# INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM

## Overview and Application Guidelines

Last updated January 29, 2025

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

AES Infrastructure Grants facilitate the creation of national or international multicenter research programs. Proposals are welcomed across the spectrum of epilepsy research, including basic, translational, and clinical research methodology to study epilepsy, seizures, and related disorders.

Each grant will provide financial support for organizational planning sessions, infrastructure development, and/or pilot projects to enable the research program to compete for subsequent investment by other organizations.

Infrastructure Grant awards provide up to $50,000 for one year. Each grant may be renewed up to one time through competitive application, with no guarantee of renewal. The number of awards made each year is contingent on available funds. Allowable costs include the direct costs of research including principal investigator salary, travel and meeting costs, and staff or administrative costs that are directly applicable to the proposed work. Indirect or F&A costs are not allowed, as the funds from this grant are intended to help investigators compete for larger grants that cover the full costs of research.

### APPLICATION DEADLINES AND AWARD DATES

- February 3, 2025: Application submission opens through ProposalCentral
- April 2, 2025 at 5PM ET: Full proposals due
- By May 31, 2025: Awardees notified
- June 15, 2025: Earliest award start date.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: All applications must meet the following eligibility criteria. In rare cases, exceptions may be made for an award funded by a partner organization. Contact grants@aesnet.org with any questions.

1. The contact principal investigator(s) should be members of the American Epilepsy Society
2. The contact principal investigator should be at an academic research institution in the United States. Collaborators may be based at international academic research institution as well as at non-profit or for-profit organizations.
3. Proposals should outline the one-year and the long-term goals for creating a multicenter research program to hasten the speed of discovery. Examples of eligible goals include, but are not limited to, establishing centralized databases, common protocols, shared resources, core laboratories, and exchange of rapidly developing techniques and technologies to collect and analyze large scale data.
4. Applications should include a minimum of three collaborators across three institutions.

**REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA**: Infrastructure Grants are reviewed by the AES Research and Training Council with focus on the following criteria.

- Fit for Infrastructure: Does the proposal meet the criteria of an Infrastructure grant as a new multicenter research program with a minimum of 3 or more institutions, with the potential to catalytically advance epilepsy research with new infrastructure, tools, or other resources?
- Investigators and Environments: Does the investigative team have the resources, staff, and qualifications to carry out the proposed work?
- Budget and Workplan: Is the budget appropriate for the proposed workplan? Is the proposed workplan feasible and appropriate for a one year $50,000 award?
- Support for the next generation. AES encourages but does not require inclusion of early career investigators as active participants in the proposed multicenter research program
- The strength of the scientific premise, the potential for innovation, and significance to the scientific understanding and clinical care of patients with epilepsy.
- Specific research hypotheses to be tested do not need to be included in the research plan. However, potential scientific questions that could be addressed in future studies using the proposed infrastructure can be explained in the proposal.
- Preference will be given to applications that will strengthen U.S.-based research through national or international collaboration. If a non-academic institution is included, a justification should be added.

## OTHER POLICIES

Infrastructure Grant Terms and Conditions are available for download through ProposalCentral and contain information on AES's policies related to use of human subjects, use of animal subjects, and other conditions of the award.

**INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Applications must be submitted through ProposalCentral (https://ProposalCentral.altum.com/).

• Applicants who do not yet have an account with ProposalCentral will need to register as a new user and provide the requested professional profile information before proceeding.

• Once logged in as a user, go to the Grant Opportunities tab, and filter the list to display American Epilepsy Society Awards.

• Locate AES Infrastructure Grant Program and click on Apply Now to begin an application. Required components of the proposal include the following sections to be completed as online forms or submitted as individual proposal attachments in PDF format. Additional instructions will be available on screen in ProposalCentral and within downloadable templates for proposal attachments. No applications, nor any parts of or updates to the application, will be accepted if submitted after the deadline or if sent directly to AES offices by electronic or U.S. mail.

1. **Title Page:**

   a. Enter the title of your proposal (max 75 characters)

   b. Project Period: Enter desired Start Date and End Date. The award term should be one year.

   c. Research types: Please select the Primary Research Type, the percent of your research that is Basic, Translational, and Clinical, and, Primary Epilepsy Type.

2. **Download Templates and Instructions:**
   a. All proposal attachment templates, and this application guideline document can be downloaded here from ProposalCentral. A template is available for the Plan of Activities and the biosketch. No template is provided for the budget or letters of commitment.

3. **Enable Other Users to Access This Proposal**: This screen allows you to give other users access to your grant application, if necessary, such as signing official or financial officers at your institution. Please inquire internally at your institution to understand who, if anyone, should be able to access your proposal.

   **NOTE**: If your budget will be split across more than one institution (i.e., funds will need to be sent from AES to more than one institution), please add a contact from the other institution.

4. **Applicant/PI**: Applicant information is pre-loaded from the applicant's Professional Profile. Doublecheck that the information is complete and correct. If it is not, click Edit Professional Profile to update.

5. **Institution and Contacts**:

   a. Institution information is pre-loaded from the applicant's Institutional Profile. Double-check that the information is complete and correct. If it is not, click Edit Institutional Profile to update.

6. **Key Personnel**: Provide the names and institutions of collaborating investigators, other than the applicant, on this page.

7. **Abstract and Keywords**: Type up to 3,000 characters that provide a general overview of the content of your proposal as described in the Plan of Activities. Please select 2-5 key words and relevant Benchmarks for Epilepsy Research that best fit your proposed project.

8. **Budget Period Detail:** The total amount requested should not exceed $50,000. Enter detailed budget costs below. Allowable costs include the direct costs of research, travel and meeting costs, and staff or administrative costs that are directly applicable to the proposed work. Indirect or FandA costs are not covered because the modest seed funds from this grant

9. **Budget Summary and Justification**: Enter Proposed Start and End Dates for your budget. Additionally, enter up to 3,000 characters to justify your budget totals by category.  Allowable costs include the direct costs of research, travel and meeting costs, and staff or administrative costs that are directly applicable to the proposed work. Indirect or Fand A costs are not covered because of the modest seed funds from this grant.

10. **Organization Assurances**: Use this section to indicate use of human subjects, human tissue, or vertebrate animals, and to confirm institutional assurances. All assurances should be provided at the time of the application if available, and documentation must be provided before funding can begin for awarded proposals. See Award Policies above for more information.

11. **Proposal Attachments**: Upload any required and optional attachments for your proposal.

    a. **Plan of Activities: 5 pages maximum** (template available in section 2). Please include the following information in the narrative:
        i. An abstract or specific aims overview
        ii. Background/significance
        iii. Preliminary results (if any)
        iv. Research plan, including the respective roles of each center. It should also include a statement of the intended roles of each PI and center to the proposed research program.
        v. Plans for future funding

b. **Biosketch**: Provide using NIH-style for major PIs and other key personnel whose expertise or background will be essential to the project. Template available if needed.

c. **Letter of commitment from each site PI**

12. **Demographic Information (optional)**: All demographic information is voluntary. Applicant information is pre-loaded from the applicant's PROFESSIONAL PROFILE. AES is committed to supporting a strong, diverse, and inclusive research workforce. If you choose to provide information such as gender, race and ethnicity, or disability status, it will be used to help AES understand our granting programs through analysis of deidentified aggregated data. Such demographic information will not be available to the reviewers of your research proposal.

13. **Validate**: Click the VALIDATE button to check for any missing REQUIRED information or files. All missing required information will be listed on the screen. Please correct any missing information before submitting your application.

14. **Signature Pages**: The Applicant/PI and the Signing Official must e-sign the application prior to submission in order for the application to pass validation. All signatories must log in to ProposalCentral to sign the application. Signatures needed are:

    a. Applicant/PI: Please type your full name and hit sign. This will trigger an email to your designated Signing Official asking them to log in and sign.

    b. Signing Official: The Signing Official you listed in Section 5 (Institution and Contacts) will be listed here.  After you complete your e-signature, the Signing Official will receive an email asking them to log in and complete their e-signature. They need a ProposalCentral account in order to complete their signature, and can access the application through the "Proposals" tab. The Signing Official's signature is required for you to submit your application.

15. **Submit**: You will be unable to submit if you have not provided all the required information. Any missing information will be listed on the screen. If your submission is successful, you will receive a confirmation message on the screen and a confirmation will be sent to the applicant.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you encounter technical difficulties with ProposalCentral, please contact their help desk at pcsupport@altum.com or 1-800-875-2562 (toll-free US and Canada). If questions arise about your application and the review process, contact the AES Grants team at grants@aesnet.org

**Terms and Conditions of Award**

**American Epilepsy Society Infrastructure Grant**

**Acceptance Form:** A signed and completed acceptance form must be returned to AES by the date indicated in your award notification email. Award payments will be mailed to your institution's address indicated on the acceptance form. Please specify the name and address of the individual (if any) to whose attention payment should be mailed. No funds can be paid until the acceptance form is completed and returned.

The start-date of your award is indicated in your notification email and acceptance form. You may indicate on your acceptance form if you request a delay of up to 3 months. If you require a more extended delay, please notify AES in writing to request an extension.

**Use of Human Subjects/Tissues in Research:** When human subjects or tissues are to be used in a research project, it is the responsibility of the grantee to ensure that the project receives approval from his/her Institutional Review Board. A copy of that Board's current approval notice and a copy of the patient informed consent form should be submitted with the application if they are available. If not submitted with an application selected for an award, these documents must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the start-date of the award.

**Use of Animals in Research:** When animals and/or animal tissues will be used, it is the responsibility of the grantee to ensure that the project receives approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. If available, a copy of these documents should be submitted with the application. If not submitted with an application selected for an award, these documents must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the start-date of the award.

**Use of funds:** Funds can only be used as stipulated in the program guidelines and for the purposes as budgeted in the awarded application. Infrastructure Grants may provide up to $50,000 for one year and may be renewed up to one time through competitive application, with no guarantee of renewal. Infrastructure Grants may be used for direct costs only because these limited funds are designed to help seed the creation of a research program that will then compete for investment by other organizations to cover the full costs of research. Examples of allowable costs include the direct costs of research, travel and meeting costs, and staff or administrative costs that are directly applicable to the proposed work.

An applicant may not apply for, use, or accept funds for a research project or part of a project already supported by funds from another public or private source. Accordingly, full disclosure of all available and pending funds for research support must be made in the grant application. If funds from other sources become available to support the proposed research during the review or awarded term of an Infrastructure Grant, the applicant/recipient must inform AES in writing so that a decision can be made about continuation of the award.

**Change in status:** It is your responsibility to notify AES in writing if your status at the institution changes during your award period, or if there are any significant changes in the project as approved. Any proposed revisions in the project budget or project timeframe must be submitted to and approved by AES before being implemented.

**Requests to extend award term:** Grantees may request up to a 12-month no cost extension (NCE) to complete research within the scope of the awarded grant. A written request must be submitted to AES at least 30 days prior to the end of the award. It must provide an explanation for the delay in progress, plans for completing the project within the extended period, and a summary of the funds expended and the intended use of unexpended funds. Unexpended funds at the end of a project term are not justification for a NCE.

**Patent and Copyright Policy:** The recipient may develop inventions, products, publications, processes, know-how, formulae, and the like, from the research funded by the grant or award, whether or not capable of protection under copyright, trade secret or patent protections (the "Research Products"). Neither the AES nor any Contributing Partners will have rights in or to the Research Products that are conceived or reduced to practice in the performance of the grant or fellowship, regardless of whether the invention is patented or copyrighted.

**Manuscripts:** All manuscripts (including meeting abstracts and research articles) that result from this research project are to be submitted to the AES once accepted for publication. Publications should acknowledge AES support with the phrase: Supported by a grant from the American Epilepsy Society. If a funding partner is acknowledged on the acceptance form, publications should acknowledge the support of both organizations (e.g. Supported by a grant from the American Epilepsy Society and [insert funder names]).

**Final reports**: <u>**Submission of final scientific and financial reports is a requirement of this award**</u>.

- A Final Scientific Report is due 90 days after the end of the project term. The recipient grants AES the right to disseminate the information provided for questions that are specifically indicated as "for promotional materials." Information provided on other questions of the report will be kept confidential.
- Final Financial Report is due 90 days after the end of the project term. **Unexpended funds in excess of $100 remaining at the end of the award term must be returned to AES.**

Final reports must be emailed to grants@aesnet.org.

**Long-term success:** The AES periodically evaluates whether its investment in different funding programs has been meaningful for the research community. Every few years, grantees may be asked to provide brief information on research project seeded with this grant. AES also encourages all grantees to contact grants@aesnet.org when milestones in the research project are achieved, such as publications, patents, or follow-on research grants. We want to celebrate the success of our grantees!

Questions? Suggestions? Contact [grants@aesnet.org](mailto:grants@aesnet.org)