



ORGANIZATION FOR AUTISM RESEARCH
“Research that helps families today.”

GRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM
Proposals due June 1, 2007

Background

In February 2004, the Board of Directors of the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) approved the establishment of the Graduate Research Grant Program intended to encourage and support students pursuing graduate and post-graduate studies in disciplines related to assessment, intervention and support of learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and their families.

Announcement

OAR invites research proposals for its 4th Annual Graduate Research Grant Program. Through this competition, OAR intends to promote research in:

- The analysis, evaluation, or comparison of assessment models, treatment models, or service systems
- Applied aspects of early and/ or school-based education, behavioral, or communication intervention, or
- Adult issues such as containing education, employment, housing models and “later intervention.”
- Issues related to family support, social and community integration, and assessment and intervention with challenging behavior.

OAR seeks to fund studies that will likely produce practical and clearly objective results that may aid parents, families, professionals, and people with autism to make more fully informed choices that will lead to healthier and happier lives.

OAR’s Scientific Council will evaluate the proposals it receives for scientific and technical merit.

Review Criteria. Review criteria for the evaluation include:

- **Significance.** Does the study address an important problem? How will it advance scientific knowledge in the field?
- **Approach.** Are the concepts, design, methods, and analyses adequate and appropriate? Are alternate approaches accounted for?
- **Innovation.** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are its aims original? Does it challenge existing paradigms?
- **Meaningful Outcomes.** OAR places special emphasis on the research’s importance to the autism community and its application to the practical challenges of autism. Thus, while a proposal’s scientific merit in terms of design, methodology, and analysis are vital, the meaningfulness of its outcomes will carry great weight in the final review.

OAR’s Board of Directors will make grant awards based on these evaluations and the recommendations of the Scientific Council.

Proposal

The proposal should be no more than 10 pages not including the cover sheet, transmittal letter and any enclosures. The proposal should follow the following format:

- **Cover Sheet.** Please fill out attached cover sheet. This should be the first page of your proposal package
- **Transmittal/Cover letter.** Please prepare a transmittal/cover letter on department letterhead that includes an introduction of the Principal Investigator (applicant) and his or her faculty research advisor. This letter should state the amount of funds requested, describe the intended use of the funds and identify and explain any variations from the prescribed proposal format. For example, if submitting without completed IRB approval, please note that and advise OAR when approval is expected.
- **Abstract.** (300 words or less) Please include a brief abstract of the project suitable for publication and media announcement of the project.
- **Background.** (1-3 pages) Please include background information, including a brief analysis of relevant historical and contemporary knowledge and research related to the proposed topic. Demonstrate that you have the requisite experience and resources necessary to perform the study and accurately assess its measures and outcomes.
- **Timeline.** (1 page) Please describe the timeline of the project. Please note that the awards are for projects to be completed and evaluated within 18 months of the award (unless otherwise specified). This can be included as an attachment, if you choose.
- **Methodology and Evaluation.** (2-3 pages) Please include all information regarding the proposed research design and methodology and describe the proposed evaluation/assessment measures and proposed qualitative and quantitative analyses to be performed.
- **Outcome Recommendations.** (1-2 pages) Please include an overview of the study's expected outcomes and recommendations for further research.
- **Practical Relevance.** (1 page) How relevant is the study and its outcomes to the everyday challenges posed by autism? Does it offer to make any practical findings? (Note: In OAR's highly competitive grants programs, this section often tips the scales in favor of one study over another. Thus, the discussion of this point carries significant weight.)
- **Subject Protection.** Please include evidence of IRB approval or exemption, if not required for the study. If for any reason, you cannot obtain IRB approval before the proposal deadline, please demonstrate that you have commenced the process and state when you expect to receive the IRB's approval in the cover/transmittal letter. (We will consider your proposal as if it had IRB approval, but we will not award any grant until we have received it.)

Required enclosures:

1. Proof of IRB approval or a corresponding exemption
2. Letter of support from the faculty research advisor
3. Budget

Competition

The maximum grant awards are \$2,000.00 for Doctoral or Post-doctoral candidates and \$1,000.00 for Master's candidates. OAR will consider making up to 15 awards, for a total of \$25,000 in grants. Proposals must be post marked due by June 1, 2007. OAR will announce and award the grants September 3, 2007.

Administrative

As discussed above, the proposal has four components: a cover letter, the proposal, proof of IRB approval and the letter of support. The administrative specifications for the cover letter and proposal are:

1. Margins: 1 inch top, bottom, left and right,
2. Font Size: 12 point font,
3. Spacing: Single or double-spaced,
4. Number of copies: Original and three copies mailed plus one complete electronic file e-mailed to: Pgerhardt@researchautism.org.

Please send the original **and** three copies of the entire proposal to:

Organization for Autism Research
Graduate Research Grants Program
2000 N. 14th Street, Suite 480
Arlington, VA 22201

For more information, contact Mike Maloney or Peter Gerhardt at OAR: (703) 243-9710, or send an email to oar@researchautism.org.

**ORGANIZATION FOR AUTISM RESEARCH
GRADUATE GRANT PROPOSAL COVER SHEET**

Applicant Name: _____
Pursuing: <input type="checkbox"/> Masters (\$1,000 maximum) <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate (\$2,000 maximum)
Amount Requested: _____
Address: _____ _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Name of University: _____
Office that Administers Grants: _____
Contact Person: _____
Address: _____ _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Faculty Advisor: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____ _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Title of Study:
