

Guidelines for AO CMF Start-Up Grant applications

These guidelines are outlining the preproposal **and** full proposal submission process. The online form will guide you in details through the submission process, depending on the application stage.



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

General information

- The AO CMF Start-Up Grants are funded by AO CMF, a clinical division of the AO, a medically-guided, not-for-profit organization, a global network of surgeons, and the world's leading education, innovation, and research organization specializing in the surgical treatment of trauma and musculoskeletal disorders.
- This call is open to investigators from all AO clinical divisions: AO Trauma, AO Spine, AO CMF, and AO VET
- With the AO CMF Start-Up Grants, AO CMF supports projects in a wide range of research fields including unconventional and novel projects. We encourage submissions that follow the strategy of translational approaches for bone constructs and their impact on facial bone reconstruction.
- Its primary aim is to provide seed money to researchers in the early stages of their careers. Senior investigators are not eligible for this program.
- If a project is funded, AO CMF strongly encourages the investigators to submit and publish a review or manuscript in AO CMF's [*Journal of Craniomaxillofacial Trauma and Reconstruction*](#).
- The application process entails two steps:
 - 1) Open call for preproposals by the defined deadline
 - 2) Invitation to submit the full project proposal if preproposal has been selected

Eligibility criteria for the principal investigator

- Investigators younger than 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 prerequisites and description for the **preproposal**

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

Preproposal

The preproposal must be submitted in English and cover the following points:

- Project abstract: Short description of the project (approx. half-page A4).
- Outline the problem and current state of the art in this field: In a few sentences, summarize problem and the current state of the art (approx. half-page A4).
- Briefly describe the research plan for carrying out this study (approximately 2,500 characters with spaces).
- What do you aim to achieve with your study? Specify the milestones in few sentence
- Indicate support whether you have applied or plan to apply to other sources for financial support for this project.

Application prerequisites and description for the **full proposal**

Full proposal (by invitation only)

The principal investigators of projects selected to submit full proposals will be individually contacted and informed. The grant application must be submitted in English through the online application form. Incomplete and noncompliant applications 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 (relevant for full proposal)

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:

- AO Guiding Principles on Human Care and Use of Animals in Research and Education*
- Institutional Research Animal Program Review Policy*
- 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 \(aofoundation.org\)](https://aofoundation.org)

The current AO CMF Start-up Grant call is not focused on product development.

Funding policy

Amount and duration

AO CMF Start-Up Grants provide support **up to CHF 25,000** per year with a maximum duration of two years. AO CMF 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 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

Applications that involve collaboration with the AO Research Institute Davos (ARI) must be approved by its director prior to submission. For this reason, ARI must be contacted at least three weeks prior to the submission deadline, at the very latest by **February 19, 2024**. It is the responsibility of the applicant to get a written confirmation from the above-mentioned AO institute.

Conditions of contract

Please note that the contract is not negotiable and AO CMF 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

The principal investigator of the funded project must be a member of an AO clinical division. <https://aofnd.my.site.com/ao/s/>

Publication

The principal investigator and coinvestigators may be interviewed for sharing interim/final results and project updates. Funded researchers are required to submit a review of the

funded project to the *Journal of Craniomaxillofacial Trauma & Reconstruction (CMTR)*. Further publication is expected in peer-reviewed journals.

Review and decision process

Notification

After submission, the applicant will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of their application.

Review process

All preproposals are being prescreened and successful candidates are eligible for the full proposal submission. The AO CMF Research and Development Commission, an independent group of world-class scientists and researchers, is responsible for the peer-review process of the submitted projects.

The maximum duration of the project/study is two years. The project/study must start at the beginning of January 2025.

Deadlines

If a collaboration with an AO institute (ARI or AO Innovation Translation Center [AO ITC] Clinical Evidence) is planned, written approval is required; send your request to the respective institute by latest February 19, 2024.	February 19, 2024	Principal investigator
Submission of the preproposal through the online application tool	March 6, 2024	Principal investigator
Information about acceptance / rejection	Mid-/end of April 2024	
Submission of the full proposal through the online application tool	End of July 2024	Principal investigator
Information about acceptance/rejection of the full proposal	End of October 2024	AO staff
Start accepted research projects	January 1, 2025	Principle investigator