Purpose

AO Spine Europe and Southern Africa established two research grants which are available to young investigators who have a desire to perform high-quality, clinically relevant spinal or spinal cord research. Each grant is dedicated to a separate research area: clinical science or translational science. The purpose of these grants is to encourage new research activities by providing start-up funding of up to 7,500.00 Swiss Francs for one year.

The deadline for application submission is **October 25, 2020**. Award winners will be announced in December 2020.

All applications should be e-mailed to:

Kryśia Zagórska-Pöttker  
Project Manager  
kzagorska@aospine.org

Eligibility Requirements

- The primary applicant must be an active member of AO Spine Europe and Southern Africa. The applicant must be a physician, surgeon, or scientist with focused interest in disorders of the spine/spinal cord and with an appointment at a university or hospital-based research institution in Europe or Southern Africa Region.
- The primary applicant must be 40 years old or less at the moment of application (max. October 24, 1980).
- The applicant must not have received this grant in the preceding year.
- Location: research must be done within the Europe and Southern Africa Region.
- Cost-sharing of projects can only be allowed with local hospitals or societies but not with industry sponsors.
- The grant application requires evidence that the investigator has the experience and resources to complete the proposed research.
- AO Spine must be cited as the source of funding in any publication, presentation or in any publicity resulting from the award or its results.
- The number and amount of research grants awarded each year are at the discretion of AOESEA.

General Guidelines

- Application deadline is on October 25, 2020.
- Completed applications should be e-mailed to: kzagorska@aospine.org.
- All correspondence will be sent to the Primary Investigator. It is the responsibility of the Primary investigator to provide information to co-investigators.
- Funds are for work to be performed, not works in progress or already completed.
- Multiple grants are not to be funded simultaneously for the same applicant in the same year.
- Indirect costs shall not exceed 5% of the overall budget.
- Topic must be spine related – clinical and translational studies are accepted.
- All projects are required to be completed in 1 year.
- Projected budget to be presented with grant application.
- Detailed budget must be presented at completion.
- Completed projects must be of a quality ready for podium presentation in the GSC or publication in leading ISI journals.
- A Progress Report, regarding the research project, must be submitted to AOESEA 6 (six) months after the work commences. A Final Report must be submitted at the end
of the 12-month period and should include a description of the grant’s accomplishments and an accounting for the funds received under the grant.

- If the work cannot be completed within the 12-month time frame, AOSESA must be notified and a written request to extend the grant must be submitted to AOSESA board for approval to extend the grant.
- When the reports above or other information (including the failure to submit reports) indicate any part of a grant is not being used for its intended purpose, AOSESA has a duty to investigate. During such investigation, AO Spine shall withhold further funding.
- AO Spine reserves the right to discontinue the grant, with return of full funding by the grantee, if for any reason, it is determined that the activities for which the grant is intended to address cannot be met.
- Each award will be in the amount of 7,500.00 Swiss Francs.
- Funds will be distributed in the following manner:
  - 5,000.00 Swiss Francs – distributed at the beginning of the 1-year award cycle.
  - 2,500.00 Swiss Francs – distributed at 6-month interval. Subject to the other requirements of these General Guidelines, funds will not be distributed until the 6-month Progress Report (and other Progress Reports as deemed required) has been filed with AO Spine.

Application

Applicant must present the following documents:

- application form: filled and signed;
- letter of intent by primary investigator to AO Spine ESA;
- CVs of primary, and co-investigators (max. 5 pages).

Selection Process

- All grant applications are reviewed by the AO Spine Grant Reviewing Committee.
- Applications are rated on their scientific merit and include the following criteria:
  - clinical need: There is a clinical need about the topic?
  - significance: Does it address the significance topic?
  - approach: Are the aims of the project clear and reasonable in the context of the project?
  - methods: Are methods of the projects able to produce scientific evidence?
  - feasibility: Can the investigators deliver a result?
- All persons submitting applications do so with the understanding that they will abide by the conditions, deadline policies and decisions of AOSESA Board.

Retention of Records

AO SESA shall retain all records pertaining to all grants to institutions to include:

- grant applications;
- names of reviewers;
- scoring sheets by reviewers;
- correspondence;
- progress reports;
- distribution of funds.