

Research

Appropriate Areas of Research and Criteria



Appropriate research areas may include but are not limited to the following as they relate to scleroderma:

1. Scleroderma-related lung disease.
2. Pediatric scleroderma.
3. Vascular manifestations.
4. Studies of animal models.
5. Therapeutic modalities.
6. Mechanisms of end organ damage.
7. Immunologic studies.
8. Endothelial cell biology.
9. Fibroblast biology.
10. Models and markers of gender and genetic factors.
11. Cell signaling.
12. Epidemiology studies.
13. Matrix biology.
14. Stem cell biology.
15. Health services research (e.g. quality of life, health care delivery.)
16. Study of clinical manifestation.

Restrictions

Applicants may submit only one grant application per grant review.

No more than two (2) grants in any given year will be awarded to any institution or major branches of institution (e.g. University of California San Diego, University of California San Francisco.)

Unless unusual circumstances prevail, National Scleroderma Foundation may fund applicants for only three consecutive years for New Investigator

Grants and two years for Established Investigator Grants.

Applications failing to strictly adhere to the National Scleroderma Foundation guidelines will be administratively disqualified and not be further reviewed.

Applicants may hold only one grant at any given time from the National Scleroderma Foundation.

Applicants who have been funded by the National Scleroderma Foundation must wait one year after their grant has ended to reapply.

Revised grants utilizing critiques from the previous submission may be resubmitted no more than once.

Before research can begin, grant agreements must be signed and all approvals such as IRB must be obtained.

Review Considerations

The National Scleroderma Foundation peer review committee will review applications for responsiveness to the research objectives of the National Scleroderma Foundation and for the eligibility of the Principal Investigator under the requirements stated above. Applications found to be unresponsive to these guidelines will be returned without further consideration.

Applications that are complete and responsive to the guidelines of the National Scleroderma Foundation will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit.

Review Criteria

In the written review, comments on the following aspects of the application will be made in order to judge the likelihood that the proposed research will have a substantial impact on the pursuit of these goals. Each of these criteria will be addressed and considered in the assignment of the overall score.

1. **Significance.** Does this study address an important problem related to SSc? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field?
2. **Approach.** Are the conceptual framework design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the investigator acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
3. **Innovation.** Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?
4. **Investigator.** Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers (if any)? Is there evidence the applicant is committed to pursuing research related to scleroderma?
5. **Environment.** Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?

The personnel category will be reviewed for appropriate staffing based on the requested

percent effort. The direct costs budget request will be reviewed for consistency with the proposed methods and specific aims. Budgetary adjustments may be made by the review panel or the National Scleroderma Foundation. The duration of support will be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate to ensure successful completion of the requested scope of the project.

Award Criteria

The following will be considered in making funding decisions:

1. Scientific merit of the proposed project as determined by peer review.
2. Importance of the area to scleroderma research.
3. Availability of funds.

Progress, Financial Reports, and Carry-Over Requests

Progress and financial reports are required at each grant award year, and as requested by the National Scleroderma Foundation. Further details of what is required is included in the grant agreement. All required forms are available on the website.

An additional and final report will be due 90 days after the completion of the grant, describing any publications and subsequent funding.

Failure to meet reporting requirements may result in future ineligibility to apply to the Foundation's research program for the primary investigator, key personnel, and other investigators at the institution.

Carry forward requests exceeding 5% of the annual grant award must be submitted with a justification, progress, and financial report for further review by the National Scleroderma Foundation. Requests may not exceed 20% of the annual grant award amount and may not exceed six months.