

**The Orthotic and Prosthetic  
Education and Research Foundation, Inc. (OPERF)**

**2017 Award Program Overview**  
Version 1.0 (10/2/2016)

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## Award Programs

The Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and Research Foundation (OPERF) provides funding to support clinically-relevant research in orthotics and prosthetics (O&P), including Fellowships and Small Grants. Fellowships are designated for students, and the Small Grant funding is designated for investigators who have attained a doctoral degree or have a history of prior research experience.

### **Fellowships**

The OPERF Fellowship Program is designed to support quality graduate education research related to the orthotics and prosthetics (O&P) profession. Each year, one-year Fellowships of up to \$5,000 are awarded. Previous recipients may request a one-year competitive renewal of the fellowship period and an additional \$5,000 to support longer projects. Fellowships will be awarded based upon the merit of the proposed research project (see OPERF Review Form, available on the [OPERF website](#)). OPERF has arranged for award recipients to present their research at the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (AAOP) National Meeting. The AAOP has donated complimentary single day registration for fellows to present their OPERF-sponsored research.

#### *Requirements:*

- The student must be currently enrolled in a Masters and/or PhD educational program within the United States.
- The project must be relevant to the orthotics and prosthetics profession.
- A Letter-of-Intent (LOI) is due in advance of the proposal (see Funding Cycle, below)
  - Maximum of 1 page in length.
  - Must include a brief description of the proposed research.
- The proposal should be a maximum of 5 pages in length (12-point font, 1” borders, single-spaced).
  - The research proposal must include the following components:
    - Application cover page (available on [OPERF website](#))
    - Abstract (up to 300 words)
    - Specific aims\*
    - Background and significance\*
    - Previous research (if appropriate)\*
    - Methodology\*
    - Project timeline (including milestones and deliverables)\*
    - Anticipated results\*
    - References
    - Budget and facilities description
    - List of current/pending support related to the proposed research
    - List of collaborators (including a short biosketch for each)
    - Biosketch for the student
    - Letter of faculty support (from the student’s advisor)

Note: page limit applies only to those sections marked with an asterisk (\*).

#### *Award Specifics:*

- Fellowship funds are intended to be used for expenses related directly to the conduct of the proposed research project and are not to be used for tuition, books, or supplies required for the student’s coursework.
- Award funds will be paid directly to the award recipient. No indirect (i.e., Facilities and Administrative) costs will be allowed. Any financial or tax liabilities associated with accepting the award will be the responsibility of the recipient.

- If human or animal subjects are included in the proposed research, the applicant will be required to provide evidence of Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) approval from the host institution before funds are disbursed. Approval is not due at the time of submission, but will be required to receive award funds.
- If a submission includes proprietary or confidential information, this should be noted by the applicant on the cover sheet and relevant sections of the proposal.
- Fellowship Award recipients must submit a 2-page report to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson upon conclusion of the funding period.
  - The report should be typed single-spaced in 10-12 point font on pages with 1” borders. Legible figures may be included in the report.
  - The report should describe the fellow’s progress over the project period and summarize expenditure of the award.
- Fellowship Award recipients will be responsible for submitting an abstract (based on the OPERF-funded research) to the AAOP National Meeting, with a copy sent to the OPERF Research Committee Chair. The abstract should be formatted using the template provided by the AAOP when the call for papers is announced (approximately July in the year prior to the Annual Meeting).
- Upon acceptance of the AAOP abstract, Fellowship Award recipients are required to attend the AAOP National Meeting and present their OPERF-funded research results.
  - Complimentary single day meeting registration has been donated for all OPERF award recipients.
  - Airfare and lodgings for the National Meeting are the responsibility of the Award recipient and may be paid by the fellowship. If funds to travel to the AAOP National Meeting are not requested to be paid for by the Fellowship, recipients should indicate how travel to the conference will be achieved.
- A no-cost extension period of up to one year may be requested by the Award recipient prior to presenting the study results at the AAOP meeting.
- Award recipients are encouraged to submit the results of their work as a manuscript to the Journal of Prosthetics and Orthotics (JPO) or another peer-reviewed journal.
- Award recipients are required to acknowledge OPERF funding in any publication or presentation of the funded research by including the following statement: “This work was supported through funds from the Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and Research Foundation, Inc. (OPERF) under grant number \_\_\_\_\_.” (Grant number will be assigned to the recipient when award is made.)
- Applicants are encouraged to keep a copy of their original e-mails containing their LOIs and proposals to verify that they have met the deadlines. OPERF will send e-mail receipts when LOIs and proposals are received. If the applicant does not receive a receipt, they should call or e-mail the Research Committee Chair to verify receipt of their documents within one week of the deadlines. After one week from the deadline, any lost LOIs or proposals will not be considered for funding.

### **Small Grants**

The OPERF Small Grant Program is designed to support quality investigator-initiated research related to the orthotics and prosthetics (O&P) profession. Each year, one-year Small Grants of up to \$25,000 are awarded. Previous recipients may request a one-year competitive renewal of the award period and an additional \$25,000 to support extended research projects. Awards will be made based upon the merit of the proposed research project (see OPERF Review Form, available on [OPERF website](#)). OPERF has arranged for Award recipients to present their research at the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (AAOP) National Meeting. The AAOP has donated complimentary single day registration for investigators to present their OPERF-sponsored research.

### *Requirements:*

- The Principal Investigator (PI) must have attained a doctoral degree or provide evidence of prior research experience.
- The host institution and the primary research site must be located within the United States.
- The project must be relevant to the orthotics and prosthetics profession.
- The proposed research must include a clinician trained in prosthetics and/or orthotics as the principal investigator or co-investigator.
- A Letter-of-Intent (LOI) is due in advance of the proposal (see Funding Cycle, below).
  - Maximum of 1 page in length.
  - Must briefly describe the proposed research.
- The research proposal should be a maximum of 10 pages in length (12-point font, 1” borders, single-spaced).
  - The research proposal should include the following components:
    - Application cover page (available on [OPERF website](#))
    - Abstract (up to 500 words)
    - Specific aims\*
    - Background and significance\*
    - Previous research (if appropriate)\*
    - Methodology\*
    - Project timeline (including milestones and deliverables)\*
    - Anticipated results\*
    - References
    - Budget and budget narrative
    - Facilities description
    - Current/pending support related to proposed research
    - List of collaborators (including a short biosketch for each)
    - Letters of support (e.g. from department or institution, collaborators, etc.)
    - Biosketch for the principal investigator

Note: page limit applies only to those sections marked with an asterisk (\*).

### *Award Specifics:*

- Award funds will be paid directly to the Award recipient’s host institution.
  - A maximum indirect rate (i.e., Facilities and Administrative costs) of 10% of the total direct costs will be allowed under the OPERF Small Grants Program (maximum direct + indirect costs are not to exceed \$25,000 per award).
  - Small Grant funds will be disbursed in two installments (6 months apart) to the host institution.
  - Investigators must submit a 2-5 page progress report to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson 5 months after the initial funds are received by the host institution.
  - The principal investigator is responsible for the timely submission of the progress report.
  - Disbursement of the second installment of Small Grant funds is contingent upon a satisfactory progress report as evaluated by the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson.
- If human or animal subjects are included in the proposed research, the applicant will be required to provide evidence of Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) approval from the host institution before funds are disbursed. Approval is not due at the time of submission, but will be required to receive award funds.
- If a submission includes proprietary or confidential information, this should be noted by the applicant on the cover sheet and relevant sections of the proposal.

- Small Grant Award recipients must submit a 2-5 page final report to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson upon conclusion of the funding period.
  - The report should be typed single-spaced in 10-12 point font on pages with 1” borders. Legible figures may be included in the report.
  - The report should describe progress over the project period and summarize expenditure of the award.
- Small Grant Award recipients will be responsible for submitting an abstract (based on the OPERF-funded research) to the AAOP National Meeting, with a copy sent to the OPERF Research Committee Chair. The abstract should be formatted using the template provided by the AAOP when the call for papers is announced (approximately July in the year prior to the Annual Meeting).
- Upon acceptance of the AAOP abstract, Small Grant Award recipients must attend the AAOP National Meeting and present their OPERF-funded research results.
  - Complimentary single day meeting registration has been donated by the AAOP for all OPERF Award recipients.
  - Airfare and lodgings for the National Meeting are the responsibility of the Award recipient and may be paid by the grant. If funds to travel to the AAOP National Meeting are not requested to be paid for by the Fellowship, recipients should indicate how travel to the conference will be achieved.
- A no-cost extension period of up to one year may be requested by the Award recipient prior to presenting the study results at the AAOP meeting.
- Award recipients are encouraged to submit the results of their work as a manuscript to the Journal of Prosthetics and Orthotics (JPO) or another peer-reviewed journal.
- Award recipients are required to acknowledge OPERF funding in any publication or presentation of the funded research by including the following statement: “This work was supported through funds from the Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and Research Foundation, Inc. (OPERF) under grant number \_\_\_\_\_.” (Grant number will be assigned to the recipient when Award is made.)
- Applicants are encouraged to keep a copy of their original e-mails containing their LOIs and proposals to verify that they have met the deadlines. OPERF will send e-mail receipts when LOIs and proposals are received. If the applicant does not receive a receipt, they should call or e-mail the Research Committee Chair to verify receipt of their documents within one week of the deadlines. After one week from the deadline, any lost LOIs or proposals will not be considered for funding.

## Review Process

All OPERF Award submissions will be reviewed by a Review Panel comprised of OPERF Research Committee members and ad-hoc members, as needed. Composition of the panel will be determined by the type and number of award submissions. The standing OPERF Research Committee Chairperson will serve as the Review Chairperson and serve as the point-of-contact for the Award Program.

### Function of the Review Panel

The function of the Review Panel is to evaluate the applications, including the relevance of the research topic, the merit of the research design, and the appropriateness of the personnel and environment. The Review Panel will score the Fellowship and Small Grant Award applications using the OPERF Review Form (available on [OPERF website](#)).

### Review Process

All proposals will be administratively screened upon receipt for completeness and compliance with award requirements. Incomplete applications may be returned to the applicant without review. Complete applications will be assigned to two or more Review Panel members for review. Proposals will be evaluated and scored on scientific merit and relevance to the orthotics and prosthetics profession using the OPERF Review Form (available on [OPERF website](#)). All submissions will be given a numerical score by each reviewer and a consensus score will be generated. Consensus scores, summary comments, and written reviews will be provided to all applicants upon completion of the review process.

OPERF reserves the right to reduce the terms of the Award, both in time and in funds, as deemed appropriate by the scope of the proposed research. The Review Panel may also request that applicants respond to reviewer comments regarding any part of the submission prior to rendering a final Award decision.

### Conflict of Interest Procedures

Review Panel and OPERF members involved in the Award Program are required to maintain confidentiality regarding all aspects of the grant review process, the proposed projects, and the identity of Award applicants. OPERF will strive to review all submissions fairly and without bias. In cases where a proposal is submitted by (1) a member of the Review Panel, (2) a panel member's organization, (3) a panel member's student, resident or mentee, or (4) a panel member's colleague who lists the panel member as having any responsibility or involvement in the project being reviewed or who collaborates or currently associates with the panel member in other capacities, the Review Panel member in question will be excused from review of the proposal.

When this situation applies to the Chair of the Research Committee, the Chair will turn over management of the reviews of that type (Fellowship or Small Grant) to another Research Committee member. That Committee member will be responsible for identifying suitable reviewers, receiving from reviewers the OPERF Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-Disclosure Statement and Review Forms, and chairing that portion of the review meeting where the application in question is discussed. Furthermore, if the application in question is successfully funded, the Chair of the Research Committee will turn over management of the funded project to another member of the Research Committee. That Committee member would then be responsible for receiving and reviewing reports, confirmation of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and requests from the Award Recipient, as well as handling any issues that might arise with that particular project.

Reviewers for each application are required to complete the OPERF Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Non-Disclosure Statement (available on [OPERF website](#)) prior to review. If a submission includes

proprietary or confidential information, this should be noted by the applicant on the cover sheet and relevant sections of the proposal.

### Notification of Applicants

All applicants will be notified in writing of the status of their application following review. Notification will include the consensus score, a summary statement of reviewer comments, and written reviews from primary reviewers. For successful applicants, notification will also include information about how and when funds will be made available. Funds for Fellowship Awards will be payable as a lump sum, while Small Grants Awards will be payable in two installments, with disbursement of the second installment dependent on submission of an adequate progress report to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson, as noted below. (Note: In cases where revisions to the progress report are needed, notification may include instructions and a deadline for the appropriate revisions. In such cases, Award status may be listed as pending until satisfactory responses to comments are received.)

### Final Report

Fellowship and Small Grant Award recipients are responsible for providing a final report to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson (see Contact Information, below) upon conclusion of the funding period. Final reports are due by the dates specified in the OPERF Award Program Funding Cycle, below. The style and format of each final report varies as follows:

- The Small Grant Final Report should be 2-5-pages, typed, single-spaced in 10-12 point font on pages with 1” margins.
- The Fellowship Final Report should be 2-pages, typed, single-spaced in 10-12 point font on pages with 1” margins.

Final Reports should detail the work performed during the study period, summarize expenditure of the Award budget, and include a list of any submitted and/or anticipated publications and further research directions, including additional grant opportunities that may result from the OPERF-funded research.

Any questions regarding the content or format of the final report may be directed to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson.

### Resubmission

Proposals not awarded may be resubmitted for another award cycle. A maximum of two resubmissions following the original submission will be accepted. The applicant is responsible for resubmitting the proposal using any updated instructions provided on the OPERF website. The cover letter should indicate that the proposal is a resubmission and a separate document should likewise indicate any changes made to the proposal in response to reviewer concerns from the previous submission (limit two pages, not included in the submission page limit).

### Competitive Renewal

Previous recipients of Fellowship Awards may request a one-year renewal of the award period via competitive renewal. Fellowship renewals may be awarded an additional \$5,000 to support extended research projects. Previous recipients of Small Grants may likewise request a one-year competitive renewal. Small Grant renewals may be awarded an additional \$25,000 to support extended research projects. Competitive renewals may be requested using the standard OPERF application process by noting the “renewal” box on the submission coversheet.

### No Cost Extension

A one year no cost extension may be applied for by students/investigators who have been awarded a Fellowship or Small Grant in the event that their project requires additional time to complete or if



additional time is required to prepare for presentation at the AAOP National Meeting. A written request for a no cost extension must be submitted to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson (see Contact Information, below) one month prior to expiry of the current award. If the extension affects the timing of an AAOP meeting presentation, the Award recipient must inform the chair at least two months prior to the National Meeting.

### Complimentary Funding/Support

OPERF Fellowship and Small Grant Award applicants are required to identify existing and/or pending funding related to the application. If complimentary funding is obtained by the investigator prior to the Award announcement or during the Award period, Award recipients are required to inform the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson (see Contact Information, below) in writing. Investigators are encouraged to submit a modified budget, reflecting the complimentary support obtained for the proposed research. OPERF reserves the right to modify the provided funding based upon the receipt of alternative support received by the investigator(s). Decisions regarding the modification of funding will be approved by the OPERF Board of Directors.

### Instructions and Forms

Instructions and forms for submission of proposals are available both online ([www.OPERF.org](http://www.OPERF.org)) and by e-mail, upon request to the OPERF Research Committee Chairperson. Submissions may be made only via e-mail. The applicants are responsible for confirming all materials are received by the due dates.

### Ownership of Work

Ownership of intellectual property arising from OPERF-sponsored funding is vested in the Award recipient, per the policies of the applicant's host institution. OPERF reserves the right to publicize all materials received in the course of funding a particular project, e.g. proposals, progress reports, final reports, AAOP National Meeting abstracts, etc., with the exception of those marked "confidential" or "proprietary."

Award recipients are required to acknowledge OPERF funding in any publication or presentation of the funded research by including the following statement: "This presentation/work was supported (or "supported in-part" if the project was also supported by other sources) through funds from the Orthotics and Prosthetics Education and Research Foundation, Inc. (OPERF) under grant number \_\_\_\_\_." (Grant number will be assigned to the recipient when Award is made.)

**2017 OPERF Award Program Funding Cycle**

The following are key dates and deadlines for the OPERF Award Program. Applicants are responsible for ensuring all materials are received by OPERF by the due dates.

**Fellowship Awards**

- LOI due ..... December 11, 2016
- Proposals due ..... January 15, 2017
- Award notification ..... April 1, 2017\*
- Funding available..... May 27, 2017\*

**Small Grant Awards**

- LOI due ..... December 11, 2016
- Proposals due ..... January 15, 2017
- Award notification ..... April 1, 2017\*
- Funding available..... May 27, 2017\*

\* Dates are based on anticipated number of submitted applications. A greater number of submissions than expected may delay notification. Applicants will be notified in writing, if delays occur.

## **Contact Information**

All requests for additional information may be addressed to:

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