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Academic Enrichment Fund Program

**AEF PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Academic Enrichment Fund (AEF) Program is to cultivate and support the scholarship and research of clinicians who devote the majority of their effort to clinical service.

The AEF program is supported by Seattle Children’s Hospital with the goal of providing Seattle Children’s based services to investigators – thus supporting investigations taking place at Seattle Children’s sites and using Seattle Children’s Core Services (e.g., BEAR core). The program is administered by the Center Business Office. Applicants can be a member of any Seattle Children’s Research Institute research center.

The fund supports a wide range of clinical and basic science investigations including hypothesis-driven projects and research related to patient safety and quality improvement (that follow the SQUIRE guidelines).

**Award Details**

The awards will be authorized by the Chief Academic Officer based on recommendations from the Academic Enrichment Fund Committee. The Committee, comprised of Children’s clinicians from varied hospital departments, will review and rank the applications.

Beginning with the 2022 award cycle, at least one award will be given to a proposal that is focused on health disparities.

**Funding**

* + 1. Amount awarded will be a maximum of $25,000 for studies with a single Principal Investigator (PI). Projects that involve more than one PI from different divisions or departments can apply for up to $40,000. Projects are two years in length.
    2. Payment of indirect costs, PI salary, and membership dues are not allowed.
    3. Department/Division Chair must support the awarded recipient in helping to retain and protect adequate non-clinical time to complete the awarded AEF project.

**Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for an award, **all** of the following criteria must be met by the PI/Co-PI:

1. Total FTE: must be a minimum of 0.6 FTE if part time.
2. Clinical FTE: Must have 60% of total designated FTE dedicated to clinical service providing patient care at Seattle Children’s Hospital or a Seattle Children’s satellite.

\*\**If not yet appointed as a faculty member, a letter from the division head/department chair should be supplied stating the date of appointment will commence at or before the time that AEF funding begins.*

1. No active extramural research support as Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-PI (includes federal, external non-profit, or industry funding) at the time of application submission.
2. Candidates who are not PI, but who are co-investigators on extramurally funded awards with less than 0.10 total combined FTE/salary support are eligible to apply.
3. Candidates with intramural support are eligible to apply.
4. Clinical faculty and staff (e.g., physicians, nurses, therapists, dieticians and other allied health professionals) are eligible.
5. Fellows or other trainees are not eligible.
6. Applicants may not have active AEF support at the time of application submission. Candidates who completed AEF supported projects on/before the application due date are eligible to apply as long as final progress reports have been submitted and approved.
7. Academic Enrichment Fund Committee members are not eligible to apply.

**Note:** The funds are not intended to support the research of established investigators. An individual who does not meet one or more of these criteria may serve as project “mentor,” provided the independent nature of the principal investigator’s project are clearly delineated in a supporting letter to accompany the application.

**Allowable Costs**

1. Non-PI Personnel (PI salary not allowed)
2. Travel (lodging, meals, transport, airfare, etc.) for the PI to present findings related to the awarded project (limited to $2,500 per individual; limited to $5,000 for dual PIs). **Travel must abide by the SCH travel and reimbursement policies.** You must attach your abstract to your travel request to demonstrate that you are using travel monies for the purpose of presenting your work. Membership society dues are not allowable.
3. Supplies and research equipment
4. Other expenses, such as fees for [core services](https://child.seattlechildrens.org/research/core_services/)\*

\*Seattle Children’s core services must be used when available. Detailed justification is required for core service requests outside of Seattle Children’s.

**Award Cycle**

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| **Program Announcement** | January 2025 |
| **Application Deadline** | Friday, June 27, 2025 |
| **Awards Announced** | September 2025 |
| **Earliest Funding Begins** | October 1, 2025 |

Applicant may delay start of funding to January 1, 2026 to allow sufficient time for IRB or IACUC approval.

**Review Process**

Applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Academic Enrichment Fund Committee. Prioritization will be based on a project’s:

* 1. Likelihood of enhancing our knowledge of disease, clinical practice, patient safety or quality of care.
  2. Having a well-defined outcome or product (including publications).
  3. Feasibility within a justified budget and timeline of the award period.
  4. Likelihood of promoting the applicant’s and/or Seattle Children’s academic status.

Preference will be given to collaborative projects involving multiple departments and/or divisions. All applicants will receive a summary of reviews conducted on their applications. Final funding decisions will be made by the Chief Academic Officer. Applications will not be reviewed unless they are complete and adhere to the eligibility requirements specified above.

**Award Terms and Conditions**

1. Seattle Children’s Academic Enrichment Program will grant a cost-reimbursable award of up to $25,000 per individual applicant and up to $40,000 for projects that involve two eligible principal investigators from different divisions or departments. Awardees will receive a Lawson activity number for project-related expenses.
2. AEF awards are non-transferable. The project is awarded to the individual PI and not to the department. They are intended to cultivate and support the scholarship and research of the recipient. In an event of a special circumstance, contact the AEF chair.
3. AEF funds will not be available until the funding period commences on the start date of the award period: October 1, 2025). Expenses cannot be incurred prior to the effective date of the funding period.
4. Payment of indirect costs or applicant salary is not allowed.
5. AEF awards are intended to support the direct costs of research at Seattle Children’s. AEF awards will not fund work occurring at an external institution and subaward contracts are not allowed. (In the unlikely event that Seattle Children’s does not have the expertise to provide the required service to complete a project contact the AEF Chair to discuss options prior to application submission).
6. A progress report must be submitted to [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org) at least 30 days prior to the year 2 project start date. Year 2 support is contingent upon receipt and acceptance of this project report.
7. It is expected that the research will be conducted within the timeline outlined in the submitted proposal. Funds not expended by the end of the project date will be returned to the AEF Program.
8. International projects involving recruitment of participants, prospective collection of data, or transfer of funds abroad are not allowed. Use of prior collected international data is allowable.
9. Budget Revisions: If you propose to change a budget line item by 25% or more at any time during the award period, you must obtain approval from the AEF Committee Chair. Any changes to the original proposal outline require prior approval from the AEF Committee Chair. If you are proposing adding on or revising a core service, you must notify the related core manager of your proposed change and a new quote will be required. Requests for re-budgeting and proposal changes can be sent to [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org) to be forwarded to the Chair for consideration.
10. No-cost extensions require the approval of the Academic Enrichment Fund Committee. Submit requests for no-cost extensions to [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org) no less than thirty (30) days prior to the project end date. Only one no-cost extension will be granted and the funds must be expended within one year of the no-cost extension approval.
11. The Recipient must ensure that, before the research commences and during the full Award Period, all the necessary national and local ethical, legal and regulatory requirements to conduct the research are met, and all the necessary licenses and approvals have been obtained.
12. Travel and travel costs must abide by the Seattle Children’s travel and reimbursement policies.
13. Where the terms and conditions of the Award have not been observed, the AEF Program reserves the right to withdraw the remainder of the award.
14. At the conclusion of the project, a final report must be submitted to [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org) within 60 days of project end date.
15. Acknowledgement should be included on all publications that result from support by the *Seattle Children’s Academic Enrichment Fund Award*.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

[Katherine Weybright](mailto:katherine.weybright@seattlechildrens.org?subject=AEF%20question) [Eileen Klein, MD, MPH](mailto:eileen.klein@seattlechildrens.org)

AEF Program Administrator AEF Committee Chair

(206) 884-3237

[aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org)

**AEF APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Award Cycle**

Program announcement: January 2025

**Application deadline: June 27, 2025**

Awards announced: September 2025

Earliest funding begins: October 1, 2025

**COMPLETE THE APPLICATION**

* 1. Complete all required application materials, for a detailed list and specific instructions for each section see AEF Application Checklist below.
  2. Format Specifications
     1. Font: Arial 11
     2. Page Margins: Use at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages, including continuation pages
     3. Application Spacing: Single-spaced
     4. Do not exceed page limitations noted for each section on the application
  3. Combine all completed documents into **one single PDF file for submission**.

**BEFORE APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

1. **At least 6 weeks before you submit your application** (by 5/16/25) meet with a biostatistician from the BEAR core. AEF Funds applicants must meet with a member of the [Seattle Children’s Biostatistics Epidemiology and Analytics in Research (BEAR)](https://www.seattlechildrens.org/research/resources/bear/) core – they will advise on research and analysis plan as well as sample size.
2. **At least 30 days before you submit your application** (no later than 5/23/25 please send a copy of your project proposal to your Grants Administrator. Your GCA will assist you in the development of your proposal and budget, and coordinate review of clinical billable events for pricing by the Seattle Children’s Research Institute’s (SCRI) Clinical Research Budget Analysts, if applicable. They will also guide you through the internal sign-off process for grant submission at SCRI. Please contact your [Center’s business office](https://child.seattlechildrens.org/research/center_support_services/center_business_operations_cbo/) for assistance.
3. SCRI has several [core services](https://child.seattlechildrens.org/research/core_services/) that may be useful to funded AEF projects (e.g. Clinical Research Center, Biostatistical Services, Research Staff Support Core, Research Specimen Processing Lab, and Investigational Drug Services). The costs for these services must be included in the project budget. Applicants can reach out to the [Research Navigation](https://child.seattlechildrens.org/research/center_support_services/research_integration_hub/research_navigation/) team for assistance with determining study start up and core services to use for their project.
4. Meet with your Department/Division Chair to discuss your application submission. **Your Department/Division Chair must sign off your application.** They must also acknowledge that they are willing to support retaining and protecting adequate non-clinical research time if you are awarded the AEF grant.

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

1. Email completed application materials as a single PDF packet to [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org)
2. **Submissions must be received** **no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, June 27, 2025.** Submissions will be reviewed and applicants notified of award status in September 2025. The award period will begin October 1, 2025. Applicant may delay start of funding to January 1, 2026 to allow sufficient time for IRB or IACUC approval.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. **I do not understand the FTE criteria. Can you please provide an example?**

The FTE requirement is that a PI must be 0.6 to 1.0 FTE and have 60% of their FTE dedicated to providing direct patient care. See the examples provided below.

Examples:

1. I am a 1.0 FTE. 60% of that time or 0.6 FTE must be clinical time to be eligible
2. I am a 0.6 FTE. I need to have a minimum of 60% or 0.36 FTE dedicated to clinical patient care to be eligible.
3. I am 0.5 FTE. I am not eligible regardless because my FTE is not 0.6 FTE.
4. **Does the AEF grant provide funding for PI salary support?**

Payment of applicant salary is not allowed for this award. Applicant must discuss this application with Department/Division Chair on how they will have protected non-clinical time to work on the project if awarded.

1. **Why do I need the Division/Department chair to sign off my application?**

We want to make sure your project is successful. Getting sign off from your Division or Department Chair assures their commitment to provide the support you will need to be successful. We urge you to discuss what you will need and confirm that support prior to having them sign off on your application.

1. **Do I need to get a quote from Biostats/BEAR?**

Yes. All applicants are required complete a biostats consultation for their project prior to application. These consultations need to be requested at a **minimum of 6 weeks prior** to your application submission. See the [BEAR site](https://www.seattlechildrens.org/research/resources/bear/) for [submission information.](https://redcap.seattlechildrens.org/surveys/?s=M9HL8L8WWT) Even if you do not plan to use biostats, you need to have biostats sign off that they still reviewed your application and project.

1. **I want to do preparative activities prior to the award project period. Can I get an advance in my budget to pay for these expenses?**

No, advances are not allowed for this program. The program only funds activities that take place during the funding period.

1. **I plan to use the Research Coordinator Core or other services within the Clinical Research Cores. How can I get information on pricing?**

Be sure to budget appropriately for integrated cores and services. Learn more at the [Clinical Research Cores](https://child.seattlechildrens.org/research/center_support_services/research_integration_hub/clinical_research_cores/) site. AEF applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to the specific cores to learn about pricing and offered services.

1. **Am I allowed to travel to present at a conference or meeting?**

Yes, AEF allows each awarded PI to use a maximum of $2,500 to fund travel costs to present findings related to your awarded project. The award may not be used to pay for society membership dues. You will be required to attach your abstract that you will be presenting to the travel authorization. Travel must abide by the SCH travel and reimbursement policies.

1. **Are multi-center projects funded?**

No. If there is a part of the project originating from Seattle Children’s funding may be considered. There must be an independent aspect to the work and a viable product for the applicant (e.g., authorship) must be described. Letters of support from the collaborative sites must be included in the application to be considered. In addition, no AEF funds will be used to support or be sent to other institutions.

1. **Are international projects funded?**

International projects involving recruitment of participants, prospective collection of data, or transfer of funds abroad are not allowed. If using data already collected and Seattle Children’s resources to evaluate that data, then that project is allowed.

1. **I was awarded the AEF. How do I request a delayed start?**

All awardees are automatically given an award start date of October 1 for June submissions or June 1 for January submissions. If you would like a delayed start, you need to notify the AEF Committee Chair *prior to signing your award document*. You can email [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org).

1. **I am a current AEF recipient. Can I apply again for a new project?**

Applicants must not have active AEF support at the time of application submission. Candidates who completed AEF supported projects *on/before the application due date* are eligible to apply. Final progress reports must have been submitted and approved for any prior AEF projects to be considered complete.

1. **I am a current AEF recipient. How do I submit my progress report and budget reallocation request?**

Progress report and budget allocation forms can be requested by emailing [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org). The program administrator will forward your progress report and completed budget reallocation request to the AEF Chair for review.

1. **I am a previously awarded AEF recipient without an active AEF grant. Can I apply again?**

Yes, as long as you do not have an active AEF support *at time of application*.

1. **Is there more than one application cycle per year?**

Beginning fall 2022, the AEF program is piloting a 2x/year cycle, with submissions in January (June 1 start) and June (October 1 start). To see the application timeline and deadline, visit the AEF website or contact the AEF program administrator at [aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org)

1. **I am a current CCTR Pediatric Pilots Fund or Clinical Research Scholar awardee. Can I apply to AEF?**

Yes. It is not common for investigators to be awarded for both programs as many investigators only meet the eligibility of one program. Your AEF project proposal should have a distinct scope of work from your other funded project. They should not be for the same scope of work.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

[Katherine Weybright](mailto:katherine.weybright@seattlechildrens.org?subject=AEF%20question) [Eileen Klein, MD, MPH](mailto:eileen.klein@seattlechildrens.org)

AEF Program Administrator AEF Committee Chair

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[aef@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:aef@seattlechildrens.org)

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| **Application Checklist** | |
|  | **Cover page** *(use form provided)*  Each investigator in a dual-investigator application must complete this form   * Current applicant information * Department/Division information * Title of proposed AEF project * Verification of eligibility requirements * Applicant’s signature (electronic signature is acceptable) * Department/Division Chair review and signature (electronic signature is acceptable)   + Department/Division Chair must approve checking off the box that they are willing to support the applicant in retaining and protecting non-clinical time if awarded the AEF grant. This needs to be discussed between the applicant and Chair prior to submission. |
|  | **Budget and budget justification (limit 2 pages, use form provided)**  Provide a detailed budget that includes a justification for why support is needed for each requested item. If you are including personnel, explain how personnel specifically relates to the project. Travel (lodging, meals, transport, airfare, etc.) costs **for the awarded PI** are limited to those associated with data collection and/or up to $2,500 to present findings related to your awarded project at a meeting. The budget should cover all the costs (aside from PI salary) associated with the study. Be sure to double check your math prior to submission. |
|  | **Biomedical Statistics Consultation** *(Required)*  Complete an initial free consultation with the [Seattle Children’s Biostatistics Epidemiology and Analytics in Research (BEAR)](https://www.seattlechildrens.org/research/resources/bear/). This must be completed **at least 6 weeks prior** to your submission. *Even if you do not plan to use biostats, you need to get biostats to sign off that it is not needed for your project.* |
|  | **Biosketch of all PIs and key personnel** *(limit 5 pages for each individual)*  Please use the current [NIH biosketch](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm) |
|  | **Background and Project Plan** *(limit 2 pages; follow the format specifications as detailed in the instructions, including font and spacing)*   * Question to be studied\* * Specific aims * Background and goal(s) of the project and why it is important * How will the goal(s) be addressed? What method or approach will be used? * Describe the role of the PI and any co-investigators, including a description of how the project will advance the applicant’s career or academic progress * Describe the likely outcomes from the project (e.g., publications, clinical or educational tools, resources for other investigations, etc.) * Indicate whether the study requires clinical or laboratory tests that are not part of standard care   \*Note: QA/QI project applications should be broadly applicable, follow the SQUIRE guidelines, and have a clear methodology referenced and supported by scholarly work. Proposals requesting funding for a qualitative study must clearly describe the problem and reference appropriate methodology for the study. |
|  | **References** *(limit 1 page)* |
|  | **Project Mentor** *(optional)*  A letter of support is required if another faculty person will serve as mentor for the PI. The letter should clearly specify the roles of the mentor and investigators, as well as the independent nature of the project with respect to any funded research activities of the mentor. |
|  | **Letter of Support of Collaborators** *(optional)*  A letter of support is strongly encouraged if you are collaborating with another department or an external institution. A letter of support from leadership of involved participants is encouraged if students, trainees or staff are subjects of the research. The letter of support should describe your partnership and how the collaboration will enhance your project’s success. |
|  | **Appendix** *(optional – maximum 2 pages)*  An Appendix should only be included for data collection sheets, survey tools, or similar materials. |

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| AEF Application Cover Page | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Applicant Information Check Box  NEW PROJECT RESUBMISSION | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Name:** |  | | | | | | Phone: | | |  | | | |
| **Email:** |  | | | | | | **Mailstop:** | | |  | | | |
| **Academic Rank/Title:** | |  | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [**Center Member Affiliation**](https://child.seattlechildrens.org/research/centers_and_programs/)**:**  *(CCTR, CRBT, CCHBD, etc.)* | |  | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Have you completed a BEAR Core consultation?** | | YES, Project Number and Biostats/BEAR Reviewer Name:  NO | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Department/Division Information | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Department/Division:** | | |  | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Department Chair/Division Head:** | | |  | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Email:** | | |  | | | | | | | | **Phone:** |  | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Title of Project | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Will approval of the study be required from the Institutional Review Board or Animal Care and use Committee of Children’s or another institution?  YES  NO | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | |  | | | | |  | | | | |
| Eligibility Requirements (verify eligibility by completing the information below) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clinical Appointment at Seattle Children’s | | | | | | Total FTE: | |  | | | | | |
| % of total FTE providing patient care: | | | | |  | | | The FTE requirement is that a PI must have 60% of clinical time providing patient care. See the examples provided in the FAQ for clarification. | | | | | |
| No extramural research support as PI and ≤ 0.1 FTE as co-investigator | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No active AEF support (Candidates who completed AEF supported projects by application deadline are eligible to apply) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *By signing and submitting this application, the applicant and the applicant’s department/divisional chair that they have read and understand the Academic Enrichment Fund Program Terms and Conditions and that, if the project is funded, it will be conducted in accordance with those terms and conditions, as well as any applicable institutional policies and/or government regulations.* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Applicant Signature:**  *Electronic signature is acceptable* | | | |  | | | | | | | | | Date: |
| By checking this box, as the applicant’s department/division chair, I will support the applicant in retaining and protecting adequate non-clinical time to complete this AEF research project, if the grant is funded. I understand that the AEF grant does not allow funding for indirect costs or the applicant’s salary. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Department/Divisional Chair Signature\*** *Electronic signature is acceptable* | | | |  | | | | | | | | | Date: |
| *\*Signature verifies review of the academic merit of the application and certifies that the applicant fulfills the eligibility criteria above* | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| **Budget** | | | |
| *Enter subtotal amount in appropriate row, rounded to the nearest dollar, and double-check your math.* | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Cumulative** |
| **Salaries** *(Staff, % FTE or Hourly. PI salary not allowed)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Benefits** *(Fringe Benefits Based on Current Rates)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Biostatistics Purchased Services** *(\*BEAR)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Internal Purchased Services** *(Non-Biostats/BEAR Cores: PCRC, RCC, IDS, RCRIC, etc.)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Other Non-Seattle Children’s Purchased Services**  *(Outside Consultants, Outside Services, Transcription, etc.)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Supplies & Materials** *(Lab and Office Supplies, Books)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Equipment** *(Equipment/computers purchased with Children’s funds remain the property of Children’s)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Other Expenses** *(Postage, Copying, Printing, Shipping, Conference Registration, Research Subject Inducement)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **\*\*Travel** *(Per Diem Lodging/Meals/Expenses, Air Fare, Mileage, Car Rental)* | $ | $ | $ |
| **Tuition** | $ | $ | $ |
| **Consortium/Contractual Costs** | $ | $ | $ |
| **TOTAL BUDGET** | **$** | **$** | **$** |
| *\* Seattle Children’s/University of Washington core services must be used when available. Detailed justification is required for core service request outside of Seattle Children’s/University of Washington.*  *\*\* Travel expenses are limited to $2.5K per individual and traveler must adhere to the travel and reimbursement policies. The award may not be used to pay for society membership dues.* | | | |

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| **Budget Justification (2 pages)** |
| *Detail expenses listed above and explain how funds will be used. If personnel, be specific in how the personnel relates to the project.* |