2020 CORE Grants Program Information

LOIs are due December 16, 2019 at 11:59pm ET
Full applications (approved LOIs only) are due January 15, 2020 at 11:59pm ET

All documents are submitted through proposalCENTRAL.

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The application process is paperless. Applications are reviewed electronically and only documents submitted online will be reviewed.

Submit the LOI online at proposalCENTRAL. You are required to submit an LOI for your project. Applications will not be accepted without an LOI submitted on or before December 16, 2019 at 11:59pm ET. The LOI is a non-binding agreement. It is used to assist grant administrators for planning the needs for the grant review.

Submit your full application online at proposalCENTRAL on or before January 15, 2020 at 11:59pm ET. Please read all instructions below. Applicants who are not eligible for an award and/or do not follow the instructions for preparing an application may be administratively withdrawn from consideration.

Late submissions will not be accepted and deadlines will be enforced. Please allow enough time to submit in case of website malfunction, internet outage, or other issues. If you experience technical problems accessing the proposalCENTRAL site or uploading your submission, please email COREGrants@entnet.org and pcsupport@altum.com immediately.

CREATING/UPDATING AN ACCOUNT IN proposalCENTRAL

If you are a new user of proposalCENTRAL:

- Under APPLICATION LOGIN click the “CREATE ONE NOW”.
- Complete the basic registration
- Agree to the Terms of Service.
- You will receive a confirmation number by e-mail which is required the first time you log in.
- Login as an Applicant and enter the confirmation number you received in the next screen.
- Update your Professional Profile using the green tab, second tab from the left

More information on registering and completing your profile can be found here.

If you are already registered with proposalCENTRAL, access your account with your Username and password. If you have forgotten your password, click on “Forgot your password?” link.

For assistance, contact

- COREGrants@entnet.org
- pcsupport@altum.com, 1-800-875-2562
GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Centralized Otolaryngology Research Efforts (CORE) program is a collaboration of the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery Foundation and:

- American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS)
- American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNSF)
- American Head and Neck Society (AHNS)
- American Neurotology Society (ANS)
- American Rhinologic Society (ARS)
- American Society of Pediatric Otolaryngology (ASPO)
- Association of Migraine Disorder (AMD)

The CORE members agree to a uniform, centralized research grant application, review, and administration process. This process was designed to achieve three objectives:

- provide support for the most meritorious research in otolaryngology-head and neck surgery;
- educate young investigators to prepare competitive grant applications;
- and prepare more surgeon-scientists to serve as peer reviewers for NIH and other research agencies.

The CORE review includes three subcommittees: Otology, Head and Neck Surgery and General Otolaryngology. The reviewers are made up of experienced investigators and representative physicians from the collaborating societies.

The CORE review follows a similar process utilized by the NIH. Each application is assigned 2-3 independent expert reviewers who submit a written report prior to the in-person meeting that addresses predetermined review criteria. In March, all reviewers meet in-person to discuss the applications and assign a priority score to each based on significance, approach, and feasibility of the research strategy. Each application receives a detailed Summary Statement of the review (aka "pink sheet" or critique) with the application strengths and weaknesses to assist applicants with future grant-writing efforts. Applications, critiques, and funding recommendations are provided to the societies, who determine the final award.

CORE Grant Cycle General Timeline

Funding Opportunity Announcements Released.................................August – September
LOI Deadline .......................................................................................December 16
Application Deadline ...........................................................................January 15
Initial Review by CORE Study Section ..............................................Mid-January – Early March
CORE Study Section In-Person Meeting ..........................................Third Weekend of March
Review by governing bodies ..............................................................April – May
Granting societies make funding decisions.................................June
LETTERS OF INTENT (LOI)

Is an LOI required in order to submit an application?

Yes. An LOI must be submitted and approved prior to the application. The LOI is a non-binding agreement, meaning you do not have to submit an application if your LOI is approved.

An LOI must be submitted electronically using proposalCENTRAL, by December 16, 2019.

The LOI includes:
   a) Name of Principal Investigator (PI)
   b) Project Title
   c) PI contact information and education
   d) Institution
   e) Whether the project is a resubmission (if yes, note previous submission date)
   f) Other sources of funding (if applicable, sources should be listed)
   g) Total award amount requested
   h) Start date and end date
   i) Project Summary/Abstract (2,000 characters max, including spaces. Text only. No special characters or formatting)
   j) Selected ‘Focus Area’ from key words provided (can select multiple key words)
   k) Selected ‘Discipline’ from key words provided (can select multiple key words)
   l) Selected ‘Topic Area’ from key words provided (can select multiple key words)

After submitted the PI will receive an approval or rejection notification via email. Once approved, access to the application is opened.

Is an applicant required to submit an application if and LOI has been submitted?

No, and applicant is not obligated to submit a grant application if an LOI has been submitted.

What is the purpose of an LOI?

The purpose of the LOI is:
   1) to ensure that individuals are not applying to multiple mechanisms with the same project;
   2) to allow administrators planning time to contact expert reviewers; and
   3) to ensure applicants are applying to the correct mechanism for their project(s), academic level, and experience.

Can I submit an LOI and application for more than one grant?

Do not submit the same LOI for more than one grant mechanism. If the same LOI is submitted to more than one grant mechanism, they will be rejected. Applications will be reviewed only once.

You may apply to more than one mechanism if you have unique projects. It is recommended that the PI submit a letter with each application to verify resources to work on all projects concurrently.

If an LOI or application was submitted to the incorrect grant mechanism, how do I change it?

Contact the CORE Grants team (COREGrants@entnet.org) and indicate a change to the grant mechanism. Include the PI’s name, proposal ID number, project title, original grant mechanism to which the project was submitted, and the mechanism that it should be moved to. Please do this as soon as possible.
**GRANT APPLICATION**

*Which grant should I apply to?*
Review the 2020 CORE Grants At-A-Glance table (Appendix B) to determine the grant(s) appropriate for you. Often the selection is influenced by:
- your subspecialty or research area of interest;
- your career stage; and
- the type of grant mechanism you are seeking (research project or career development).

*Can I change the title of my grant application?*
The title may be changed only before the application is submitted. Titles can be changed in the Title section of proposalCENTRAL. Remember to click ‘Save’ once you’ve made the change.

*Can the PI be changed on an application if we’ve already submitted an LOI?*
The new PI will need to create an account in proposalCENTRAL and will require the CORE Grants team to make the change. The applicant should contact COREGrants@entnet.org with the new PI information.

*Can I apply for a CORE grant if my project already has funding?*
It will depend on the grant mechanism. Refer to the “Eligibility” section of the grant mechanism’s Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) to determine eligibility. If eligible, additional funding will be declared under the “Other Support” section of the application. Additional funding from a CORE grant should be specific for an activity not already funded.

*Can I apply for a CORE grant if I have been awarded a CORE grant in the past?*
Yes. Applications are reviewed independently. Project running concurrently must be addressed in a letter or other documentation. There should not be any delinquent deliverables on the current project. If there are delinquent deliverables, they must be uploaded to their proposalCENTRAL account prior to the January 15, 2020 deadline. If deliverables remain delinquent the status will be a part of the review package for the new application.

*If I have applied to be a CORE reviewer or am currently a reviewer, can I also submit an application?*
Yes, CORE reviewers (residents and non-residents) may apply for a CORE grant in the same cycle. Individuals with conflicts will recuse themselves from the grant mechanism applied for and leave the room during the review process for that mechanism.

*Can I submit a project if it will be developed in parallel with a broader study currently funded by another grant?*
Yes. If you are a collaborator on a broader study, please note the funding source when submitting your LOI. When submitting your application, include a letter to describe how your project contributes to the work of the broader study and that the activity not already funded under the existing grant. On budget justification disclose all funding and financial information.

*Can medical students apply for a CORE grant?*
It will depend on the grant mechanism. Please refer to the 2020 CORE Grants At-A-Glance table (Appendix B) and the FOAs for each grant mechanism for specific eligibility information.
I live outside the U.S and Canada. Are there any grants that I would be eligible to apply for?
Yes, the Association of Migraine Disorders Resident Research Grant does not have a residency requirement. Be sure to review the specific FOA to ensure your project is appropriate and you are eligible.

Can an organization apply for a CORE grant?
No. Grants are awarded to individuals. A member of the organization may apply for the grant as the PI, depending on the grant mechanism eligibility.

What are the page limits for the research strategy?
Page limits for the Research Strategy are noted as follows:

   - AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Investigator Development Grant
   - AHNS/AAO-HNSF Young Investigators Combined Grant
   - AHNS/ AAO-HNSF Translational Innovator Award
   - ARS New Investigator Award
   - ARS Friends in Research Award
   - ASPO Research Career Development Award

   - AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Resident Research Grant
   - AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Grant
   - AAFPRS Research Scholar Award
   - AAO-HNSF Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant
   - AAO-HNSF Rande E. Lazar Health Services Research Grant
   - AAO-HNSF Health Services Research Grant
   - AAO-HNSF Maureen Hannley Research Grant
   - AAO-HNSF Resident Research Award
   - AHNS Pilot Grant
   - AHNS Ballantyne Resident Research Grant
   - AHNS Endocrine Surgery Section Eisai Research Grant
   - AHNS Endocrine Surgery Section Stryker Research Grant
   - AMD Resident Research Grant
   - ANS/AAO-HNSF Herbert Silverstein Otology/Neurotology Research Award
   - ARS Resident Research Grant
   - ARS Consortium Award
   - ASPO Dustin Micah Harper Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis Research Grant
   - ASPO Research Grant

Should I upload the multiple documents that make up the Research Strategy separately?
No. Merge the Research Strategy documents into one PDF. Below are instructions on how to merge multiple PDFs into one file:

Merging files with Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Professional or later:
1. With the source document open, choose Document > Insert Pages.
2. In the Select File to Insert dialog box, select the source document you want to insert into the target document, and click select.*
   *Note: You may highlight all necessary files by holding the shift button down and clicking all necessary files needed.
3. In the Insert Pages dialog box, specify where you want to insert the document, and click OK. Most often, any pages that will be inserted will be placed after the source document.
4. Save the document under a new file name.
**What is a “preceptor”?**
A preceptor is a designated faculty member at the institution who will directly supervise the research and evaluate the progress. If research intersects multiple areas of expertise, multiple preceptors may be necessary. The selection of a preceptor is considered in the grant review process. In general, the preceptor should be one who:

- is a successful researcher;
- has recent publications in the area of research;
- experience in the research techniques;
- employed in a department that will support the research; and,
- ideally, has external grant support from major grant agencies (this is not a requirement, but highly encouraged).

Additionally, the proposed training shall be designed in collaboration with the designated mentor and approved by the applicant’s Department/Division Chair and institution. Training should be specifically focused on the acquisition and refinement of patient-oriented clinical research skills and may include both didactic course work and applied experience. A structured program of study (as opposed to informal directed readings) will be reviewed most favorably.

**Which grant mechanisms require a preceptor?**
A preceptor is required for the following grants:
- AAO-HNSF Resident Research Award
- AMD Resident Research Grant
- ARS New Investigator Award
- AHNS/AAO-HNSF Young Investigators Combined Grant
- ARS Resident Research Grant
- AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Resident Research Grant

Applications must be accompanied by letters of support from both the applicant’s preceptor and from the Department/Division Chair, verifying that the applicant will be permitted to devote the specified amount of time to the proposed research and research training activities.

**What is the process for resubmitting an application?**
When resubmitting an existing grant:

- For the LOI, select ‘Yes’ on the drop-down box marked ‘Resubmission?’ on the Title Page section.
- For the application, Refer to the “Resubmission Instructions” in proposalCENTRAL.
- In the Title Page section, DO NOT enter resubmission information in the text box.
- Include a cover letter, previous critique with responses, and if applicable, a brief letter of permission from the previous PI. Save the documents as one PDF file. Upload the document in the Research Plan & Other Attachments section (from the Attachments dropdown menu, select “Summary Statement (Resubmissions Only)).
- If the application was submitted prior to 2012, the Research Plan will need to be converted to the new Research Strategy format.

If you are submitting a project previously submitted by another individual, please include such information in your cover letter. When an application is marked as a resubmission, it will be assigned to at least one of the previously assigned reviewers, whenever possible.
**What letters of support should I include with my application?**

Letters should be obtained from the following:

- Co-Investigator,
- Preceptor, (if applicable)
- Mentor, (if applicable)
- Consultant,
- Collaborator,
- Department/Chair Head
- ASPO grant: Letter of support from ASPO member
- Bobby R. Alford Endowed Research Grant: please see additional instructions online

If a co-investigator, preceptor, or mentor will play a key role in the project, a letter from that individual state their role in the project. Also include letters from consultants and collaborators confirming their role in the project. Include biosketch pages for each consultant and collaborator.

A letter from the Department/Chair Head must be included with all applications. It should be a reference for the applicant and confirm the applicant’s availability for the required period of time. The letter should also address the support of the Department or Division for the project, availability of resources for the project, and verification that any resident applicants will be permitted to spend the specified time on the project.

Scan or convert your letters to .pdf format so that they may be uploaded to the application site.

**Whose signatures should I obtain on the cover sheet?**

At a minimum:

- the applicant;
- the sponsor or department head; and
- an authorized official of the institution.

After the application is submitted, print the provided cover page for the signatures required for that grant mechanism. Signatures must be original (not stamped or electronic signatures). Signatures indicate the application has been reviewed.

Scan and upload signed documents to complete the application.

**Do I need a biosketch for everyone involved with the project?**

Yes. A biosketch, along with degrees, is required for all personnel named in the application. A sample biosketch is provided in the Instructions, Templates & Samples section of the application in proposalCENTRAL.

**I would like to include additional information outside of the Research Strategy section. Where should I add this information?**

You may submit additional information in the optional Appendix. Do not use the optional Appendix to circumvent page limitations. Tables, charts or graphs essential to the application should be included in the Research Strategy and included in page limitations. The Research Strategy should be able to stand on its own as a document. The optional Appendix should be used only for supplementary information. Keep such material to a minimum. Bibliography/references may be added in the optional Appendix.

**Do I need to submit the “Other Support” section?**

Yes. The “Other Support” includes all financial resources, active and pending, for all of the individuals listed in the application, even if they have no current active support. Indicate whether support for the submitted project is
being sought from other funding agencies or organizations. See the provided “Other Support” sample in the Instructions, Templates & Samples section of the application in proposalCENTRAL.

**Where do I upload the bibliography/references?**
The bibliography and references can be uploaded in the optional Appendix.

**Does the bibliography or reference list count as part of the page limit for the research strategy?**
No. The bibliography/reference can be included in Research Strategy or as an optional Appendix.

**What if I don’t have my final signature page complete by January 15th?**
If all of the signatures are not available by the January 15 deadline, upload what is available proposalCENTRAL by the deadline. Email the fully signed signature page COREGrants@entnet.org within 2 calendar weeks after the application deadline. Failure to do so will result in administrative withdrawal.

**My IRB/IACUC approval is taking longer than expected. Can I still submit an application?**
Yes. If the final IRB/IACUC approval letter is the available for the January 15 application deadline submit the documentation, along with a cover indicating when the IRB/IACUC committee is meeting to review and the date final approval is anticipated. The final approval should be emailed to COREGrants@entnet.org no later than February 15. Please be advised that no grants will be awarded without the final IRB/IACUC approval.

If your institution requires award confirmation before approving IRB/IACUC applications, please include an informational letter outlining the IRB/IACUC process at your institution. Keep in mind, grant funds will not be disbursed until IRB/IACUC approval is received.

**Can the technical personnel supported by the award be listed as key personnel?**
Yes, technical personnel can be listed as key personnel. Key personnel are those individuals who participate in the scientific development/execution of the project. This will generally include individuals with professional degrees but may also include individuals with other qualifications. Support personnel are those individuals who provide administrative or technical assistance to the project (e.g., dishwashers, animal caretakers, histopathology technicians, electron microscopy technicians, and in some instances research technicians or associates). Refer to Appendix A for detailed allowable expenses, or refer to the “Terms” section of the specific mechanism for which you are applying.

**What are indirect costs?**
The NIH defines indirect costs as “necessary costs incurred by a recipient for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved.” These include costs such as fringe benefits, overhead, general and administrative expenses, etc. In many cases, university or institutional policy stipulates that a portion of grant funds be allocated toward institutional indirect costs. If this is the case, no more than 10% of the grant funds can be utilized for indirect costs.
REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

What are the review considerations for a project?
Applications will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by experts in the subject matter of the application. Priority scores will be assigned to applications based on their scientific merit, feasibility, innovation, and approach. Additional evaluation criteria include:

1. **Significance**: The extent to which the project will make an original and important contribution to biomedical and/or behavioral science.

2. **Approach**: The extent to which the conceptual framework, design (including, as applicable, the selection of appropriate subject populations or animal models), methods, and analyses are properly developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project, including the following:
   a. Plan for use of controls
   b. Sample size justification
   c. Power functions where appropriate
   d. Analysis techniques

3. **Feasibility**: The likelihood that the proposed work can be accomplished in the project period by the investigators, including the adequacy of plans for the recruitment and retention of human subjects.

4. **Subjects**: The appropriate, safe, and humane use of subjects, both human and animal, if applicable. The project must be approved by the appropriate intramural institutional committees. Institutional approval is not a priori evidence of a procedure's acceptability.

5. **Personnel**: The following will be used to evaluate personnel:
   a. Do the personnel have the appropriate background and skills?
   b. For training grants, are the personnel appropriate to the objectives of the grant?
   c. Does the PI have an active role in the project beyond supervision of technical personnel?

6. **Budget**: The following will be considered in evaluating the fiscal plan:
   a. Are the funds requested appropriate to the design, the facility, and to the personnel?
   b. Are the proposed expenditures adequately justified?

How are funding decisions made?
The CORE reviewer recommendations, scores, critiques are shared with each sub-specialty society along with the grant applications. The final decision is made by an advisory panel, council or board of the funding society.

What are some of the main reasons that projects are assigned a low priority score during the review?
- Insufficient information or documentation.
- Inadequate statement of hypothesis, experimental design, or methods.
- Failure to address troubleshooting and contingency plans for problems and pitfalls
- Insufficient or improper controls.
- Failure to describe the relevance of the proposed study to the FOA.
- Failure to document the skills or training required to meet the goals of the proposal.
- Failure to meet all criteria described in the FOA.
GENERAL GUIDELINES

Formatting:
- The applicant’s name should always be in the top “HEADER” portion of all templates (upper left corner).
- Use English only and avoid excessive jargon and unusual abbreviations.
- Font size must be 11 points or larger. Smaller text in figures, graphs, diagrams and charts is acceptable as long as it is legible when the page is viewed at 100%.
- Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch.
- Line spacing must be no more than six lines per vertical inch.
- Text color must be black. Color text in figures, graphs, diagrams, charts, tables, footnotes and headings is acceptable.
- Use standard paper size (8 ½” x 11”). Use at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. No information should appear in the margins.
- The following fonts are recommended: Arial, Garamond, Georgia, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, Times New Roman, Verdana. Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters; the font size requirement still applies.

Research Strategy Information:
- Use the template provided in proposalCENTRAL to construct your Research Strategy.
- There is a 6-page limit for Research Grants; 12-page limit for Career Development Grants. Failure to adhere to the specified page limitations may result in an application being administratively withdrawn.
- Career Development applications must include an educational plan.
- Charts, tables, graphs, and photos essential to your application should be included in the Research Strategy and will be counted in your page limits. All graphs, diagrams, tables, and charts should be in black ink.
- Photographs, oversized documents, supplementary charts, tables, and graphs and bibliography/references should be included in the Appendix. The optional Appendix will not be counted against your page limit but should not be used to circumvent page limits.

Templates and Forms
- Download the MS Word templates from proposalCENTRAL then convert the files to Adobe Acrobat PDF format to upload.
- Include the cover sheet with appropriate signatures in a scanned PDF file
- Do not mail hard copies to the AAO-HNS office.

Incomplete Applications:
An application is incomplete if:
1. Instructions are not followed.
2. The material presented is insufficient to permit an adequate review.
3. The cover sheet with appropriate signatures is not submitted within 2 calendar weeks of the deadline.
4. The appropriate institutional approvals for use of human or animal subjects are not pending or in place prior to review.

Human and Animal Subjects:
- Documentation concerning IRB or IACUC approvals should be included in the application
- All required documents are due prior to the date an award commences.
- Grants without final IRB or IACUC approval will not be issued.
- Animal Subjects requires accreditation from the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC), the Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance, the United States Department of Agriculture, or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUC).
CONTACT INFORMATION

Electronic application process:

- proposalCENTRAL help desk:
  - E-mail: pcsupport@altum.com
  - Phone (toll-free): 1-800-875-2562

Additional questions:

- COREGrants@entnet.org
## APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF ALLOWABLE EXPENSES FOR CORE GRANTS

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<th>Grants</th>
<th>Salaries</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>PI</td>
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<td>AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Resident Research Grant</td>
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<td>AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Grant</td>
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<td>AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Investigator Development Grant</td>
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<td>AAO-HNSF Rande H. Lazar Health Services Research Grant</td>
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<td>Funding Source</td>
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<td>American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS)</td>
<td>AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Resident Research Grant</td>
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<td>AAFPRS Leslie Bernstein Grant</td>
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<td>$30,000; 3 years</td>
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<td>$10,000; 1 year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AHNS Ballantyne Resident Research Pilot Grant</td>
<td>$10,000; 1 year</td>
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<td>AHNS Endocrine Surgery Section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding Source</td>
<td>Grant Mechanism</td>
<td>Grant Amount</td>
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<td>Stryker Research Grant</td>
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<td>AHNS/AAO-HNSF Young Investigators Combined Grant</td>
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<td>AHNS/AAO-HNSF Translational Innovator Award</td>
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<td>ARS New Investigator Award</td>
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<td>ARS Friends in Research Award</td>
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<td>ARS Consortium Award</td>
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<td>ASPO Research Career Development Award</td>
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<td>ASPO Research Grant</td>
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<td>ASPO Dustin Micah Harper Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis Research Grant</td>
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<td>Association of Migraine Disorders (AMD)</td>
<td>AMD Resident Research Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Neurotology Society (ANS)</td>
<td>ANS-AAO-HNSF Herbert Silverstein Otology/Neurotology Research Award</td>
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