

SEED GRANT PROGRAM

Overview & Application Guidelines

Last updated January 25, 2024

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The AES Seed Grant Program provides support to established investigators to:

- Pursue new and innovative directions in epilepsy research.
- Bring new research methods to their research programs.
- Begin new collaborations with other investigators in epilepsy or in different, complementary disciplines.

These small awards are designed to enable preliminary investigations that will lay the groundwork for subsequent substantial grants from government, industry, or other funding sources for research to advance the understanding, treatment, and prevention of epilepsy.

Seed grants may provide up to \$20,000 for one year for direct costs only. They may not be renewed. Examples of allowable costs include research project supplies and expenses related to information and technology exchange, such as travel for postdoctoral fellows between collaborating laboratories. The number of awards made each year is contingent on available funds.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: All applications must meet the following eligibility criteria. In rare cases, exceptions may be made for an award fully funded by a partner organization. Contact grants@aesnet.org with any questions.

1. Applications may come from individual investigators or from two or more collaborating investigators. The primary investigator (PI) or at least one of the primary investigators in a multiple-PI seed grant must be: 1) an AES member; 2) an established investigator with at least an Associate Professor or equivalent level appointment; **and** 3) an epilepsy-focused academic investigator. An assistant professor(s) may serve as a collaborator or Co-PI on the project provided that the application is submitted by the established professor and the award is contracted at least in part for use by the established professor.
2. The proposed research must be in a new direction that could not be initiated without Seed support. Proposals are welcome across the spectrum of epilepsy research, including basic, translational, clinical, and outcomes-related research.
3. If a project involves a collaboration between two or more investigators, preference will be given to collaborations that are new and/or involve investigators at different institutions or in different disciplines or fields of research.
4. Although collaborations between academic and industry investigators will be considered, the grant must go to an academic institution and the academic investigator should be the primary investigator. Preference will be given to collaborations between academic investigators.

5. Applications that propose only infrastructure development with no primary research or data collection will not be accepted.
6. Preference will be given to applications for research to be conducted at U.S. institutions. Depending on available funds, applications may be considered from investigators outside the U.S. who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria.
7. Final funding decisions may take into account a preference to limit multiple awards to investigators who recently received a grant from AES.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

AES is proud to partner with other non-profit organizations to make dollars go further to support epilepsy researchers. [Funding partners listed here](#) may choose to support top-scored research proposals that align with the mission of their organization. If you grant permission during your application process, your application and its materials may be confidentially shared with these and other non-profit partners to consider for full or partial support.

OTHER POLICIES

Seed Grant Terms and Conditions are available for download through ProposalCentral and contain information on AES's policies related to use of human subjects, use of animal subjects, and other conditions of the award.

SEED GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications must be submitted through ProposalCentral (<https://ProposalCentral.altum.com/>).

- Applicants who do not yet have an account with ProposalCentral will need to register as a new user and provide the requested professional profile information before proceeding.
- Once logged in as a user, go to the Grant Opportunities tab, and filter the list to display American Epilepsy Society Awards.
- Locate AES Seed Grant Program and click on Apply Now to begin an application. Required components of the proposal include the following sections to be completed as online forms or submitted as individual proposal attachments in PDF format. Additional instructions will be available on screen in ProposalCentral and within downloadable templates for proposal attachments. No applications, nor any parts of or updates to the application, will be accepted if submitted after the deadline or if sent directly to AES offices by electronic or U.S. mail.

1. Title Page:

- a. Enter the title of your proposal (max 75 characters)
- b. Total Amount Requested: Enter the total amount requested, not to exceed \$20,000.

2. Download Templates and Instructions:

- a. All proposal attachment templates and this application guideline document can be downloaded here from ProposalCentral.

3. Enable Other Users to Access This Proposal: This screen allows you to give other users access to your grant application, if necessary, such signing official or financial officers at your institution. Please inquire internally at your institution to understand who, if anyone, should be able to access your proposal.

NOTE: If your budget will be split across more than one institution (ie, funds will need to be sent from AES to more than one institution), it would be helpful to add a contact from the other institution.

4. Applicant/PI: Applicant information is pre-loaded from the applicant's Professional Profile. Doublecheck that the information is complete and correct. If it is not, click Edit Professional Profile to update.

5. Institution and Contacts:

- a. Institutional information is pre-loaded from the applicant's Institutional Profile. Double-check that the information is complete and correct. If it is not, click Edit Institutional Profile to update.

6. Collaborating Investigators: Provide the names and institutions of collaborating investigators, other than the applicant, on this page.

7. **Proposal Narrative Overview:** Type up to 3,000 characters that provide a general overview of the content of your proposal as described in the narrative.
8. **Budget Summary:** Enter Proposed Start and End Dates for your budget. Additionally, enter 2,000 characters to justify your budget totals by category.
9. **Organization Assurances:** Use this section to indicate use of human subjects, human tissue, or vertebrate animals, and to confirm institutional assurances. All assurances should be provided at the time of the application if available, and documentation must be provided before funding can begin for awarded proposals. See Award Policies above for more information.
10. **Proposal Attachments:** Upload any required and optional attachments for your proposal.
 - a. **Project Abstract (Proposal Narrative):** 3 pages maximum. Please include the following information in the narrative:
 - i. Description of the proposed research. The workplan must be appropriate for the budget and timeframe of a Seed grant.
 - ii. The significance of the line of research being initiated by the proposed work. If appropriate, please identify how the line of research will target priorities within epilepsy research identified by the Epilepsy Benchmarks or the Institute of Medicine Public Health research recommendations.
 - iii. Overview of the research and technical expertise of the participating laboratories/clinical research sites.
 - iv. Statement describing how the proposed research represents a new direction and why Seed support is essential for its initiation.
 - v. Future plans for the research beyond the one-year term of the Seed grant
 - vi. Budget for the requested funding (in U.S. dollars)
 - b. **Biosketch:** Provide using NIH-style format appropriate to applicant career stage. If co-PIs are proposed, include a biosketch for each investigator. Template available if needed.
 - c. **Letter of Support (optional):** If your proposal's budget requests that the funds will go to more than one institution, you will need to upload a letter of support from the other institution. It is also strongly encouraged to include a letter of support from any collaborator even if funds will not be sent to their institution. Please upload any such letters in this section.

11. Validate: Click the VALIDATE button to check for any missing REQUIRED information or files. All missing required information will be listed on the screen. Please correct any missing information before submitting your application.

12. Signature Pages: The Applicant/PI and the Signing Official must e-sign the application prior to submission in order for the application to pass validation. All signatories must log in to ProposalCentral to sign the application. Signatures needed are:

- a. Applicant/PI: Please type your full name and hit sign. This will trigger an email to your designated Signing Official asking them to log in and sign.
- b. Signing Official: The Signing Official you listed in Section 5 (Institution and Contacts) will be listed here. After you complete your e-signature, the Signing Official will receive an email asking them to log in and complete their e-signature. They need a ProposalCentral account in order to complete their signature, and can access the application through the “Proposals” tab. The Signing Official’s signature is required for you to submit your application.

13. Submit: You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. Any missing information will be listed on the screen. If your submission is successful, you will receive a confirmation message on the screen and a confirmation will be sent to the applicant.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you encounter technical difficulties with ProposalCentral, please contact their help desk at pcsupport@altum.com or 1-800-875-2562 (toll-free US & Canada). If questions arise about your application and the review process, contact Michelle Norton at grants@aesnet.org