



MULTICENTER INFRASTRUCTURE/REGISTRY GRANT

APPLICATION SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The PERF® Grant for Infrastructure/Registry (I/R) Research is up to 3 years of support for up to \$330,000. Grants are for \$110,000 per year for each of three years, with \$10,000 withheld from the Year 1 payment (see *Grant Payments* below). The Grant Application should include a description of the project, a total estimated cost, and anticipated benefits to be derived. Any supporting documents, e.g., a research plan, should be included. Please see “Application Submission Instructions” for exact instructions.

PERF Facilities & Administration Costs Policy

The maximum total budget for PERF I/R grants is \$110,000 per year for three years (total \$330,000). In general, Facilities & Administration (F&A) fees (also referred to as Indirect Costs, or IDC) are not permitted. Exceptions may be made if F&A fees are required per the written policy of the contact PI's institution. In such cases, you may include up to a total of \$8,000 in F&A expenses *within* the overall \$110,000 per year budget of the I/R grant (e.g., this would allow for \$102,000 per year direct costs + \$8,000 per year F&A for a total of \$110,000). If your budget includes F&A fees, you must include the institution's written F&A policy in your application packet, with the applicable section(s) highlighted. F&A fees may be distributed across study sites, but the maximum total amount for the overall grant budget (including distributions to sites) is \$8,000 per year.

Application Submission Deadline

Applications are due no later than 5:00 pm (Central Time Zone), Monday, April 5, 2027. There are no extensions. Receipt of the application will be acknowledged by email within two business days. The application will be administratively withdrawn if it does not fully comply with the instructions. PERF advises submitting the application early to allow sufficient time to fix administrative issues if found.

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1. It is appropriate for investigators to share these instructions with ALL personnel assisting you with your grant application (including the grants office regarding the intellectual property policy).
2. A letter of exemption from the Internal Revenue Service (with the tax identification number of the primary study site) needs to be included.
3. If F&A fees are requested, include the institution's written F&A policy in your application packet, with the applicable section(s) highlighted (see *PERF Facilities & Administration Costs Policy* above).
4. Every application must include a Mentoring Plan in Core Section 8. This applies to all PIs, not only early-stage investigators — see the *Mentorship Plan* instructions below, which explain what to include and note how requirements differ for early-stage versus established-investigator PIs.
5. At least one child neurologist must be a member of the core study team as a PI, additional multiple-PI (MPI), or co-investigator.
6. Grant funding is contingent upon IRB/IACUC approval of your project (if applicable). Notice of current IRB/IACUC approval must be received by the sponsor prior to receiving financial payment.

7. Proposed Statistical Analysis and Sample Size Calculation. Provide clear justification for the sample size proposed, the statistical power for the primary Aim(s), and the statistical analysis plan for each of the proposed aims. The statistical analysis should include prespecified primary outcomes and primary analysis as well as secondary outcomes and secondary analyses. Also include discussion on how missing data will be handled.
8. A minimum of two letters of recommendation, but no more than four, are required. At least one reference letter must include a yellow-highlighted statement that documents the willingness of the institution to accept the grant without indirect costs or explains why F&A fees are required and guarantees provision of sufficient protected time to perform the research described in the application. PERF grant funds must be applied above and beyond any research support already provided by the investigator's institution. PERF salary support cannot offset salary or expenses the institution already covers. These highlighted statements are to be included in a letter from the applicant's Section Chief or Department Chair. This letter is mandatory.

A letter of support also is required from an investigator at each participating site. The letter must briefly describe the suitability of the investigator and their institution to fulfill their specific role in the research project. Letters of support from sites are limited to one page per letter.

9. **Grant Payments:** Grant payments are initiated upon full execution of the foundation grant agreement and receipt of an invoice from the institution. \$10,000 of the Year 1 payment will be withheld pending receipt of your Year 1 progress report; subsequent-year payments are not subject to this withholding. This \$10,000 is paid upon completion of the research project and receipt of the final scientific and financial report. Subsequent year(s) payments are contingent upon successful completion of aims and timelines as outlined in the approved budget and receipt of the interim scientific and financial report for the year. If <75% of budgeted funds for a given year have not been expended, an updated financial report will be required before additional (i.e., subsequent year's) funds are released. A report on the use of funds and effectiveness of the project (progress report) must be submitted to the Foundation the year following the grant and all subsequent year(s). A final report and financial accounting must be submitted at the conclusion of the project. Unused funds are expected to be returned upon completion of the grant award period.
10. All applicants will be notified of the Board's funding decision by June 30 of the submitting year.
11. The grantee's institution should be prepared to cash the grant check within one month of receipt of the payment.
12. At PERF, we understand that generative AI can be used by some investigators as they write proposals. We require applicants to disclose their use of AI in both the Letter of Intent and the full application, using the AI Use Disclosure and Attestation sections provided in each.

It is suggested you provide the application packet and forms to all staff assisting you with completion of this grant application. If you are working jointly with co-investigator(s), one site will need to be designated as the primary site where PERF funds will be sent should your proposal be funded.

Merge all documents into one PDF, in the specific order listed below.

A Table of Contents is REQUIRED after the signed face page.

CORE SECTION

Core Section	Document	Limit: Page, Line, or Word
1	Face Page	Not applicable
2	Table of Contents	Two pages
3	List of Abbreviations	No limit
4	Abstract	Not to exceed 250 words
5	Lay Summary	Not to exceed 250 words
6	Specific Aims	One page
7	Research Proposal	Twelve-pages
8	Mentoring Plan	Two-pages
9	Multiple PI Leadership Plan	One page
10	Biographical Sketches (SciENCv)	Per NIH guidelines
11	Other Support Page	No limit
12	Budget	One page
13	Budget Justification	No limit
13.1	If applicable, Institution F&A Policy	No limit
14	Resources	One page per site, including submitting site
15	Letters of Recommendation	Two pages each; minimum two letters, maximum four
16	Site Letters of Support	One page each; one letter per site
17	References Cited	No limit

APPENDIX

Appendix items, as applicable. An asterisk (*) indicates a required document if a project requires IRB or IACUC.

Note: it is understandable that the following items may not be available at time of submission; however, they will be required at the time of award announcement and are required before the proposal is funded.

Appendix	Document
1	Performance Sites and Key Personnel, which should align with submitted biosketches (one page limit)
2	501(c)(3) (non-profit) proof of status
3*	Human Subjects
4*	Vertebrate Animals
5*	IRB Approval Letter
6*	IACUC Approval Letter
7	PERF Terms and Conditions of Award/Intellectual Property Policy

Formatting Requirements

- Single spaced
- Standard paper size (8.5 × 11)
- ½" margins
- 11-point Arial font
- Font color should be black
- Use only a standard, single-column format for the text.
- If the research plan includes figures, graphs, diagrams, tables, figure legends and/or footnotes, a smaller type size is allowable, but it must be a black font color, readily legible, and follow the font typeface requirement. Color can be used in figures and tables.

Grant Application Checklist

- ☐ Assurance the application reflects the PI's work (signed AI Use Disclosure and Attestation)
- ☐ All core application section forms **in the specified order**
- ☐ Institution F&A Policy, if applicable
- ☐ Appendix items, as applicable
- ☐ Letter from Division Chief or Department Chair with the required statement highlighted in yellow
- ☐ Additional reference letter(s)
- ☐ Letters of Support

Convert the entire proposal and appendix to PDF format and submit online to Karen McEwen, Executive Director, PERF (perf2004@gmail.com) and copy Jo Anne Nakagawa (nakaj.perf@gmail.com).

The complete proposal must be received by 5:00 pm (Central Time Zone), April 5, 2027.

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- Applications that do not adhere to the sanctioned procedures will be returned without review.
- Applications that clear the administrative screening will proceed for review by the PERF Board of Directors. The applicant will be informed of the Board's funding decision by June 30, 2027.

Application Submission Instructions | Core Section

Application Face Page: Complete application page and obtain institutional signature.

Table of Contents: (two-page limit)

List of Abbreviations: Provide a list of all abbreviations used in the application. Please limit unnecessary use of non-standard abbreviations.

Abstract: (not to exceed 250 words) The abstract should provide information about the significance, broad objectives, hypotheses, specific aims, and anticipated methods to be used. A statement of how the project relates to the mission of PERF should be included. Do not include graphs or images.

Lay Summary: (not to exceed 250 words) Provide a summary describing the proposed work, using short sentences and simple sentence constructions. This means using everyday language (not higher than 8th-grade reading level). Omit technical, medical terminology and acronyms. The summary must be understood by non-medical members of the PERF Board of Directors and staff. Do not include proprietary/confidential information. This summary should describe how the proposed project will develop a new or enhance an existing infrastructure/registry in a pediatric neurologic disorder.

Resource: Consider using the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Calculator (goodcalculators.com/flesch-kincaid-calculator) to test the general readability of your summary.

Specific Aims: (one-page limit) Begin with a brief narrative that clearly indicates the concern or problem to be addressed in the proposal. State the long-term goals or objectives of the proposal and clearly state the hypotheses to be tested. List 2–4 specific aims; aims should be logical, achievable, and clearly relate back to the hypothesis. The final paragraph/sentence should be an impact statement stating what will become possible that currently isn't, and how the research/project will impact the scientific field.

Research Proposal: (twelve-page limit) Use NIH layout and information, as explained starting on page 145 of the NIH Application Guide (Research Plan Section): <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-i/general-forms-i.pdf>

Divide your proposal into sections on Significance, Innovation, and Approach. Be sure to use terms/phraseology that a general neurologist would understand.

Mentorship Plan: (two-page limit) The primary goal of this grant mechanism is to establish and/or expand the scientific scope of multicenter clinical research collaborations to (1) support meaningful clinical research to improve the lives of children with neurologic disease, and (2) prepare the investigators to develop competitive subsequent research grant applications (e.g., NIH, PCORI, CIHR). Mentorship is a key value for PERF. Every application must provide a mentoring plan (maximum 2 pages), for both early-stage and established-investigator PIs, as detailed below.

Application Submission Instructions | Core Section, continued

Early-Stage Investigators (faculty less than 10 years post-training who have not held major independent grants — e.g., NIH R01, CIHR Project Grant, or equivalent — or those beginning new lines of research topics or methods) who serve as principal investigators (PIs) on PERF grants must demonstrate that their mentorship plan provides the necessary support for them to execute the proposed study.

(1) PERF grants are not traditional career development awards. They are intended to develop multicenter research networks. Thus, the mentorship plans for these grants should be specific to the proposal.

(2) This plan should clearly indicate how the PI will be supported as an early-stage investigator to be successful in leading *this* multicenter study. The plan should include a detailed strategy for professional activities/responsibilities and specific mentorship that will enable the PI to successfully lead the proposed research project and foster the PI's development as an independent pediatric neurology researcher.

(3) Ideally, the primary mentor shall be local (i.e., at the same institution as the PI). However, in some circumstances the most appropriate primary mentor may be at another institution/organization. In this case, provide a clear description of how the PI will work with the primary mentor and how the PI will receive local mentorship on navigating the internal systems at their home institution.

(4) Research mentors must have a track record in (1) pediatric neurology research or another area relevant to the application, and (2) multicenter study leadership. It is acceptable to have multiple mentors for different aspects of the study. The mentors' involvement in the proposal design and planned execution should be clearly described.

(5) For each mentor, provide evidence of a track record of mentoring productive early-stage investigators, as evidenced by the mentor's career evolution, productivity, extramural funding, publication record, and the productivity of their prior mentees.

(6) In the mentorship plan, indicate how often the PI will meet with their mentor(s), how these meetings will be conducted (in person, Zoom, etc.). If there is a mentorship team, outline how this team will work together to support the PI's successful leadership of the multicenter project.

Established Investigators may also serve as PIs for PERF Infrastructure and Registry Grants. These PIs must demonstrate the appropriate skills to lead the multicenter study. They shall explain in their mentorship plan how they will mentor early-career investigators involved in the study (e.g., assistant professors, instructors, fellows, or people who are new to clinical research).

(1) Provide evidence of a track record of mentoring productive early-stage investigators, fellows, and other trainees. Include information about experience in providing the proposed research mentorship, as evidenced by the PI's career evolution, productivity, extramural funding, publication record, and the productivity of prior mentees.

(2) Provide a comprehensive mentoring plan that details how the PI will facilitate the research career development of more junior investigators who participate in this multicenter research. Include information about the potential impact of the proposed mentoring plan. Describe plans for virtual communication strategies, teleconferences, networking, training, etc., along with how frequently these activities will occur and how their outcomes will be assessed.

Multiple PI (MPI) Leadership Plan: (2-page limit)

- Rationale: Briefly describe the reason the project requires multiple PIs. Designate who will serve in a leadership role and include a brief description of their leadership experience.
- Study Oversight: Describe who will provide joint oversight of the entire project and specify what they will do as PI. Who will oversee budgetary matters, regulatory and data management, etc.?
- Communication Plan: Describe who will share responsibility for communications with study sites about study progress reports, for example, and what methods will be used to communicate.
- Process for Conflict Resolution: Describe your plan for resolving a conflict related to the research, should one occur.
- Change in PI Leadership: Briefly describe your plan if one or more PI moves to another institution.
- Publications: Describe your authorship policy.
- Summary: Summarize your overall leadership plan in lay language.

Biographical Sketch: Provide a Biosketch for each of the key personnel, including site PIs, and the primary mentor. Key personnel are individuals who contribute in a significant, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of the project. This typically does not include technicians or others unless they provide specific expertise or a skillset needed to complete the proposed research. Use the SciENcv format (ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv).

Other Support: (no page limit) Complete required information on the NIH-formatted Other Support form. Applicants should provide funding information on active and pending support. Other support is to include all resources made available to the applicant and is necessary to verify there is no budgetary or scientific overlap or commitment of effort greater than 12 person-months for the PI, MPI(s), and, as applicable, their mentor.

Budget: (use provided Excel spreadsheet) Enter costs for each requested budget period. The budget period is 12 months (September 1–August 31). Only expenses related to this project should be requested. Any individual (PI, MPI, mentor, support staff, etc.) contributing to the research project can receive salary support appropriate for work outlined in the proposed budget. PERF utilizes the NIH Salary Cap for the infrastructure/registry awards; for the current salary cap, see grants.nih.gov/policy-and-compliance/policy-topics/nih-fiscal-policies/salary-cap-summary.

Budget Justification: (no page limit) Provide a justification for the budget requested under each category on the Excel spreadsheet. If no budget is requested for a category, indicate “not applicable.”

Facilities & Administration Policy: See the PERF Facilities & Administration Costs Policy at the beginning of this document. If F&A fees are required, include the institution's written F&A policy in your application packet, with the qualifying language highlighted.

Resources: (one-page limit per site) List resources/facilities and available major equipment relevant to the proposed research that are required to undertake and complete the proposed research successfully.

Letters of Recommendation and Support: See Guidelines Page 2, item 8 above.

References Cited: (no page limit) The references cited in the research plan, or any other part of the application, must follow the style standards established by the National Library of Medicine (NLM): list all authors, last name first, then first initial and middle initial if available, separated by commas. List the full article title, capitalizing only the first word and any proper nouns. Abbreviate the journal title according to the NLM Catalog of Journals. Put the year first, followed by month and date if listed. References are to be uploaded as a separate file and are not included in the research plan page limit.

Performance Sites and Key Personnel: (one-page limit) Complete required information on form.

Awardee Financial Information: (one-page limit) Complete required information on form.

501(c)(3) proof of status: Provide a letter of exemption from the Internal Revenue Service (with the tax identification number of the primary study site).

Human Subjects: (no page limit) Mark the “Not Applicable” box if the applicant is not using human subjects. Indicate the assurance status (active, pending, not submitted), the approval date, and expiration date if known.

Succinctly state the characteristics of the subjects; research material source(s); plans for recruitment and obtaining consent; any potential risks to subjects; and processes for protecting against or minimizing potential risks.

Inclusion of Women and Minorities: Discuss the demographics of the minority populations in the area and the criteria and rationale for selection of gender and racial/ethnic group, as well as your plan for recruiting/including women and minorities in the research.

Targeted Enrollment Table: estimate participation in the study by gender and ethnicity.

Inclusion of Children: Discuss the participation of children and explain the rationale if children are excluded. If included, describe the rationale for selecting demographics: age, sex, etc.

Vertebrate Animals: (no page limit) Mark the “Not Applicable” box if the applicant is not using animal subjects. Indicate the assurance status (active, pending, not submitted), the approval date, and expiration date if known.

Give a detailed description of the proposed use of the animals in the work outlined in the Research Strategy section. State the species, strains, ages, sex, and numbers of animals to be used. Provide information on veterinary care. Describe the procedures for ensuring that discomfort, distress, pain, and injury will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically sound research, including the use of analgesic, anesthetic, and tranquilizing drugs and/or comfortable restraining devices where appropriate. Describe any method of euthanasia to be used and the reasons for its selection, and whether it is consistent with AVMA Guidelines on Euthanasia (include scientific justification if not).

IRB Approval Letter: (no page limit) May be provided at time of funding if institutional approval has not been received.

IACUC Approval Letter: (no page limit) May be provided at time of funding if institutional approval has not been received.

PERF Terms and Conditions of Award for Potential Grantee: Sign (PI and institutional representative) and include this form with your application. If your proposal is selected for funding, this form and the Intellectual Property Policy will be included as part of the Grant Agreement.