

Guidelines for AO VET Seed grant applications

The online form will guide you in details through the submission process.

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- Only applications conforming with the guidelines and submitted by the deadline will be accepted for further consideration and reviewed.
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General information

- The AO VET Seed grants are funded by AO VET, a Clinical Division of the AO Foundation, a Swiss non-profit organization dedicated to the world-wide advancement in the surgical treatment of trauma and degenerative disorders of the musculoskeletal system through research, development, and education.
- This call is open to all Clinical Divisions such as CMF, Spine, Trauma and VET
- With the AO VET Seed Grants, AO VET supports projects in a wide range of research fields including unconventional and novel projects. In particular, it favors projects related to basic, pre-clinical, and clinical research.
- Its mission is to provide predominantly seed money and favors researchers in the early part of their career. Senior investigators are not eligible for this program.
- The application process is a one-step approach:
 - 1) Open call for full proposals by the defined deadline

Eligibility

Young investigators (≤ 40 years old) who are:

- 1) within five years of the completion of their terminal degree (eg MD, DVM, PhD, etc.) **or**
- 2) within five years of initiation of their first assistant professor position at an academic institution **or**
- 3) enrolled in residency programs or fellowships.

Application forms

Only applications submitted through the online submission tool will be considered.

The full application must be submitted in English. Full applications which are incomplete or do not comply with our guidelines will not be considered.

The following topics must be covered in the application:

- Description of principal investigator's future career aspirations and focus (applicable for young researchers as described in Eligibility the section)
- Personal data including an abbreviated curriculum vitae (CV)
- Abstract of the research project
- Outline of the problem
- State of the art in this field
- Applicant's past research in this field
- Hypothesis, open questions, aim of the project
- Detailed research plan
 - Study design, study subjects, specimens, or materials
 - Predictor and outcome variables
 - Methods for taking measurements
 - Data management and planned analyses including sample size estimate (a sample size estimate includes setting the level of power)
 - Animal model (see next section, Animal model)
- Relevance of the project
- Time schedule
- Relevant literature by the applicant and other authors

Animal model

If an in vivo animal model is used in the planned research work, please describe the model in detail. The description should include:

- Anesthesia protocols
- Treatment protocols
- Pain management
- Surgical techniques
- Postoperative care

The AO Foundation is committed to animal welfare and requires AAALAC International standards in AO-sponsored, external research:

With the grant application, AAALAC accreditation must be provided by either providing a copy of the AAALAC accreditation certificate or the certificate from the applicant's federal or local authority, confirming that the applicant meets the standards.

If the applicant's animal research unit is not AAALAC accredited, the national accreditation must be approved by AO VET. In case the applicant's animal research units is not nationally accredited, the form titled *Animal Care Program Description for Non-AAALAC Facilities* must be submitted. These documents must be in English, official translations can be accepted.

Please see the guidelines and forms in the online application page:

- a) *AO Guiding Principles on Human Care and Use of Animals in Research and Education*
- b) *Institutional Research Animal Program Review Policy*
- c) *Animal Care Program Description for Non-AAALAC Approved Facilities*

Medical Devices

Please note that no medical device development can be funded via this call. For medical device development, please inquire about the AO's innovation funding. [AO's innovation funding](https://aofoundation.org) (aofoundation.org).

The current AO VET Seed Grant call is not focused on product development

Funding policy

Amount and duration

AO VET Seed grants provide support **up to CHF 7,500** with a maximum duration of one year. AO VET highly encourages applicants to submit small grant proposals. For example, investigators may consider seeking funds to support primary or secondary data analyses, systematic reviews with meta-analyses, or manuscript preparation.

Salaries

Salaries for the applicants (main applicant and co-applicants) will normally not be approved. If the project is only possible with some funding for the applicants, it must be clearly shown that the funding requested is essential, project specific and well documented.

Written and signed confirmation from the head of your institution is required with the application that no alternative source of income (including salary, stipend or grant) is available.

Travel expenses

Only project specific travel expenses with a maximum amount of CHF 1,500 for conferences will be covered.

Indirect costs

No overhead contributions are made to the submitting organization.

Additional funding

Additional funding from other AO institutions or any other source must be disclosed in detail. If other funding is available, it must be made clear how this will affect the overall budget of the project if the AO grant application is successful.

Collaboration with AO Institutes

If a collaboration with an AO institute—the AO Research Institute Davos (ARI) or AO Innovation Translation Center (AO ITC) Clinical Evidence—is planned, written approval is required; send your request to the respective institute. **Important: Note deadlines at the end of this document.**

Conditions

Contract

Please note that the contract is not negotiable and AO VET reserves the right to cancel the grant should the contract not be duly signed in ink, by the principal investigator and the director of the project within two months of approval.

AO Membership

AO Membership from any AO Clinical Division (e-member) is a condition for the Principle Investigator of the funded project: [How to get involved \(aofoundation.org\)](https://aofoundation.org)

Publication

The Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators might be interviewed for sharing interim / final results and project updates. Further publication is expected in peer-reviewed journals.

Review and decision process

Notification

The applicant will receive a confirmation e-mail regarding receipt of the application.

Review process

The AO VET Research and Development Commission is an independent group of world class scientist and researchers and is responsible for the peer review process of the submitted projects.

Decision

It is not our policy to enter into any discussions and we do not accept a resubmission of an application previously declined.

Duration and start of project / study

The maximum duration of the project / study is one year.

Deadlines

The deadline for the submission of the full project is **Sunday, May 12, 2024, at 23:59 CET (Central European Time)**.

If a collaboration with an AO institute (ARI or AO Innovation Translation Center [AO ITC] Clinical Evidence) is planned, written approval is required; Deadline for sending your request to the respective institute

April 26, 2024

Principal investigator

Submission of the preproposal through the online application tool

Sunday, May 12, 2024, at 23:59 CET

Principal investigator

Information about acceptance / rejection

July 2024

Earliest start accepted research projects

October 2024

Principle investigator