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**American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology Foundation**

**Outcome Studies Grant Program**

**Evaluating Neuropsychological Services in Dementia, TBI, CVA, Epilepsy, and ADHD**

**OVERVIEW AND INSTRUCTIONS**

The AACNF Outcome Studies Grant Program will award grants for studies evaluating outcomes of clinical neuropsychological services. Grant applications are specifically invited for studies assessing the utility and cost effectiveness of neuropsychological evaluations. Initial target areas include attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, dementia, traumatic brain injury, stroke, and epilepsy. The AACNF considers the study of outcomes imperative in maintaining and improving access to neuropsychological services for individuals with neurological and neuropsychiatric conditions. In an era marked by escalating scrutiny in determinations regarding the necessity for healthcare services, priority is being given to evidence-based practices. The AACNF seeks to increase the availability of empirical data addressing the value of neuropsychological services.

The AACNF considers the study of outcomes imperative in maintaining and improving access to neuropsychological services for individuals with neurological and neuropsychiatric conditions.  Determinations for necessity of healthcare services are increasing being driven by questions of *value*; that is, to what extent does a service improve the quality of care in the most cost-effective way? Most of the research published in our journals describes phenotypes of neurobehavioral disorders or reports on the diagnostic accuracy of various tools.  We are not looking for such studies.  Rather, we will prioritize those projects that examine *what happens* as a result of including neuropsychological assessment in the services provided to patients.  Is there an impact on costs?  Is there a quantifiable impact on treatment plan?  Is there an impact on patient satisfaction? Does provider confidence increase in a diagnosis when neuropsychological assessment is provided, and does this increased confidence have practical, quantifiable implications? Are subgroups of patients identified that are at an increased or decreased risk of consuming healthcare resources? Is a particular assessment approach more cost efficient in given situations than another, more-commonly employed approach, and can the hypothesized cost savings be demonstrated?  These are only examples – potential grant topics are limited only by the creativity and resources of the applicants, but in each case must focus on a concrete impact of having provided neuropsychological services. In an era marked by escalating scrutiny in determinations regarding the necessity for healthcare services, priority is being given to evidence-based practices.  The AACNF seeks to increase the availability of empirical data addressing the value of neuropsychological services.

The Outcome Studies Grant Program is sponsored by the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology Foundation, a nonprofit, charitable organization (501c3) established in 2008 by the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology. The mission of the Foundation is to support research to evaluate and document outcomes of neuropsychological services, and to increase access to neuropsychological services among the public by increasing awareness of those services and their outcomes. Grant recipients will be encouraged to submit research reports for publication in The Clinical Neuropsychologist. They will also be asked to present their results at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology.

**Funding**: It is anticipated that up to three grants will be awarded for a total of $30,000 each year (divided among the funded studies). The maximum request may be up to $30,000 (direct costs). The Outcome Studies Grant Committee of the AACNF will determine the number of grants that will be awarded with funding based on the cost and needs outlined by each awardee. **Indirect costs will not be covered**; if applicant institutions cannot waive such costs, they **must** be submitted as part of the direct cost budget.

**Grant Monitoring**: Awardees are required to submit annual reports of their progress. The Grant Committee will monitor progress and determine whether funds are being disbursed following the terms of the award.

**Eligibility:** Eligible applicants will include doctoral-level psychologists and graduate students matriculating in doctoral or master's programs. Board certification or membership in AACN is not required, and international applications are welcomed, providing that the application makes clear how results of the study will be of value to the members of the AACN, most of whom work in the United States.

**Applications:**  Each applicant must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI),limited to one (1) page in length, which **briefly** outlines the aims, hypotheses and research approach for their submission. The LOI must be received by **February 2, 2020.** The LOI will be reviewed by the Chair of the Grant Committee to determine if the submission is consistent with the aims of the Grant Program. For those grants determined to be inconsistent with the aims of the program, brief feedback will be provided as to the issue which lead to rejection of the project. The Chair reserves the right to consult with the full board in instances where uncertainty of the appropriateness of the project exists. Applicants are **strongly** encouraged to consult the aims of the program as described above when considering their project and be specific in their description as to how their project will examine *what happens* as a result of including neuropsychological assessment in the services provided to patients.

Applications may be downloaded from <https://aacnf.org/downloads>. The grant submission deadline is **11:59 P.M.** **April 10, 2020**. Awards will be announced at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology in June with funding for the period of one (1) year. Members of the AACNF Grants Committee or the AACNF Board of Directors are not eligible to apply for or receive a grant through this program.

**Application Scoring and Selection Criteria:** Applications will be reviewed by a panel of three (3) members of the AACNF Grants Committee with each reviewer scoring the application under the criteria. The Grants Committee has been composed of but is not limited to members of the American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology, the American Board of Pediatric Neuropsychology, and the American Board of Professional Neuropsychology. Criteria will include: relevance of the proposed research to the goals of the grant program; scientific merit of the proposed design; feasibility; and economy (perceived value relative to costs). Each grant proposal will be scored on a 100-point scale based on the following criteria and funding of grants will proceed for meritorious applications from the best application downward as far as funds permit.

* **Relevance to the Goals of the Grant Program (40 points):**  Clear demonstration that research targets clinically meaningful outcomes and/or supports evidence-based practice; compelling justification of how the proposed research is important to one or more of the target areas
* **Scientific Merit of the Research Design (40 points):** Appropriateness of the research design including subject selection and sample size, well-defined and measurable outcome or process variables, proposed statistical analyses, appreciation of time factors involved in the grant period, etc. Justification for sample size and proposed statistical analyses through a formal power analysis is recommended where applicable.
* **Feasibility (10 points):** Feasibility is scored based on a number of factors including the principal investigator’s experience in the area of study, the availability of resources/subjects to complete the study, and potential to complete the project within the grant period.
* **Economy of project (10 points):** Appropriateness of budget to complete the project as well as the opportunity cost relative to other proposals (i.e., potential value of return to relative the dollars invested).

**The final application must be submitted via e-mail to the committee chair** at [franklin.brown@yale.edu](mailto:franklin.brown@yale.edu) by April 10, 2020. Faxed or mailed submissions will not be accepted unless a waiver is granted by the committee chair (Dr. Brown). Grants submitted by e-mail should be in any version of Microsoft Word or in .rtf format which is available in most word processors. Dr. Brown can be e-mailed or called (203-785-5335) to help any applicant who has difficulty with these options.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete the following on the application forms.

**Face Page**

Please provide the Title of the Project and the Name of the Principal Investigators as noted. The remaining sections are reserved for AACNF Office Use.

**Page 2**

**Item 1: Title of Project:** Please select a title that clearly and specifically describes the project.

**Item 2: Investigator Identification**

**Item 2a - Principal Investigator:** Provide the name and associated information for the primary person responsible for the scientific, technical, and fiscal direction of the project.

**Item 2b – Secondary Investigator(s):** Provide the name and associated information for

all other individuals involved with this project.

**Item 2c-d.** Please provide all contact information for the Principal Investigator

**Item 3: Dates of the Entire Proposed Project Period -** Indicate start date and anticipated completion date. Request no more than 12 months for the entire proposed project period.

**Item 4: Amount Requested -** Enter the sum of the total costs that appears on page 3.

**Item 5: Human Subjects -** Indicate the method of institutional review board (IRB) approval that will be obtained for this project. While a review of the project by an IRB is not necessary for submission of a research grant to AACNF, a monetary award will not be made until such a review has been completed satisfactorily.

**Item 6: Student required Research –** Indicate whether or not grant is intended to underwrite dissertation, thesis, or other required student research. This is for record keeping purposes and in no way eliminates a project from consideration.

**Item 7: Signature of Principal Investigator and Date.** Type your name and the date of the application here. **Please do NOT insert a graphic file with your signature. Only those investigators who receive grants will need to submit an actual signed form.**

## Page 3

**Detailed Budget of Personnel.** If salaries are requested, list the names, roles in project, % of time, and requested salary for each person, beginning with the Principal Investigator. Fringe benefits are limited to actual cost with a maximum of 22%. We generally do not provide funds to give the principal investigator a summer salary or to cover regular salary. These funds should be requested primarily to allow the investigator to hire research assistants as necessary to carry out the study. Salary can be figured as follows:

Monthly Salary

Percent of Time Given to Project

Number of Months Involved in Project

Total Fringe Benefits

Total Amount Requested

**Equipment and Other Costs.** List all equipment and supplies that will need to be purchased and any other expenditures (e.g. publication costs, statistical consultation/analysis). Itemize the associated costs as indicated. Generally, equipment purchased which can be used after the completion of the study will not be funded or will become the property of the AACNF at the conclusion of the study. Funding for consumables (e.g., test forms) is allowed.

**Budget Justification.** As noted, please describe the specific functions of the personnel listed in the detailed budget, and explain and justify budgeted equipment, supplies, and any other miscellaneous or unusual expenses.

**Pages 4-7: SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE RESEARCH PLAN (Parts A-E)**

Please use a standard font and font size that is readily legible (e.g. Arial) with a font size no less than 11 point. A smaller font size may be used for figures, graphs, diagrams, charts, tables, figure legends, and footnotes, but this type must be readily legible.

Prepare Parts A through D of the Research Plan (below) single spaced, using one inch margins throughout (top, bottom, left, and right). Include sufficient details to facilitate an effective review. Be specific and informative, but concise. Please avoid redundancies as much as possible. The maximum permitted for the Research Plan parts A through C is three pages. Additional guidance about how much space to allocate for each section is provided below.

**Research Plan (total length of sections A-C must be 3 pages or less).**

**A. Proposal Overview (suggested length, ½ page).** Provide a summary of the proposed project including the study objectives, hypotheses to be tested, and potential benefits of the research.

**B. Background & Significance for Evaluating Outcomes of Clinical Neuropsychological Services (suggested length, 1 page).** Provide a description of this project that clearly demonstrates its applicability to the grant program goal of evaluating outcomes of clinical neuropsychological services. Projects that clearly demonstrate outcome based research and/or evidence based practice will be given strongest consideration in this section so it is important to clearly outline these factors as the basis for this research project. State concisely the importance of the research described as it relates to outcome measurement in relation to the practice of clinical neuropsychology.

**C. Experimental Design and Methods (suggested length: 1 - 1½ pages).** Discuss the experimental design, procedures and protocols to be used, and the means by which the data will be analyzed and interpreted. If your study involves human participants, it is important to describe the inclusion/exclusion criteria and expected demographic and/or clinical characteristics of your sample(s). Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. Provide evidence that supports feasibility of your work.Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may comprise risks and the precautions to be exercised. It is often valuable to assure that your Experimental Design and Methods clearly target the Specific Aims; for example, if hypotheses are stated in the Specific Aims section, then the Experimental Design and Methods section should show precisely how those hypotheses will be tested. It is usually helpful to state clearly what dependent and independent variables will be used in analyses, the statistical analyses that will be performed to test the hypotheses using those variables, what statistical criteria will be used to assess the validity of the hypotheses, and what statistical power the analyses will have to test these hypotheses.

**D. Literature Cited.** List literature citations at the end of the Research Plan, preferably according to the editorial style of the American Psychological Association (APA). There is no page length limitation, but it is more important to be selective in your citations than to be comprehensive; literature cited should only help support, not replace your text.

**E. Biographical Sketch of the Primary Investigator.** Please provide a brief summary of the scientific, technical, and academic qualifications of the principal investigator. If additive to the overall application, a biographical sketch of Secondary Investigator(s) will be accepted. Typically the biographical sketch includes current title and any academic affiliation, information about education and training, ongoing supported research, and a listing of relevant publications (do NOT include personal information or curriculum vitae). While other formats will be accepted, the preferred format for submission is the NIH-style “Biographical Sketch” (which has a maximum of 4 pages), following the PHS 398 format (see <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>).

**Page 8 - Affirmation**

**F. Affirmation.** All applicants are required to place their name on the human subjects and ethical affirmation at the bottom of the last page to indicate that they are able to follow these guidelines. Only successful grantees will be required to sign this form after the grants are awarded.

Appendices are neither required nor encouraged. Under exceptional circumstances, limited information of a supplemental nature may be included in an appendix. Such information will not be considered central to the application by the review committee, nor will extensive material be read or copied. Applications judged to include too much material will be returned for revision. The goal is to include only absolutely relevant information.

# Page 9 - Indemnification Agreement

Successful principal investigators will be required to sign the Indemnity Agreement before a monetary award can be made. These forms are designed to ensure that AACNF cannot be held financially culpable in connection with any award which is made. In the event that the investigator is associated with an institution where the research will be conducted, an authorized institutional representative will also need to sign the form.  **This form need not be submitted with the grant proposal, but only when an award is being made. However, researchers associated with an institution should assure that their institution is willing to sign before the grant is submitted.**

**The AACNF application form and instructions were developed in collaboration with the Clinical Research Grants Program of the National Academy of Neuropsychology**