair and anti-reflux procedures
- Role of anti-reflux surgery, LINX, TIF in management of Barrett's esophagus

Part of the grant review process includes evaluation of the importance of the research question. The review committee will incorporate these published rankings to determine the importance of submitted topics.

PLEASE NOTE: the committee will only fund grants that involve commercially available products.

## Grant Guidelines

It is assumed that some of the resources required to conduct the project are available through the investigator's institution or practice. The research grant serves to provide supplemental support for personnel (not including the salary of either the principal or co-investigator), equipment, or services required to complete the research.

Proposals will first be reviewed by AFS administration to confirm that eligibility requirements are met. The Research Committee will then score the proposals, in a **BLINDED** fashion, based on (1) scientific merit, (2) experimental design, (3) potential of the proposed topics and (4) grantsmanship.

Applicants must ensure that the team of investigators has the appropriate expertise to carry out the proposed research with high methodologic standards. For example, proposals that include cost analyses should include collaborators with expertise in economic or cost-effectiveness analysis and should use rigorous methods for costing and analysis. Comparative clinical studies must account for selection bias and expertise bias in the performance of surgical procedures; studies, where the technical skill of surgeons differs between comparison groups, are unlikely to provide valid estimates of relative treatment effects. It is the responsibility of the applicants to demonstrate how they will minimize bias in their proposals.

## Requirements of Grantees

**The following requirements must be met by the Investigators who receive the award:**

- Institutional IRB or animal care committee approval letter must be received by AFS prior to award funding. It is not required (although preferable) at the time of submission.
- Investigators are required to submit semi-annual updates to the AFS Research Committee during the course of the research, starting 6 months after the grant has been awarded.
- At the conclusion of the project, the investigator is required to submit a final update report to the AFS Research Committee
- An abstract must be submitted for the AFS Scientific Session, which immediately follows the successful completion of the work
- If the updates are not sent, AFS may need to recover the monies awarded

- Unused funds must be returned to the AFS at the conclusion of the research
- A manuscript on the study and your findings must be sent to the official AFS journal - *Foregut*. A copy of the final manuscript must be sent to the AFS office in order for the grant to be considered complete. AFS must be acknowledged as a funding source. *Submission to other journals is only allowed if it is first submitted and rejected by Foregut.*

**If these terms and conditions are not met, subsequent applications from the PI and co-PI will be viewed unfavorably for future funding through the AFS research grant program.**

Since a multidisciplinary team is required for awarding of this grant by the Research Committee, the primary investigator must inform the AFS office if they leave their institution during the course of completing this research. The AFS Research Committee co-chairs will work with the investigator to determine if the research funds will stay with the initial institution or move with the investigator. AFS reserves the right to make this final decision.

AFS Research Committee understands that studies may need modification during the execution phase. If a study design is modified, the primary investigator **MUST** notify the committee. The committee will then review the suggested changes and decide whether they will continue to fund the new study.

## **Conflict of Interest Guidelines**

As part of the submission process, disclosures from all known authors must be provided at the time of submission.

### **Indirect Cost Policy**

- The monies AFS awards for research grants are intended for use as seed money only and no indirect costs may be charged against these awards.

### **Important Guidelines & Instructions**

- AFS grants must be submitted via email by midnight of the deadline date to the Research Committee Administrator: Rosaleen Tully (rosaleen@affinity-strategies.com)
- **If the page limits and guidelines are not followed, the application will be not be reviewed.**