

## Call for Proposals – COMSEP APPD/LEARN Grant

### Purpose

The joint COMSEP/APPD-LEARN grant creates an opportunity for a larger grant promoting multi-institutional educational scholarship that spans the continuum of undergraduate medical education to graduate medical education (UME to GME). Study subjects are learners (medical students and residents), although UME educators could also be included. Selected educational grant(s) will be supported up to \$15,000, with a portion of the budget directed to APPD LEARN to support the project. The portion will be determined per study. Grant funding is contingent upon available funds.

Mentorship and its associated feedback and guidance are important to COMSEP and so each grant application should include information about the principal investigator's project mentor, described in greater detail below. The total funding period of the grant is 24 months; hence projects that can be completed in 18 months are advised so that the remainder of the time can be used for data analysis/presentation and manuscript preparation.

**Prior to submitting your proposal, applicants MUST contact Alan Schwartz ([alansz@appd.org](mailto:alansz@appd.org)) to discuss the scope of your proposal and costs. When contacting Alan, a draft of your abstract should be included. **A letter of support for your grant from Alan must accompany your submission.****

Due to the unique focus of this grant, it may not be as intuitive of a grant application. Dr. Veronica Gonzalez ([veronica.m.gonzalez@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:veronica.m.gonzalez@uth.tmc.edu)) and Dr. Molly Rideout ([molly.rideout@med.uvm.edu](mailto:molly.rideout@med.uvm.edu)) who have received this grant have graciously offered to answer any questions related to the application process and working with APPD.

### Use of AI Disclosure Statement

AI may be used as a tool for specific portions of grant submissions, but authors must disclose the AI tools used for generating content. Additionally, the authors are responsible for the accuracy of AI-generated content.

### Application and Submission Process

You can submit your application materials by going to the Grants page on the COMSEP website:

[Grant Program – COMSEP](#). You will then see a SUBMIT button on the page to begin your submission and will need to log on to the portal with your MEMBERSHIP login. The deadline for submitting an application is noted in the application and on the grants webpage.

### Proposals

- Projects may include any field of research that focuses on enhancing undergraduate pediatric medical education. These projects must be able to use the resident data collected by APPD LEARN. Research proposals topics should be aligned with COMSEP's mission. We welcome all proposals related to undergraduate medical education in Pediatrics!
- APPD LEARN facilitates multi-site research focusing on pediatric residents (including those who will become pediatric residents and those who have completed pediatric residency). Its resources include assistance with study design, recruitment of residency programs, IRB guidance, study management, and statistical analysis, along with a research id system that allows for linking data with existing data sets including the ACGME Pediatrics milestones, Pediatrics EPAs, longitudinal wellness and burnout data, and others. APPD LEARN expects supported projects to make their de-identified data sets available for future sharing and reuse through APPD LEARN. The APPD LEARN portion of the budget for a COMSEP/APPD LEARN proposal will depend on which APPD LEARN resources are requested and to what degree (Alan Schwartz will be able to provide a budget after discussion of your project). APPD LEARN projects involve samples of programs and engagement of residency program directors, and APPD LEARN does not have a registry of all Pediatrics residents. APPD LEARN also does not have the

resources to conduct qualitative analyses. APPD LEARN focuses on studies that test hypotheses using samples of learners, rather than descriptive studies or studies seeking to survey all learners.

- All proposals must have IRB approval (if human subjects are involved) in order for grant funds to be awarded. Realizing this takes time, investigators must, at a minimum, demonstrate evidence that their protocols have been submitted to their IRB at the time of submission of the grant application to COMSEP. This could be in the form of a copy of a) an email from the IRB or b) a screen shot from the IRB submission website, documenting successful submission of the grant proposal.
- The project must identify a **single PI who must be a COMSEP member** for all communication and responsibilities regarding deadlines, funds allocation to the PI's institution, and submission of reports to the COMSEP Grant Committee. If work is being shared across institutions, it is acceptable for site investigators to be named in the project narrative. COMSEP Grant Committee members are not eligible to be PIs or site investigators on a COMSEP grant. A COMSEP member can only be a PI on ONE grant per submission cycle. It is also encouraged that the PI or a member of the study team is a member of the APPD but it is not requirement. APPD membership will not impact the scoring of the proposal.
- The PI must identify at least one mentor for the project whose role is to support the proposed scholarship and to assist and provide consultation to the investigative team. This is the case irrespective of whether the PI is new to research/scholarship or an experienced researcher. In the latter case, the PI might select a mentor with expertise to expand the PI's repertoire of skills, such as related to the project's focus, or in the analysis or scholarly writing involved in the project. The mentor may either be a 1) faculty member at the PI's home institution or 2) COMSEP member from any institution. It is acceptable to have more than one mentor to guide the PI in different aspects of the study design/analysis. The Grants committee strongly recommends that in addition to the identified mentors, the investigators request a medical education faculty outside the topic domain to review the proposal to strengthen the proposal. Please note that COMSEP Grant Committee members cannot serve as formal mentors to the research team. However, we are here to assist in any way we can to help facilitate the team's work and can provide advice/consultation to the team at any stage during or after the submission and implementation phases of the project.
- COMSEP grants must include direct costs only; COMSEP grants do not provide indirect costs to the home institution or university. Funds to support APPD LEARN's involvement should be included with direct costs (but will be sent directly from COMSEP to APPD, so no institutional subaward will be required). Funds cannot be utilized for travel to COMSEP meetings for the PI or site investigators. With appropriate justification that aligns with disseminating the grant project's findings or learning information or skills specific to this project's activities, travel may be approved to other conferences. While the funds can be used to support the effort of consultants (such as statisticians, research assistant etc.) funds CANNOT be used to support the PI's or site investigator's SALARY. While funds can be used to defray publication costs, beware of predatory publishers. For more information please review this link (<https://blog.unmc.edu/library/2017/04/03/identifying-predatory-publishers/>)
- Work that has been previously published will not be accepted, but proposals to conduct next steps or next iteration or expansion/continuation of such work will be considered for review.
- **Conflicts of Interest (COI):** The Principal Investigator and all key personnel must disclose any potential, actual, or apparent conflicts of interest related to this research study. This includes financial interests, consulting relationships, equity holdings, or commercial affiliations that could influence or be perceived to influence the design, conduct, or reporting of the study.

### Proposal Priorities

- Grant proposals that align with COMSEP's Strategic Plan, are responsive to the requirements of this Call for Proposals and present a sound approach to an important topic or potentially valuable innovation in pediatric undergraduate medical education and beyond will receive the highest priority.
- Awardees must plan to have data for submission to either the platform or poster session of a future COMSEP meeting (within 2 years). Acceptance for presentation is not guaranteed, but submission by grant awardees is required. In addition, grantees will be expected to present some data, even if

preliminary, at a Work-In-Progress Session during the COMSEP Annual meeting the following year. Thus, the scope of work for the project should be reasonable and practical, such that it is feasible to generate preliminary data within 9-12 months and can be completed in about 18 months, with a final few months for writing and dissemination activities. The total funding period of the grant is 24 months. A pilot project to generate data for a larger grant submission in the effort to inform or scale up the study in the future is strongly encouraged.

### **Format of the COMSEP APPD/LEARN Grant (to be uploaded as an Adobe PDF file only)**

All proposals must include the following information in the order outlined below:

- **Abstract**
  - Limit length to 300 words of text using 12-point font
  - Include the project's specific aims and long-term objectives
  - Include a description of the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals
  - Write in plain language, so even a non-researcher can understand the importance of the project
- **Introduction**
  - Why the topic is important to undergraduate pediatric medical education (and if appropriate, to other learners/learner levels)
  - A literature review that articulates what is already known about the topic and identifies the existing gap
  - Explanation of theory or conceptual model for the study
  - A clear statement of hypothesis (if a research study) or a clear description of project scope and purpose (if an educational innovation project)
- **Methods/Materials**
  - Explanation of how your chosen methodology will appropriately answer your research question(s) or project plan
  - A clear and detailed study design including elements such as: a description of population to be studied or involved, the types of instruments or techniques planned for measurement with a rationale (including validity evidence) for the instruments selected, and if instruments or materials are to be developed, whether this is feasible for the scope and timetable of the project
- **Evaluation/Analysis**
  - An evaluation plan that is appropriate for the study design and one that addresses each proposed outcome measure.
  - Rationale for the evaluation(s) or statistical methods selected
- **Anticipated Outcomes and Results**
  - Discussion of the anticipated and possible alternative outcomes and how they will be informative in advancing the field
- **Dissemination Plan**
  - Describe your plans for sharing the results of this study (eg, submissions to COMSEP, PAS; peer-review publication)
- **Future steps**
  - Description of the next steps (for example, scale up or further funding potential), generalized us of the project product or findings, or potential integration into other learning settings
- **Budget and Timeline**
  - An adequately detailed budget with clear justification for funds (maximum budget for the funding period is \$15,000)
  - A realistic and practical timeline that will permit study completion in 18 months
  - The timeline should highlight potential dependencies, such as data collection delays until students arrive, IRB approval, etc.
  - The funding period is 24 months, with a start date of around June 2022
  - APPD LEARN grants must include direct costs (eg. costs that directly go into meeting the project goals) only and do not provide indirect costs (eg. costs associated with facility use or administrative support) to the home institution or university. Funds cannot be utilized for travel to meetings. With appropriate justification that aligns with disseminating the grant project's findings or learning information or skills specific to this project's activities, travel may be approved to other conferences. While the funds can be used to support the effort of consultants (such as statisticians, research assistant etc.) funds CANNOT be used to support the PI's or co-PI's SALARY. While funds can be used to defray publication costs, beware of predatory publishers.
  - The part of the budget supporting APPD LEARN will be invoiced directly to COMSEP.

- **AI - Artificial Intelligence Disclosure Statement**

AI may be used as a tool for specific portions of grant submissions, but authors must disclose the AI tools used for generating content. Additionally, the authors are responsible for the accuracy of AI-generated content.

**Proposal narratives should be limited to 3 single-spaced pages or 1500 words not including the following**

- The cover page/initial information (including the institutional grants officer name/contact information)
- The abstract
- a list of works cited (reference list) at the end of the proposal
- the budget (with justification): 1 page
- the timeline

Other documents to include are

- Brief biosketches (no more than 2 pages each for the PI and mentor)
- Letters of support from the Department Chair and at least one Project Mentor; the Project Mentors should explicitly describe their expertise in being able to contribute to this scholarly project and their willingness to guide the PI and facilitate completion of the project
- **Letter of support from APPD LEARN administration supporting the project proposal and detailing APPD LEARN's involvement and costs.**
- Evidence of IRB submission or approval
- Proposals should be in a font not smaller than 12 pt, with margins not narrower than 1 inch at top, bottom, and each side.
- **A single appendix** is permitted to provide supporting documentation such as a facilitator guide, list of survey questions, or information on study instruments **(limited to 1 page)**.

### **Review Process and Guidelines**

- All submissions will be reviewed by at least two members of the COMSEP Grant Committee. We are committed to providing an instructive critique for each proposal, including those that are not accepted. This will allow investigators to pursue their ideas by paying attention to reviewer comments and potentially re-writing their proposals for other funding opportunities. Proposals will be judged "Approved for Funding," "Not Approved for Funding," and "Not initially approved for funding but resubmission recommended." The Committee reserves the right to request changes in the proposal and re-review it before a decision on funding is made.
- The Committee will give highest priority to those projects that are aligned with COMSEP's and APPD's mission, advance undergraduate pediatric medical education in innovative ways, adhere to the guidelines listed above, are appropriate in scope, have an appropriate budget, have the potential for generalizability, have strong mentorship outlined and have the potential for future grant submissions. **A pilot project to generate data for a larger grant submission in the effort to inform or scale up the study in the future is strongly encouraged.**
- Awardees must plan to submit results for submission to either the platform or poster session at a future COMSEP ANNUAL meeting (within 2 years). Acceptance for presentation is not guaranteed, but submission by grant awardees is required. In addition, grantees will be expected to present some data, even if preliminary, at a Work-In-Progress Session during the COMSEP Annual meeting the following year. Thus, the scope of work for the project should be reasonable and practical, such that it is feasible to generate preliminary data within 9-12 months and can be completed in about 18 months, with a final few months for writing and dissemination activities. The total funding period of the grant is 24 months.

### **Acquiring Funds, Progress and Final Reports**

- It is the PI's responsibility to see that the grants office or officer designated in the proposal requests the project funds no later than 90 days after the date on the letter confirming successful application/funding. The start date of the grant will be considered as the date on the letter confirming successful application/funding. Funds not retrieved within 90 days of the award letter are no longer available for the project.

- The PI of each funded proposal will submit a progress report for review by the COMSEP Grant Committee at 9 and 21 months following the awarding of funds. This report must include 1) progress to date, 2) barriers and strategies/plans to address these, 3) budget expenditures, and 4) project activity anticipated in the next 12 months and/or dissemination plans.
- Funds remaining after 24 months must be returned to COMSEP if a request for no-cost extension is not made by the PI and approved by the COMSEP Grant Committee six (6) weeks before the 2-year period of the grant terminates.

**All presentations or publications of scholarly work must acknowledge COMSEP and APPD sponsors of the work, with the following suggested narrative: "This work was supported by a grant to the author from the Council on Medical Student Education in Pediatrics (COMSEP) and the Association of Pediatric Program Directors (APPD)". Some APPD LEARN resources require additional acknowledgments.**