

TriService Nursing Research Program: Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award Program Announcement

I. How to Use This Document

This Program Announcement document contains specific information and instructions for the TriService Nursing Research Program (TSNRP) Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award. General information and instructions for all grants are located in the Application Instructions. Follow both the instructions contained in this document as well as those in the Application Instructions when preparing and submitting your grant application except where this document indicates otherwise.

II. Overview of the Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award

Purpose

The purpose of the Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award is to support military-relevant research that is:

- Clinically focused.
- Carried out in an inpatient unit or outpatient clinic of a single military medical facility.
- Conducted in human subjects.

Award Amount

You may request funding up to \$20,000 in direct costs, plus indirect costs as appropriate, for up to an 18-month performance period.

III. Eligibility

Active duty military nurse clinicians whose primary role is to provide direct patient care to military beneficiaries in inpatient or outpatient clinical settings.

For purposes of this award, a **clinician**:

- Is a military nurse with a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree.
- Has a primary professional role of providing direct patient care.
- Has little to no research experience.
- Has received neither a TSNRP award nor an extramural research grant award to conduct research beyond a thesis or dissertation.

IV. Special Requirements

Mentoring

As a novice investigator, you must have a **mentor** and a **mentoring plan** for your TSNRP-funded research study. TSNRP promotes mentoring as a way to achieve its goal of expanding the cadre of military nurse scientists.

A mentor is an experienced nurse scientist and subject matter expert who supports, guides, and assists a novice investigator. Your mentor must be a member of your research team and be available to support you in accordance with your mentoring plan.

Include your mentoring plan in your grant application. This plan must:

- Identify the expected knowledge transfer from your mentor to you.
- Clearly explain the means and frequency of contact between you and your mentor.
- Describe your mentor's plan to evaluate your progress.



Include your mentor's evaluation of your research in each [progress report](#) that you submit to TSNRP after receiving your grant award.

Partnership with the Henry M. Jackson Foundation

You must choose the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine (HJF) as your Applicant Organization in order to apply for the Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award. Disregard any instruction to the contrary in the Application Instructions. While other TSNRP grant applicants have a choice of several Applicant Organizations, you may only partner with HJF.




Refer to sections V and XII of the Application Instructions for more information on Applicant Organizations and HJF.

V. Timeline

TSNRP accepts grant applications twice each year. You may choose to submit your grant application during Funding Cycle A or Funding Cycle B. Refer to the table for deadlines and time frames for review and funding decisions.

	Funding Cycle A	Funding Cycle B
Letter of Intent Submission Deadline	2 August 2011 by 4 p.m. EST	7 December 2011 by 4 p.m. EST
Grant Application Submission Deadline	4 October 2011 by 4 p.m. EST	7 February 2012 by 4 p.m. EST
Scientific Merit Review	December 2011	March 2012
Programmatic Review	January 2012	April 2012
Funding Decision	February 2012	May 2012
Notification of Funding	March 2012	June 2012

If you have not attended a [TSNRP-sponsored Research Development Course or Research Grant Camp](#) previously, TSNRP encourages you to attend before submitting your grant application. These courses are designed to help the novice nurse scientist create a scientifically sound grant application.



Applicants who attend the TSNRP-sponsored Research Development Course or Research Grant Camp are more likely to receive a TSNRP grant award than applicants who do not attend. For more information, visit: <http://www.usuhs.mil/tsnrp/Resources/workshops.php>.

VI. Required Forms and Documents

Include each of the following forms and documents in your grant application. Instructions for completing the forms and other required pieces of your grant application are included in [Section VII](#) of this Program Announcement.

Cover Letter from Applicant Organization

Obtain a signed cover letter from HJF and attach it to the original copy of your grant application. This letter should be on HJF letterhead and should include:

- The title of your proposed study.
- The TSNRP Call for Proposals year, written as “FY201x” (where x denotes the last digit of the year).
- Your complete contact information.
- HJF’s contact information.

TSNRP Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award Packet

This multi-page document, which is specific to this award, has several parts:

- A cover form, into which you will enter the basic information on your research team and research study.
- A research abstract form.
- Research budget and budget justification forms.

You can find this packet on the TSNRP [Forms](#) page.


Table of Contents

This Table of Contents is unique to the Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award. Download it from the TSNRP [Forms](#) page.

PHS 398 Forms

These [forms](#), part of the Public Health Service (PHS)'s grant applications, are used for TSNRP grant applications as well. Be sure to follow TSNRP instructions for each form (given in the following section) rather than the PHS 398 instructions, which may not be the same. You do not need to submit any PHS 398 forms that are not listed here.

- [Biographical Sketch Format Page](#)
- [Resources Format Page](#)
- [Continuation Format Page](#) (Note: You will use this form to write your Research Plan and your Mentoring Plan.)

 The PHS 398 forms have been revised several times. Be certain that you are using the most current version by using only the forms in MS Word format linked from this Program Announcement.

Your grant application may also include several [appendices](#), which do not need to be submitted on any particular form.

VII. Instructions for Completing the Grant Application

When application instructions differ, information contained within this Program Announcement supersedes instructions on the forms themselves.

General Instructions

Type your name (Last, First, Middle) in the header of each page when indicated.

Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award Cover Packet

Complete all sections of this two-page cover form in full as indicated below and on the form itself.



See Section VIII of the Application Instructions for general instructions on preparing and formatting your grant application.

Research Study Title

Select a title that is specific and appropriate to your proposed research topic. The title should be no more than 81 characters long, including spaces.

Applicant Organization

Enter the name and address of your Applicant Organization. This organization will be legally and financially responsible for the conduct of activities supported by your award.



Your Applicant Organization is HJF, as discussed in [Section IV](#) of this Program Announcement.

Administrative Official to Be Notified If Award Is Made

Name the official at HJF who TSNRP will notify in the event that you are awarded a Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award. Include the person's complete address for postal delivery, telephone number, and email address, as indicated.

Official Signing for the Applicant Organization

Provide the complete name and contact information for the HJF official who signs this form. This individual must have formal designation or delegated authority to sign on behalf of HJF.

By signing in this box in your grant application, the Authorized Organizational Representative of HJF certifies that the organization will comply with all applicable policies, assurances, or certifications referenced in your grant application.



See Section VI of the Application Instructions for more information on policies, assurances, and certifications.

HJF is responsible for verifying its eligibility and the accuracy, validity, and conformity with the most current institutional guidelines of all the administrative, fiscal, and scientific information in your grant application. Deliberate withholding, falsification, or misrepresentation of information could result in administrative actions, such as withdrawal of a grant application, suspension or termination of an award, or debarment of individuals, as well as possible criminal penalties.



Submit the original copy of your application (with original ink signatures) to TSNRP.

The signer further certifies that HJF will be accountable both for the appropriate use of any funds awarded and for the performance of the grant-supported study resulting from your grant application. HJF may be liable for the reimbursement of funds associated with any inappropriate or fraudulent conduct of the research.

You may, but are not required to, add a one-page letter onto the cover form with any information unique to your situation that you wish to communicate to the TSNRP Executive Director, members of the Scientific Review Panel, or the Advisory Council.

Research Abstract Form

Use this form, part of the Cover Packet, to give an overview of the study you are proposing. Follow the instructions as written on the form.

Research Budget and Budget Justification

Use this form, part of the Cover Packet, to detail the direct and indirect costs on which you will spend your grant award money during your grant.

The budget you list on this form must be:

- Complete.
- Accurate.
- Reasonable.
- Total \$20,000 or less in direct costs. (Your budget total with indirect costs may exceed \$20,000.)



Direct costs are costs that you incur from purchasing goods or services that can specifically be identified for your study. **Indirect costs** cannot specifically be identified for your study; they are negotiated between HJF and your study site for the use of the facilities and administrative services at the site.



Common Budget Items for Military Clinician-Initiated Research Awardees

This list contains many items that TSNRP grantees often include in their budgets; however, it is not exhaustive or prescriptive:

- Computer equipment and software.
- Specialized training courses (e.g., training course for ATLAS.ti software).
- Postage (e.g., to mail surveys or to ship specimens).
- Laboratory/medical equipment.
- Laboratory/medical supplies.
- Analysis of laboratory specimens (e.g., complete blood count).
- Use of a copyrighted research instrument (e.g., the Beck Depression Inventory).
- Office supplies.
- Patient care costs.
- Transcriptionist for qualitative data.
- Conference attendance (including travel and registration fee) to disseminate research findings (U.S. only).
- Poster preparation and printing.
- Manuscript preparation, including editorial support.
- Consultant (e.g., statistician) fees.

Personnel/Consultant

In this section, list each person involved in your proposed research study, beginning with you (the Principal Investigator [PI]). Also include any individuals who will not receive compensation. Designate each person's role on the study, avoiding any duplication of roles or responsibilities.

Enter the number of hours that each person will spend on the study. This number must be greater than zero and cannot be "as needed" or another non-number.

Enter the hourly rate of compensation for each person on your study who is neither a Federal employee nor on active duty.

For active duty and Federal employees listed in this section, ignore the heading "Hourly Rate." Instead, use this column to specify the time on station, projected permanent change of station/assignment date, or end of time in service for all military personnel on your research team to demonstrate the last date at which they will be able to participate directly in your study.

Compute the total compensation for each person when appropriate, as indicated in the example.



You may not use a TSNRP grant award to pay active duty personnel or Federal employees.



Include another nurse scientist who has agreed to continue the research in the event that you are away for more than 3 months. Include a letter of support from this person as an appendix to your application.



You will describe the need for each person listed in this section in the Budget Justification section of this form.

Consumable Supplies

List each category of supplies that you will purchase with the award, along with the total cost and taxes for the category, if the category total is less than \$1,000. If the total is greater than \$1,000, list each item, cost, and taxes in that category individually. Total the costs and taxes as indicated in the example.

Equipment

List each item of equipment that you will purchase with the award, its cost, and amount of tax. List each item, cost, and tax separately. Total each line and column as indicated in the example on the form.



Computer and Software Requests

- The maximum allowable cost for computer equipment and software is \$3,000.
- Some Applicant Organizations consider computers and software to be equipment; other Applicant Organizations consider them to be supplies. Check with HJF on which classification to use on your grant application.
- Any computer equipment or software that you request should be based on the needs of the research that you propose and should be well justified.

Travel

For non-dissemination travel (such as to attend a training course), list each travel request and travel cost separately. For U.S. dissemination-related travel, you may list costs for each traveler on one line, as in the example on the form. All travel should be necessary for the completion or dissemination of the research that you propose.

Total the costs as indicated in the example.

If you have multiple trips, you may create a table for this section and include it as an appendix to your grant application.



A maximum of \$2,000 per person per award may be budgeted for travel to scientific conferences or meetings for the purpose of research dissemination within the U.S. No more than two people from your study team may travel for dissemination activities. Note that dissemination activities typically occur near the end of the proposed research.

Other Costs

Itemize any other direct costs that you anticipate in your research study, such as:

- Publication costs.
- Equipment rental.
- Communication costs.
- Transcription costs.
- Advertising costs (to recruit study participants).



TSNRP awards do not pay for Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) or Institutional Review Board (IRB) fees.

Provide the hours and rates for all equipment rentals and services that you list.

Complete the budget totals as indicated on the form. HJF will provide you with the “% Indirect Costs” for your research study.



In general, your budget may not include incentives for research participation. However, if you have a unique need to provide monetary reimbursement to participants in your study, contact the TSNRP Director, who will consider requests on a case-by-case basis.

Budget Justification

For each budget item that you listed in the preceding sections of this form, describe why that item is required for your study, including a breakdown of the cost of that item, as demonstrated in the example.

For **personnel/consultants**, describe that person's specific function and role on the study. This includes any "to-be-appointed" positions. For each study team member (including the PI) who is an active duty, Reserve, or National Guard member, provide details about his or her deployment or permanent change of station/assignment dates and the plan for continuing his or her research role in the event of deployment or assignment away from the performance site.

For **consumable supplies, equipment, and other costs**, describe why these items are needed for the study and what they will be used for.

For each **travel** request and for each individual who is traveling, list:

- The purpose of the travel.
- The potential destination.
- Estimated round-trip airfare or car mileage.
- Estimated hotel prices.
- Estimated per diem costs.
- Registration fee, if applicable.

Table of Contents

Complete the Table of Contents with the correct page numbers for the sections that apply to your grant application.

Check the box indicating that you have an appendix. In the space below the checkbox, list each appendix and its contents. For example:

Appendix I: Instruments XYZ

Appendix II: Survey

Appendix III: Publications

Biographical Sketch Format Page

Page limit for this section: Four pages for each person.

Include a biographical sketch for each person you listed on the Research Budget form. Complete the education block at the top of the format page beginning with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, and include postdoctoral training, separately referencing residency training when applicable. For each entry, provide the name and location of the institution, the degree received (if applicable), the month and year the degree was received, and the field of study. For residency entries, the field of study section should reflect the area of residency. ERA Commons information is not necessary.

For each individual, create a biographical sketch that includes the following four parts:

- A. **Personal statement.** Briefly describe why the individual's experience and qualifications make him or her particularly well-suited for the role (e.g., PI, mentor) in the study proposed in your grant application.
- B. **Positions and honors.** List previous positions in chronological order, concluding with the present position. List any honors. Include present membership on any Federal government public advisory committee and any military assignments.
- C. **Peer-reviewed publications or manuscripts in press.** Limit the list of any peer-reviewed publications or manuscripts in press to no more than 15. Do not include manuscripts submitted or in preparation. For members of your research team with more than 15 publications, you may choose to select publications to list based on recency, importance to the field, or relevance to the proposed research. When citing articles that fall under the Public Access Policy, provide the PubMed Central (PMC) reference number (e.g., PMID234567) for each article, if available. For articles that are not covered by the Public Access Policy but that are publicly available in a free, online format, you may include URLs or PMID numbers along with the full reference (note that copies of publicly available publications are not acceptable as appendix material).
- D. **Research support.** List any ongoing and completed research studies for the past 3 years. Begin with the studies that are most relevant to the research proposed in the grant application. Briefly indicate the overall goals of the studies and the responsibilities of the key person identified on the Biographical Sketch. Do not include the amount of time or funds spent on the studies.



More information on the Public Access Policy can be found at <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>.

This part defines each individual's scientific expertise and emphasizes his or her professional accomplishments. Reviewers will use this information to assess each individual's qualifications for his or her designated role on the study and the overall qualifications of the research team.

Resources Format Page

Use this page to describe the resources at your performance site that are available for your proposed research. Reviewers will use this information to assess the capability of the organizational resources available to perform your study.

Identify the facilities that you and your collaborators will use (e.g., laboratory, clinic, computer, office). If appropriate, indicate their capacities, pertinent capabilities, relative proximity, and extent of availability to the study. Describe only those resources that are **directly applicable** to your proposed research.

Provide any information describing the Other Resources available to your study (e.g., machine shop, electronic shop) and the extent to which they would be available.

Describe how the scientific environment in which you will conduct the research contributes to the probability of success (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, intellectual rapport). In describing this environment, discuss ways in which your proposed study will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment or subject populations or will employ useful collaborative arrangements.

Describe your Applicant Organization's investment in your success as an investigator (e.g., resources for classes, travel, and training; collegial support, such as career enrichment programs, assistance and guidance in the supervision of trainees involved with your study, and availability of organized peer groups; logistical support, such as administrative management and oversight and best practices training; and financial support, such as protected time for research with salary support).

Describe any special facilities used for working with biohazards or other potentially dangerous substances, if applicable. (Note: Information about Select Agents must be described in the [Research Plan](#).)

Continuation Format Page (Research Plan and Mentoring Plan)

Research Plan

Page limit for this section: Six pages total for items 3–5 (below), which include any figures or tables. (Some items have their own page limits, as indicated below.)

Your Research Plan will contain the following parts:

1. *For resubmitted or revised grant applications only:* Introduction. Also include the “Recommendations and Revisions for FY__ Submission” form here. Use this form to respond to reviewer comments on your previously submitted grant application.



See the Application Instructions, Section X, for more information on resubmission.

2. Specific Aims. (If you are not resubmitting a revised grant application, this item will be the first in your Research Plan.)
3. Background and Significance.
4. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report.
5. Research Design and Methods.
6. Bibliography and References Cited/Progress Report Publications List.
7. Protection of Human Subjects.
8. Inclusion of Children.

Specific Aims

Page limit for this section: One page.

This section is the foundation on which the rest of your grant application is built. Your Specific Aims should present a direct relationship between your research questions or hypotheses, collected data, and data analysis.

This section should:

- Be easy to read and be presented logically.
- Suggest the relevance of the study that you propose to TSNRP's mission.
- Refer to the current state of knowledge in your area of study, noting how the proposed study will fill gaps in that knowledge.
- Indicate the expected outcomes of the study and the expected impact of the study findings.

Background and Significance

Briefly describe the background that led to your proposed research study. In this section, be sure to:

- Cite research literature that supports the significance of your research problem and that identifies gaps that your proposed study intends to fill.
- Describe the effect of the studies you cite on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, and interventions that form the basis of your proposed study.
- State how your study will advance scientific knowledge or clinical practice if the study aims are achieved.
- Include any economic impact that you expect the research findings to have.



It is your scientific and scholarly responsibility to cite and give specific credit for other authors' work. However, another author's *opinion* does not provide adequate support for your work; therefore, include only fact-based citations.

Remember to include all cited references in the bibliography.

Preliminary Studies/Progress Report

Highlight any preliminary work that your research team has done in the proposed area of study. Because of the nature of the Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award, you may not have conducted any previous research. Regardless, provide any evidence that your team is prepared to undertake the proposed study.

In this section,

- Include relevant data from unpublished research, if available.
- Describe what your preliminary data show, if available, and why the findings are significant to the proposed research.
- Report only research by members of your proposed research team.



You can place any relevant **published** preliminary research that supports your proposed study in an appendix to your grant application if necessary.

Research Design and Methods

Before describing the details of the methodology, first present the theoretical or conceptual basis of your research design.



The research design and methods that you propose should logically follow from the specific aims of your research as described by your Research Plan. Organize the Research Design and Methods section carefully to make this connection obvious to reviewers.

Use enough detail (including methodology, statistics, controls, etc.) to clarify what will be done, how it will be done, who will do it, and how data will be interpreted, fully describing every step in the data collection procedures. Be sure to include details of the instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

The **sample selection** that you describe should be realistic, especially if you are sampling a military population. Include:

- The parameters describing your population.
- The number of individuals available for sampling. It is critically important that you select an accessible population of interest and can recruit and enroll research subjects in a timely manner. Ideally, you and your colleagues would care for at least several patients per week who would meet inclusion criteria for the study.
- The results of a power analysis to justify the sample size used to answer your research question(s).
- Support letters demonstrating your access to settings and populations.
- Specific details of how you will identify and recruit subjects to your study.



Letters of support for your access to places and populations needed for your study are critical to the success of your grant application. Include these letters in an appendix.

Include a table that lists the reported **validity and reliability** for any tools, instruments, surveys, or other measures that you will use in your research study.

Dissemination plan. Explain the strategies that you will use to disseminate the results of your research study.



TSNRP expects all grantees to publish the results of their research in a peer-reviewed journal. Posters or presentations at national meetings—such as military medicine, clinical, or policy meetings—are also good ways to disseminate your research results. You may be able to attend a TSNRP-sponsored publishing workshop or work with a mentor who has experience writing for publication.

Bibliography and References Cited

Use a consistent style of your choice for the bibliography—one that includes the article and journal or book titles, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication in the bibliographical references. Do not include more than 30 references.

Provide the PMC reference number (e.g., PMCID234567) for each citation that falls under the NIH Public Access Policy. You may include URLs or PMCID numbers, along with the full reference, for citations that are not covered by the Public Access Policy but that are publicly available in a free, online format.



Make sure that all references in the text appear in the bibliography in the same sequence in which they appear in the text.

Protection of Human Subjects

Use this section to describe any potential risks to your subjects caused by participation in your study and the actions that you and your team will take to minimize these risks. Include discussion of:

- Confidentiality.
- Coercion.
- Volunteerism.
- Data safety.
- Your monitoring plan.
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance.
- Any other issue related to the protection of human subjects.



See [45 CFR 46.102](#) and [21 CFR 50.3](#) for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) definitions of human subjects research.

Consult the current DoD Service- and site-specific human subjects protection requirements, and ensure that your plan for human protection meets those requirements. Research involving human subjects must be conducted in full compliance with all applicable Federal regulations and DoD policies.



Include a draft of your **informed consent document** in the appendix. It must contain the following under the section labeled “Confidentiality”: “The Institutional Review Board of [the specified study site]; the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD; and other Federal agencies that provide oversight for human subject protection may see your records.”

IRBs. Research taking place on DoD installations or using DoD beneficiaries must have the approval of all appropriate IRBs. Because the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is the grantor, its IRB will conduct a secondary review of your study in addition to the performance site(s) IRB(s). Note that if you plan on including vulnerable populations, your study will be subject to strict scrutiny; obtaining approval for your study may be a lengthy and difficult process.

Documented evidence of IRB approval of your research is not required with your grant application, but you must provide this documentation to TSNRP if you receive an award.

Note that only an IRB can determine if your research is exempt from human subjects regulations.



Refer to Section XIII of the Application Instructions for helpful references regarding human subjects protection.

Inclusion of Children

If your proposed research involves vulnerable populations, such as children, it must follow the additional protections and regulations described in Subparts B, C, and D of [45 CFR Part 46](#). A child is a person who has not attained the legal age for consent to treatment or procedures involved in your research under the applicable laws.

If your study involves children, describe:

- The rationale for selecting a specific age range of children.
- Planned procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks to the children. This plan must include a description of:
 - Your investigative team’s expertise in working with children of the age you include.
 - The appropriateness of the available facilities to accommodate the children.

- The inclusion of a sufficient number of children to allow for a meaningful analysis.

Also describe your process for meeting parental permission and child assent requirements, including:

- The circumstances under which you will seek and obtain consent.
- Who will seek and obtain consent and, if applicable, assent.
- The nature of the information that you will provide to prospective child subjects.
- The method for documenting consent.

Mentoring Plan

Also use the Continuation Format Page to write your [mentoring plan](#).



As a novice investigator grant applicant, you are required to have a mentor for your research study. See [Section IV](#) of this Program Announcement for more details.

Appendices

Include one set of appendices with each copy of your grant application.

Include in an appendix any material relevant to your grant application but not suited for the main body of the grant application, such as:

- Copies and/or detailed descriptions of data collection tools, instruments, surveys, or other measures.
- The use of any instruments not in the public domain requires the **authors' permission**. If you are using any such instrument, include letters from the authors or their legal representatives granting permission to you for their use.
- Informed consent document.
- HIPAA authorization form.
- Published papers that you've authored showing preliminary research, pilot data, or history of previous research.
- Letters of support and any other letters (see below).
- Timeline (see below).



Don't use your appendix to circumvent the page limits of the Research Plan. Except when indicated otherwise, include any graphs, diagrams, tables, or charts in the body of the Research Plan, not in the appendix.

Letters of Support

Include original, signed letters of support on letterhead from:

- **Commander of your military medical facility.** This letter should demonstrate that you and your research team have access to the population and the facilities that you need to conduct the study.
- **Director, supervisor, or manager of the inpatient unit or clinic where you will conduct the research.** These letters should demonstrate that you and your research team have access to the population and facilities you need to conduct the study and that unit or clinic leaders support the study.
- **Associate Investigators (AIs).**
- **Consultants.** These letters should include the scope of the consultants' work and responsibilities, level of commitment and percentage effort, and duration of the commitment.
- **Mentor.** Your mentor should write a letter that describes his or her role and availability to support you as outlined in the mentoring plan.

Timeline

Provide a detailed timeline that delineates how your study will progress. This timeline should include major tasks and milestones as well as the time periods within which you will accomplish them. The timeline should include IRB processing; note that if you plan to study vulnerable populations or use multiple performance sites, IRB processing will be slowed. See the [sample timeline](#) for an example.

VIII. Grant Application Submission: Electronic File Naming



The instructions in this section supersede the instructions for naming electronic files in Section IX of the Application Instructions, subsection “Electronic File Naming.” The Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award uses a different set of forms for grant applications than other TSNRP grant awards. Follow all other instructions in the Application Instructions for formatting and submitting your completed grant application.

Name your electronic files as follows (including numbers):

1. (Your last name) TSNRP C-I Award Forms

- This file contains your cover, research abstract, research budget, and budget justification forms.

2. (Your last name) Table of Contents

- This file contains the Military Clinician-Initiated Research Award Table of Contents form.

3. (Your last name) Biosketch

- This file contains PHS 398 *Biographical Sketch Format Page*.

4. (Your last name) Resources

- This file contains PHS 398 *Resources Format Page*.

5. (Your last name) Research and Mentoring Plans

- Write your Research Plan and Mentoring Plan on the PHS 398 *Continuation Format Page*.

6. (Your last name) Appendix I (Brief Description of Appendix)

- Submit each appendix to your grant application as a separate file, labeled with ascending Roman numerals.



If you are resubmitting a revised grant application, you will have additional files to those listed above. See Section X of the Application Instructions for more information.

IX. Grant Application Evaluation

All grant applications undergo a two-tiered review process:

- Scientific merit review, conducted by military nurse scientists.
- Programmatic review, conducted by members of the Advisory Council.

These reviews' outcomes guide the final funding decisions made by TSNRP's Executive Board of Directors.

Throughout the review and decision process, confidentiality and conflict-of-interest measures are enforced.

Scientific Merit Review

The scientific merit review is a *criteria*-based process by which military nurse scientists from each of the three uniformed Services review, discuss, and score individual grant applications. The reviewers evaluate each grant application for scientific and technical merit, independent of the other grant applications under consideration.

All military nurse scientists participating in scientific merit review have each received at least one TSNRP grant award and are selected based on their research expertise, professional experience, and publication history.

Scientific Merit Review Procedures

For each grant application, TSNRP staff designates one military nurse scientist as *primary reviewer* and another as *secondary reviewer*. These individuals evaluate the science of the proposed study by reviewing, scoring, and preparing evaluative comments for their assigned grant applications. These reviewers also consider the feasibility of conducting the research, the military relevance of the research, and the stability of the research team.

Presentations by Reviewers

First, any military nurse scientist(s) with an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest exits the room or disconnects from the conference call, recording the date and time on the official recusal log.

Then, the assigned primary and secondary reviewers express their levels of enthusiasm for the grant application and announce their initial scores for it. The primary reviewer summarizes the grant application and presents his or her review with a focus on the major strengths and weaknesses that influenced the score. Subsequently, the secondary reviewer presents only those parts of his or her review that differ from the primary reviewer.

Panel Discussion

After presentations from the primary and secondary reviewers, all participating military nurse scientists discuss the grant application. During the discussion period, the panel members review and discuss the grant application's budget. The panel determines whether the requested budget is:

- Realistic and necessary for the conduct of the proposed research.
- Well justified.
- Appropriate considering the projected scope of work and requests for personnel.

If the reviewers recommend budget changes, the recommendations must be specific and well justified.

Scoring

After discussion of the grant application concludes, the primary and secondary reviewers may verbally change their initial scores. Subsequently, all reviewers privately record a numeric global score on individual score sheets. The reviewers' scores are based on a grant application's content as submitted, not on the basis of its potential after the applicant makes the suggested improvements.

Reviewers score grant applications on a scale of 0–9 (in whole number intervals), with the exception of grant applications submitted in the wrong funding category (see below).

The scientific review scoring scale is as follows:

Score	Descriptor	Strengths/Weaknesses
1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses
0	Zero Score	Fails to meet established standards and formatting
--	No Score	Submitted in the wrong funding category
<p>Minor Weaknesses: An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact.</p> <p>Moderate Weakness: A weakness that lessens impact.</p> <p>Major Weakness: A weakness that severely lessens impact</p>		

A grant application receives a “Zero Score” when it fails to meet established standards as determined by consensus vote of the reviewers. Grant applications that receive a “Zero Score” will not receive a subsequent programmatic review. A grant application receives a “No Score” when it meets established standards but was submitted in the wrong funding category. Grant applications receiving a “No Score” will continue through the scientific and programmatic review process.

Scientific Merit Review Criteria

Primary and secondary reviewers evaluate the merit of grant applications using the following criteria:

- **Six core review criteria.** Feedback from reviewers on these criteria allows the applicant to identify reasons for the grant application’s score and to improve or strengthen the grant application on a potential resubmission.
 1. **Scientific approach and technical merit.** This criterion is crucial because it assesses:

- The research design. This includes: purpose, theoretical framework or model, research questions or hypotheses, research method, definitions, study population and sampling strategy, research procedures, intervention protocol (if applicable), feasibility, adequacy of the approach, measures, data management and analysis plan, timeline, limitations, and dissemination plan.
- Whether the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses are well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the research.
- Feasibility, including accessibility to proposed population, potential to recruit and retain the proposed sample, institutional support for the research, and adequacy of the environment and resources where the research will be conducted.
- The likelihood that the applicant will achieve the goal of the research.

If any part of the research study does not merit support, the reviewer may recommend its deletion and a corresponding adjustment to the budget.

Reviewers note whether the application is revised from a previously submitted TSNRP grant application. For resubmissions, reviewers comment on how the applicant addressed feedback from a previous scientific and programmatic review(s), improvements, and any remaining weaknesses.

2. **Qualifications, expertise, and stability of the PI and research team.** This criterion evaluates all key personnel's training, record of accomplishments, and ability to carry out the study as proposed. Reviewers note the following for each key individual: name, degree, title, field of training or experience, publication record, projected move to a new duty location, separation, and/or deployment, and whether the PI and team are well suited to conduct the research. Reviewers also note any missing expertise that is required to complete the research. Due to the nature of this grant award, the qualifications of the mentor (and, if applicable, the consultant(s)) are critically important.
3. **Significance and relevance to nursing research.** This criterion evaluates the proposed study's potential contribution to military nursing and the importance of the problem it addresses to military health care.
4. **Availability of institutional resources and adequacy of the environment to support the study.** This criterion assesses the appropriateness and adequacy of the environment for the proposed research; the quality and extent of institutional support; and the availability and accessibility to facilities and equipment, such as clinics, inpatient units, office or laboratory space, conference rooms, computers, and the

library. In addition, personnel factors are considered, including the opportunity to interact with other scientists and knowledgeable colleagues and the quality and value of collaborative arrangements.

5. **Protection of human subjects.** This criterion evaluates the risks to subjects, the adequacy of protection against these risks, the potential benefits to the subjects and others, the importance of the knowledge to be gained, and the data and safety monitoring plan.

6. **The mentoring plan.** Reviewers assess:

- The quality of the mentoring plan.
 - The credentials of the mentor(s).
 - Whether there is evidence of mentor oversight of the research, including mentored research training and sufficient interaction among the mentor(s), applicant, and AIs.
-
- **Budget and research duration.** This additional review criterion assesses the reasonableness of the budget and proposed study duration. Reviewers provide specific recommendations and rationale for any budget modifications they make. Similarly, reviewers make specific recommendations regarding study duration.

All reviewers address the following:

1. **Level of enthusiasm.** Reviewers rate their level of enthusiasm for the proposed study as high, moderate, or low.
2. **Title of the grant application.** Reviewers evaluate how well the title of the grant application reflects the actual grant application and categorize as a good match, partial match, or poor match.

Reviewers' Comments

Reviewers' written evaluations are key documents that provide the rationale for the scientific merit reviewers' recommendations and score. TSNRP provides all applicants with an unedited copy of the reviewers' written evaluations to provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their grant applications. In addition, the TSNRP Advisory Council uses the document as it conducts programmatic review (second-tier review) of the grant application, scores each grant application, and makes a funding recommendation to the Executive Board of Directors.

Programmatic Review

The programmatic review is both a *criteria-* and *comparison-*based process in which the TSNRP Advisory Council evaluates grant applications on their relevance to the TSNRP portfolio. The TSNRP Advisory Council consists of one active duty and one Reserve member from each Service.

Programmatic Review Process

Advisory Council members review portions of the grant applications and the outcomes of the scientific merit review. During the programmatic review, the primary reviewer presents the grant application, the review, and the score to the entire panel; the secondary reviewer presents the grant application’s score and its justification. The entire council discusses the grant application and then agrees on a final score.

Scores are on a scale of 0–9 (in whole numbers). The scoring scale is as follows:

Score	Descriptor	Strengths/Weaknesses
1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
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0	Zero Score	Fails to meet established standards and formatting
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<p>Minor Weaknesses: An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact.</p> <p>Moderate Weakness: A weakness that lessens impact.</p> <p>Major Weakness: A weakness that severely lessens impact.</p>		

Programmatic Review Criteria

- Scientific merit.
- Significance to military nursing practice.
- Relevance to TSNRP portfolio/programmatic priorities.
- Strengths and stability of the research team.
- Quality of the mentorship plan.
- Command support for the study.
- Potential benefit of the proposed research relative to the proposed budget.

Funding Decisions

The TSNRP Executive Board of Directors makes final funding decisions based on:

- The mission, research priorities, and goals of TSNRP.
- Outcomes of the scientific merit and programmatic reviews.
- Recommendations of the Advisory Council.



The Executive Board of Directors' funding decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

The Executive Board of Directors is composed of the Assistant Surgeon General, Medical Force Development and Assistant Surgeon General, Nursing Services (U.S. Air Force); the Chief, U.S. Army Nurse Corps; and the Director, U.S. Navy Nurse Corps.

Appendix 1. Sample Timeline

The sample below was created for a study employing survey and focus group methodology. You should create timelines that are specific to your proposed research. Be sure to identify the calendar year in addition to the study year. Place your timeline in an [appendix](#), where indicated.

	YEAR 1 (2009)				YEAR 2 (2010)			
	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep
Recruit & Hire Study Personnel	■							
Print Questionnaires & Create Database	■							
Establish Liaison with Units		■						
Prepare Questionnaire Mailing		■						
Send 1 st Mailing of Questionnaires			■					
Send Reminder Postcards			■					
Send 2 nd Mailing of Questionnaires			■					
Obtain APFT Results & Enter in Database			■					
Scan Questionnaire into Database			■					
Questionnaire Data Cleaning					■			
Questionnaire & APFT Data Analysis					■			
Data Interpretation					■			
Focus Group Training and Planning					■			
Focus Groups						■		
Focus Group Data Interpretation						■		
Identify Intervention Strategies to Increase Exercise Participation								■
Report & Manuscript Preparation					■			■

Adapted from timeline provided courtesy of COL (Ret.) Laura R. Brosch, ANC