

March of Dimes: Basil O'Connor Starter Scholar Research Awards

Unrestricted funding opportunities

Coordinator:	Nicole Dancz, Foundation Relations (nicole.dancz@emory.edu)
Website:	https://www.marchofdimes.org/research/basil-o-connor-program.aspx
Submission Limitations:	None
Foundation Deadline:	Application is due July 9, 2021

Please contact your RAS unit ***and Nicole Dancz to inform them of your intent to submit.***

Overview

March of Dimes is committed to advancing the health of all moms and babies, and that involves seeking answers through a diverse research portfolio. They are actively seeking applications for research grant funding that involve translational and actionable science that will lead directly to interventions or preventions. Their goal is to turn observations in the laboratory, clinic, and community into interventions, therapeutics, and devices that improve the health of moms and babies. They are also committed to learning about differences in populations integrated into key research areas.

Basil O'Connor Starter Scholar Research Awards support young physicians/scientists committed to March of Dimes' mission to fight for the health of all moms and babies. Named in honor of our first chairman and president, this award includes a \$150,000 grant for outstanding investigators just embarking on their independent research careers.

March of Dimes invites request for proposals of impactful research that will advance our translational understanding of, or lead to improved clinical treatment of any serious medical conditions that affect the health of pregnancies and/or moms and newborns within the first year postpartum. Applications focused on preterm birth, developmental origins of health and disease, and health equity are prioritized. All applications must have a direct link to clinical translation. The eventual goal to cure or greatly mitigate conditions that adversely impact the health of pregnant people and newborns is required.

Eligibility

The Basil O'Connor Starter Scholar Research Award is intended to be an early career grant to young investigators who are just embarking on an independent research career. Eligibility is thus restricted.

- MD or MD/PhD applicants should be 4 to 9 years past their last year of clinical training required for medical specialty board certification, must hold a full-time tenure-track faculty position (or equivalent) at their current U.S. based institution and must have received their first tenure-track appointment no more than 4 years prior to the submission deadline.
- For PhD scientists, the same timelines applies, but the 4 to 9 year window begins upon completion of their terminal degree. They must have either primary or secondary appointments in clinical departments related to maternal or child health.
- Applicants who have transition faculty-mentored awards (e.g. K99/R00) are welcome if they still have one year of the mentored portion. If not, application should be deferred. K12 and K08 applicants are encouraged.
- Candidates may not simultaneously hold a grant for any other March of Dimes research program.
- Applicants may not have total grant support exceeding \$200,000 per year before the BOC award start date (e.g. R01).
- Those who have previously submitted an application to the Basil O'Connor program are ordinarily not eligible for resubmission; however, exceptions will be considered on an individual basis.

Funding

The award is \$150,000 for 2 years, including 10 percent indirect costs to sponsoring institutions.

Submission Process

The entire process must be completed online at <https://modresearchgrants.aibs-scores.org>

Required Information

- Application (templates provided) for the proposed research, which includes the following information in this order:
 1. Contact information
 2. Project information
 3. Academic appointment details
 4. Animal/human subject use and assurance information
 5. Payee information
 6. References
- Attachments:
 1. Candidate's biographical sketch
 2. Current financial support
 3. Pending financial support
 4. Professional personnel
 5. Consent form (if applicable)
 6. Budget
 7. Budget justification
 8. Research plan
 9. Research plan citations
- Letter of nomination: deans, chairs of departments or directors of institutes/centers may submit nominations for this award. Included should be the nominator's name, academic appointment, mailing address, telephone and e-mail address. The nomination letter should be submitted via the online system, and should vouch for a candidate's having an unrestricted faculty position and dedicated lab/clinical research space. Information provided should explicitly include details concerning the candidate's faculty appointment, independence, laboratory space (assigned to the candidate), startup package and access to core facilities. This information will be scrutinized closely.
- Two (2) letters of recommendation: postdoctoral mentor and an additional reference of the applicant's choosing.

Assessment

1. The academic background and potential of the candidate.
2. Resources available as judged by the nominator's letter.
3. The proposal: once completed, it should place the candidate in position to be competitive for a R21 or R01 building on the results of the project.
4. Clinical relevance to research priorities of March of Dimes.

Expectation

All awardees are expected to attend local and national March of Dimes events during the award and alumni sessions for the two years following. Details will be available at the time of award.

Key Dates

July 9, 2021..... Application portal closes
September 20, 2021..... Review and notification
October 1, 2021..... Award start date
September 30, 2023 Award end date