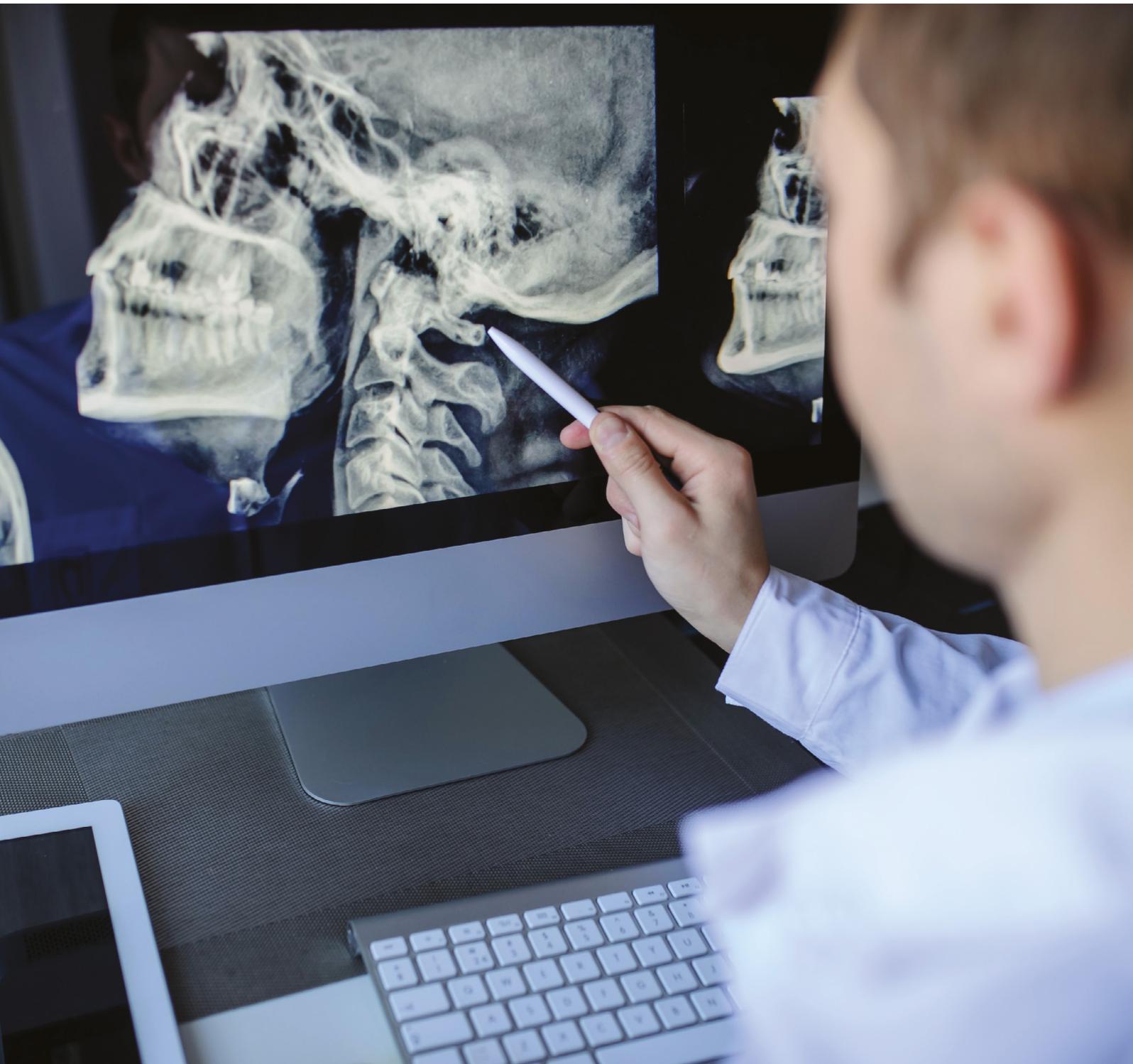


Research

2022 AO Spine Discovery and Innovation Award

Call for proposals and proposal guidelines



2022 AO Spine Discovery and Innovation Award

Introduction and eligibility

The AO Spine Research Commission is pleased to announce the 2022 AO Spine Discovery and Innovation Award. We would like to support scientists and clinicians in the field of spine research and encourage global participation in the [AO Spine Knowledge Forums](#). The AO Spine Knowledge Forums are five expert-driven global study groups focused on **spine deformity**, **degenerative disease**, **tumor**, **spinal cord injury**, and **trauma**.

The aim is to identify, engage, and integrate AO Spine members who have a desire to perform high-quality, clinically-relevant clinical and translational research in the AO Spine Knowledge Forums.

This invitation for proposals is open to AO Spine members* proposing to conduct clinical or translational investigations pertaining to spine deformity, degeneration, tumor, spinal cord injury, or trauma and must be a faculty member at a university or hospital-based research institute. We are looking for novel project proposals in the following areas:

Deformity

- Adult spinal deformity

Degenerative

- Cervical degenerative conditions, especially involving ACDF
- Treatment of lumbar degenerative spondylolisthesis

Tumor

- Primary spinal tumors
- Metastatic spine disease.

Proposals in the areas of data science and molecular biology and genomics are encouraged.

Spinal Cord Injury

- Non-traumatic spinal cord injury
- Traumatic spinal cord injury

Trauma

- Traumatic intervertebral disc lesions
- Osteoporotic fractures
- Primary spine infections

*AO Spine members holding a position within an AO Spine governance or research body including AO Spine Knowledge Forums, regional boards, and commissions are NOT eligible to apply.



Funding

Each award shall be up to CHF 45'000 and for the duration of one year. In this call, a maximum of ten awards will be granted, maximum two per pathology.

Applicants should note that indirect costs shall not exceed 5% of the overall budget. Payments will be made to the Institution and not to the individual applicants, provided that the Institution agrees to hold such payments in accordance with the terms of the specific grant.

Additional funding from other AO institutions or any other sources must be disclosed in detail. If other funding is/ or becomes available, it must be made clear how this will affect the overall budget of the project, should the application be successful.

Applications

Each applicant must submit their proposal to Mrs. Simona Koch: simona.koch@aofoundation.org.

Please [click here](#) to download the application template.

The deadline for submissions is **February 1, 2022, at 23:59 CET**.

Applications which do not conform completely to the application format or which ignore or fail to comply with any part of the guidelines may be returned to the applicant and will not be considered unless re-submitted by the deadline.

If your planned research involves the use of an *in vivo* animal model, please provide all necessary documentation and details.

Application evaluation and selection process

A peer-review process that will lead to the selection of awards will be conducted through scientific evaluation by the AO Spine Research Commission.

The decisions are final and binding. A concise critique will be provided only for successful awardees. No critiques will be provided to support the final decision in all other cases.

Applications are rated on their scientific merit, clinical relevance, and feasibility:

- **Relevance:** Is the project clinically relevant, and does it have strong rationale?
- **Novelty:** Is the concept innovative and new?
- **Approach:** Are the aims of the project clear and achievable, and is the methodology optimal to answer the research question(s)?
- **Feasibility:** Can the investigator deliver the expected result within the estimated timeframe (max. 1 year) and complete the work?
- **Budget:** Is the budget reasonable for the expected deliverables?
- **Overall impression:** Will this research have an impact on spine care worldwide?

Award ceremony, results, and reporting

Successful applicants will be invited to become Associate members of the AO Spine Knowledge Forum which relates to their research proposal for the term of the project (1 year), with a possible extension. They will be invited to participate and present at the AO Spine Knowledge Forum virtual and in-person meetings at their own expense.

The first in-person meeting and award ceremony will take place during the Global Spine Congress from June 1-4, 2022 in Las Vegas, NV, USA. Registration to the Global Spine Congress 2022 is mandatory for attendees. For more information, please visit www.gsc2022.org.

An interim progress report regarding the research project must be submitted to the respective AO Spine Knowledge Forum Steering Committee 6 months after the work commences, using the research grant report form provided. A final report must be submitted at the end of the 12-month period and shall 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 timeframe, AO Spine must be notified and a written request to extend the grant must be

submitted for approval. The AO Spine Research Commission reserves the right to discontinue the grant, with return of full funding by the recipient, if for any reason it is determined that the activities for which the grant is intended to address cannot be met.

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. It is encouraged that successful applicants present their research findings at the Global Spine Congress and submit their work for publication in the [Global Spine Journal](#).

Retention of records

AO Spine shall retain all records pertaining to all grants including grant applications, names of reviewers, scoring sheets by reviewers, correspondence, progress reports, and distribution of funds.

Miscellaneous

For support on how to develop a robust grant proposal, take advantage of [AO PEER—AO Program for Education and Excellence in Research](#). It provides a collection of useful research learning tools, including grant writing and study protocol development, designed by surgeons, for surgeons.

Timelines

The following are non-negotiable deadlines:

Open call for proposals:	December 1, 2021
Deadline for proposals:	February 1, 2022 (23:59 CET)
Grants announced:	May 2022
Award ceremony:	June 1-4, 2022 (during the Global Spine Congress)
Contract start:	May-July 2022
Interim report:	6 months from the project start date (must occur in 2022)
Final report:	May-July 2023

It is advised that the final report is presented at the Global Spine Congress 2023 and/or the AO Spine Knowledge Forum meetings.

Contact information

Please address all correspondence and questions to Mrs. Simona Koch, email: simona.koch@aofoundation.org.

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