The application deadline is 11:59 pm Pacific Standard Time on December 1, 2021. To submit an application, visit www.myast.org/research-grants. If you have any questions, please email research@myAST.org.

The purpose of the AST Research Network Patient-Oriented Fellowship Research Grant is to support the career development of fellows or residents committed to patient-oriented research, foster research that is of high merit, and encourage high quality applicants who have the potential to develop into productive investigators. The grant rewards a project that provides a strong training vehicle for the applicant.

A. General Information

This grant is awarded in the amount of $75,000 per year for one year. Please submit your research proposal planning on one year of funding. Research must commence on July 2022 and cannot be deferred for any reason. Only grants supporting research related to solid organ transplantation will be considered.

The Patient-Oriented Fellowship Research Grant supports research that has patient interaction or the study of cells/tissues where the identity of the patients is pertinent. The following topics are intended to provide applicants with a set of examples.

- Transplant patient biomarker studies
- Disparities in immunosuppression use and compliance
- Ex vivo perfusion of organs prior to transplant
- Monitoring samples from patients being treated with novel therapeutic strategies
- Pre-transplant risk assessments
- Outcomes studies

However, any research topic that is patient-oriented and related to solid organ transplant will be accepted, as we recognize the importance of innovation in areas outside of these priorities.

C. Application and Review Process:

1. Applications must be complete and submitted online through the AST Research Network submission website.
2. All complete applications received by the submission deadline will be reviewed and scored by the AST Research Network Scientific Review Committee (SRC).
3. Submissions will be scored based on the quality of the applicant, scientific project, sponsor, and institution with an emphasis on preparing the applicant for a career as an independent investigator.
4. All applicants will receive comments on the strengths and weaknesses of their grant application.
5. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application in March 2022.
6. Those awarded a grant will be notified and asked to accept or decline the grant via email.
   a. Upon acceptance, the recipient will be asked to complete and return an official letter of agreement, signed by the applicant and the grants office.
7. Grant recipients will be recognized during the 2022 American Transplant Congress June 4-8 in Boston, MA. Recipients are expected to register for and attend ATC. Registration is not included as part of the AST grant.
D. Eligibility Criteria:

1. Applicant’s Position
   a. The applicant (PharmD, PhD, MD, or equivalent) must be within the first two years of the
      beginning of post-doctoral research training by the grant application deadline (December
      1, 2021). Applicants who have worked in other fields or taken a leave of absence are
      eligible beyond this two-year period, but this must be directly addressed in the sponsor's
      letter (see section E. 7).
   b. Throughout the period of the grant, the applicant must be at a fellowship or resident
      training level and may not hold an independent faculty level position or a salaried senior
      staff position (or equivalent). The AST defines an independent faculty level position as: a)
      Assistant Professor or equivalent; or b) regardless of title, institutional support that
      includes independent lab space and/or start-up funds to allow independent research.
   c. The applicant’s fellowship must commence in July 2022.
   d. The minimum protected time is 25%.

2. Applicant’s Sponsor and Institutional Support
   a. The applicant must have a sponsor. Only one AST Research Network grant will be
      awarded per mentor/sponsor per year (e.g. as a recipient of a Faculty Development
      Research Grant, recipient of an AST directed grant, or as a sponsor of a Fellowship
      Research Grant). If more than one grant from a given faculty member is submitted and
      deemed competitive, the AST will determine which grant to fund.
   b. If the applicant’s sponsor departs or is planning to depart the institution prior to the start
      of the grant term, the following outcomes apply:
      i. If the sponsor’s impending departure is known before the submission deadline, the
         applicant must notify the AST Research Network national office and the applicant
         will be allowed to revise their application accordingly.
      ii. If the departure occurs after the submission deadline, the applicant will not be
         eligible for funding and their grant withdrawn, as an evaluation of the sponsor is
         part of the scoring procedure.
      iii. If the departure occurs after a grant has been awarded and the grant has
         commenced, funding will be suspended. Reinstitution of the grant will be at the
         discretion of the AST Research Network Scientific Review Committee (SRC)
         Executive Committee, contingent upon satisfactory replacement of the sponsor
         and other factors.

3. AST Membership
   a. The applicant is not required to be an AST member.
   b. The applicant’s sponsor must be an AST member in good standing or have submitted a
      completed membership application by December 1, 2021.
   c. If the applicant is awarded a grant, the sponsor’s AST membership must be maintained
      throughout the term of the grant.

4. Other Funding
   a. Fellows who currently are PI on a K-series grant or hold other individual fellowships,
      career development awards, or other grants awarded in their name that support their
      salary are not eligible to apply for the Patient-Oriented Fellowship Research Grant.
   b. Applicants can apply for the Patient-Oriented Fellowship Research Grant at the same time
      as applying as primary investigator on a K-series, individual fellowships, career
      development awards, or other grants that support their salary. However, the AST grant
      cannot be accepted in conjunction with another award. An AST grant recipient who is
      awarded another grant(s) will need to determine which to accept and which to decline.

5. Miscellaneous
   a. Location: The proposed work is to be performed in a North American research setting.
   b. Education: The applicant must have a PharmD, PhD, MD, or equivalent at the time of
      application.
   c. Citizenship: The applicant must be either: a) a U.S., Canadian, or Mexican citizen; b) a
      lawfully admitted permanent resident foreign national of the U.S., Canada, or Mexico with
a valid visa during the awarded period; or c) a foreign national admitted lawfully for residence in the U.S., Canada, or Mexico during the awarded period. J1 and H1B visa holders are eligible to apply.

E. Specific Application Requirements

1. Title
2. Abstract of the proposed research plan: This document should concisely summarize the project in 400 words or less. The abstract should introduce the project and note its relevance to transplantation. It should describe the long-term objectives and specific aims, research design, and methods for achieving these goals.
3. Applicant's NIH-type biosketch: This document may not exceed five (5) pages.
4. Sponsor's NIH-type biosketch. This document may not exceed five (5) pages.
5. Statement of career goals: This document should explain the applicant's short- and long-term career goals, and how the grant will enhance these plans. This document may not exceed one (1) page.
6. Proposed research plan: This document cannot exceed six (6) pages; the page limit does not include references. It should summarize the proposed research project as well as any simultaneous training that will be obtained during the period of grant support. The applicant and the sponsor may jointly write the proposed research plan, and the participation must be detailed in the separate sponsor narrative. The following sections must be included:
   a. Aims: Include the key questions posed or hypotheses to be tested
   b. Introduction: provide the rationale for the research
   c. Preliminary Results: show preliminary results supporting the research plan
   d. Research Plan: explain how the questions or hypothesis will be studied, with emphasis on experimental design over the details of the specific methods to be used. Include a description of the statistical methods. Anticipated results and potential pitfalls and alternative approaches should be briefly discussed. Specific research (and, if applicable, training) goals to be reached at the end of the grant should also be provided.
7. Sponsor narrative: should not exceed three (3) pages and should include:
   a. A concise description of the overall research plan
   b. A description of the training program in addition to lab research (e.g., courses, conferences, etc.)
   c. A description of the sponsor's background in supervising the research and training of students and postdoctoral fellows
   d. The role of the applicant in the project
   e. A description of the role of the applicant vs. the sponsor in preparing this application. A significant role for the applicant in writing the application is highly encouraged, although input from the sponsor is expected.
   f. An evaluation by the sponsor of the applicant's experience and performance, future potential, and the degree of previous interaction with the applicant.
   g. An explanation of any mitigating or additional factors that need to be considered in terms of eligibility (e.g. account of extra years in education or a change in research field).
   h. The sponsor must specify whether he/she is a PI/recipient on an AST Research Network Grant or the sponsor of another AST Research Network Fellowship Research Grant.
   i. A guarantee of minimum protected time.
   j. For re-submissions only: provide a concise summary of how the applicant's proposal has been modified in response to prior reviewer feedback.
8. Overall project budget
9. Two (2) letters of recommendation: from two senior scientists other than the sponsor who are familiar with the applicant's potential as an investigator. Electronic copies with original signatures on institutional letterhead.

**DISCLAIMER:** The AST will not assume responsibility for any clinical study funded by the AST. Such proposals must be IRB-approved. Any responsibility will be assumed by the PI and the funded institution.
F. Funding Guidelines and Terms of Agreement:

Review these guidelines and terms prior to completing your application. If you are awarded a grant, you and your institution’s grant office will sign a formal letter of agreement (LOA) agreeing to these funding guidelines and terms, and the LOA will be co-signed by your sponsor.

1. The grant is intended to support the applicant’s salary and/or research costs. The following expenses are not permitted: institution overhead, capital equipment, or travel costs.

2. Funding will not be released until visa status is confirmed.


4. Pursuant to regulations of the federal Physician Payment Sunshine Act (included in the Affordable Care Act), NPI numbers will be collected from grant recipients (if applicable) and tax ID numbers collected from the recipients’ institutions (if applicable). All payments will be reported to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Open Payments system, as payments from AST represent indirect transfers of value from the funding pharmaceutical company.

5. Grant funding is not transferable from one recipient to another. If the grantee relocates, the AST will determine if the grant can be transferred to the recipient’s new location, or if the grant must be surrendered and any remaining funds returned (if the grant is surrendered, a final report will still be required.

6. The applicant must acknowledge the grant as a funding source in all manuscripts and presentations derived from the funded research by using the following statement: "This work was supported by a grant from the American Society of Transplantation Research Network." Copies of such publications must be submitted to the AST National Office.

7. Reports from the recipient and letters from the sponsor are required at the following intervals, and continuation of current grant funding and eligibility for future AST funding is contingent upon completion of these items:
   b. Recipients of one-year grants must provide a final report within 30 days of the conclusion of the grant term. A letter from the sponsor must also be submitted summarizing their observations of the recipient during the term of the grant.
   c. All grant recipients must submit a final report, even if the grant is surrendered for any reason prior to the conclusion of the grant term.

8. If the recipient’s sponsor departs during the term of the grant, funding will be suspended and reinstitution of the grant will be at the discretion of the AST Research Network Scientific Review Committee (SRC) Executive Committee, contingent upon satisfactory replacement of the sponsor and other factors.

9. If the grantee does not retain fellowship or resident status, he/she must notify the AST, surrender the grant, and return any remaining funds. A final report will be required.

10. During the term of the research grant, there can be no concurrent extramural funding.