

ACCEPTED PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

DDF research grants may be used for an independent project or to support additional work on an ongoing, funded study, but are not designed to cover the applicant's entire compensation.

If necessary, an explanatory letter should be included in the appendix to clarify the differences between the present application to the DDF and currently funded projects or salary support.

The applicant's institution is expected to provide the required physical facilities and administrative services normally available in an institution.

DDF's research grants do not provide money for facilities and administration costs (indirect costs), or funds for such items as: secretarial/administrative salaries, books and periodicals, membership dues, office and laboratory furniture, office equipment and supplies, rental of office or laboratory space, recruiting and relocation expenses, personal services, or construction, renovation, or maintenance of buildings or laboratories.

Proposal Sections

1. Cover Pages

Please use the grant application (visit Dysimmune.org for to access grant application form).

2. Lay Language Abstract

300 words (if funded, this abstract including the name of PI and his/her affiliation will be published on the DDF web site; by submitting a proposal the PI agrees to these terms). The abstract should be written for a general audience, at the level of popular news magazines (as a rough guide, assume that the audience knows what proteins and DNA are, but not what protoaggregates or transcription are). Technical terms should be minimized or explained, and Greek characters and other symbols should be avoided or spelled out.

3. Technical Abstract

The structured technical abstract is a summary of the proposed research or scholarly project for general scientific audiences. It must not exceed 1 page in length. It should provide a clear, concise overview of the proposed work by addressing the following points:

Background: Provide a brief statement of the ideas and reasoning behind the proposed work.

Objective and Hypothesis: State the objectives and hypothesis to be tested. Cite evidence or provide a rationale that supports it.

Specific Aims: Concisely state the specific aims of the study.

Study Design: Briefly describe the study design, emphasizing those elements you consider most relevant to assignment of the proposal for peer review.

Scientific Relevance: Provide a brief statement explaining the potential relevance to autoimmune neuromuscular disease. If this application is funded, this description will become public information. Therefore, do not include proprietary or confidential information.

4. Research Project Budget

Max. 1 page; including a table and a short justification of costs. DDF agrees to pay all direct (but no indirect) costs for this project.

Needs: Research Grants are intended to fit a variety of needs in scientific investigations related to autoimmune neuromuscular disease. A grant is generally made to cover the cost of such items as salaries and benefits for professional and technical personnel, special equipment, supplies, and other miscellaneous items required to conduct the proposed research. Budgets submitted must be realistic estimates of the funds required for the proposed research. Because of its limited resources, DDF and its Peer Review Process expect applicants to exercise considerable budget restraint.

Flexibility: It is the intent of DDF to be flexible in response to the changing needs of a research program. The PI may make minor alterations within the approved budget except where such expenditures conflict with the policies of DDF. Major changes (e.g. change of milestones and deliverables) require written approval from DDF's Grant Advisory Board.

Personnel: Names and positions of all personnel must be individually listed and the percentage of time to be devoted to the project by each person should be noted, even when salary is not requested. If the individual is proposed to engage in the work but has not been selected, please list as "vacancy." The costs to the institution of employee fringe benefits should be indicated as a percent of the employee's salary. The amount of fringe benefits requested must be prorated to the salary requested. (For example, if 50% of an individual's annual salary is requested then no more than 50% of that individual's annual cost for fringe benefits can be requested.)

Permanent Equipment: Defined as all items costing over \$500 with a useful life of 2 or more years. List separately and justify the need for each item of equipment. The maximum allowable for durable equipment is \$8,000.

Consumables: Group into major categories (e.g. glassware, chemicals, radioisotopes, survey materials, animals).

Miscellaneous Expenditures: List specific amounts for each item; examples of expenditures allowed include publication costs, special fees (e.g., publication costs, pathology, computer time and scientific software, and equipment maintenance).

Subcontracts: If any portion of the proposed research is to be carried out at another institution, enter the total costs and provide a categorical breakdown on a continuation budget page.

Travel: PIs are expected to present their results at a national or international conference, following completion of the award. Travel and lodging expenses for this meeting can be requested here. A list of all planned travel should be provided here. Please note that DDF funds shall not be used for travel costs not approved in the budget as awarded.

Total Amount Requested: Budget totals should reflect a maximum duration of 2 years.

Justification of Budget: Justify all items of equipment costing over \$500, and the need for personnel, supplies, travel, and other miscellaneous items.

5. NIH-style Biosketches

Max. 5 pages per researcher (including your bibliography). Please find a template for download here:

- https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch-blankformat_exp%2002-28-2023.docx
- <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm> or
- Instructions can be found here:
[https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.240-r&r-seniorkey-person-profile-\(expanded\)-form.htm#Instructions](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-e/general/g.240-r&r-seniorkey-person-profile-(expanded)-form.htm#Instructions)

Submit biosketches for the PI, CoPI, and collaborators/consultants, even if no salary support is requested. Do not provide biosketches for individuals who provide only technical assistance. Collaborators are defined as individuals who will participate actively in the design and execution of the studies whereas consultants are defined as individuals who will provide any combination of advice, guidance, and reagents without "hands-on" involvement in the project). Include letters of intent to collaborate or consult in the Appendix. Details of contractual arrangements with collaborators or consultants should be provided in the Justification of Budget section of the application.

6. Letters of Support

A letter of support from your mentor(s) indicating their knowledge of and support for your proposed project.

A letter of support from your institution indicating their knowledge of and support for your proposed project, including their ability to support salary and indirect costs not covered by this grant and acknowledgement of protected time to complete the proposed project.

7. Other Support

Max. 1 page. DDF will not provide funding that is redundant with that from other sources, but recognizes that some projects will require funding from multiple sources to cover expenses. Indicate overlap with proposed project.

Current Support: List all current awards; give the source of funds, grant number, title of project, period of time covered by the grant, the amount of direct cost support for current year and total grant period, and percent effort. Outline the goals of the project in a brief two or three sentence paragraph. If necessary, an explanatory letter should be included in the appendix to clarify the differences between the present application to the DDF and currently funded projects.

Pending Support: List all pending applications to other funding sources for research support; identify those applications to be considered on an either/or basis with the DDF application. In the case of substantial overlap, state whether DDF funding or the other funding would be returned. If there is not substantial overlap, justify why this is so. You may use the NIH "Other Support" form found here <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/othersupport.htm>

8. Research Plan

Limit research plan to max. 4 pages. Proposals should be realistic in terms of work to be accomplished in the period for which support is requested.

Although it is permissible to submit applications on an "either/or" basis with other agencies, proposals should be adjusted to fit DDF's term and budget constraints.

- **Specific Aims:** List the objectives and goal of the research proposed and describe the specific aims briefly in order of priority.
- **Background and Significance:** Concisely summarize and critically evaluate related work done by others and specifically state how the successful completion of the work proposed the in specific aims of the application will advance scientific knowledge or aspects of clinical practice.
- **Research Design and Methods:** Describe your proposed methods and procedures in sufficient detail to permit evaluation by other scientists. Discuss potential difficulties and imitations of the methods and procedures and provide alternative approaches. Order your priorities, and estimate the length of time that you believe will be required to complete each specific aim. Although the time estimated should not exceed the term for which support is requested, it is helpful to state how this project fits in with your long-term research goals.

9. Milestones/Deliverables/Figures/Gantt Chart

Max. 1 page. Create a comprehensive list of milestones and deliverables including a timeline when those are due. It is recommended to visualize the timeline using e.g. a Gantt chart. You can insert figures here.

10. References

Each literature citation should include the author names, title, book or journal, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. There is no page limitation for the list of references.

11. Appendix

Use only for support letters and assurances and certificates - no page limit, no figures or references should be included in the Appendix.

Assurances and Certification. All activities involving human subjects or vertebrate animals must be approved by an appropriate institutional committee before the application will be funded by the DDF. Furthermore, compliance with current US Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for financial conflict of interest, recombinant DNA, research misconduct, and vertebrate animals is required. The assurances and certifications are made and verified by the signature of the institutional official signing the application. Assurances and certificates may be included into the Appendix.

Human Subjects. All proposed research projects involving human subjects must be approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB). The review date should be recent; certification is invalid if the review date precedes the submission date by more than one year.