

**Georgia Foundation for Physical Therapy  
Guidelines for Research Grants - November 1, 2023**

**MISSION**

The Georgia Foundation for Physical Therapy will advance the art and science of physical therapy, and promote evidence-based physical therapy education and clinical research that enhances the quality of patient care.

**VISION**

The Georgia Foundation for Physical Therapy, through support of education and clinical research, will empower clinicians, students and clinical researchers to advance the profession of physical therapy.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

***Grant Amount***

The maximum **grant award** amount is \$10,000. Funds are available for collaborative research between at least two institutions or organizations, one of which is a research-supporting entity with an Institutional Research Board that meets compliance with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations governing the protection of human subjects. Research funds will be deposited with this entity and cannot be given directly to the grantee. GFPT funds may be used to support direct expenses. **No overhead or salary costs are allowed. Please make your institution/organization fully aware of this restriction.**

***Grant Period***

A proposed project may have a Period of Performance of 1 or 2 years. At the time of application, the Investigator must request either a 1- or 2-year grant period. The amount of the **GFPT award** will be the same, \$10,000, for a 1- or a 2-year award. **A grant year will begin on date of award and end 365 days from that date, unless another Period of Performance has been requested and approved by GFPT in advance of application submission.**

***Use of Funds***

Funds may be requested to meet any type of expense reasonably associated with the research project, excluding salaries and fringe benefits. Purchase or rental of equipment, supplies, travel, publication costs, printing or postage, and special services such as computer time, and photographic services, are allowed.

***Areas of Study***

Eligible research projects will evaluate the efficacy and quality of the outcomes of physical therapy interventions and/or services. All research methods, including surveys, qualitative approaches, and interventional studies, are eligible for consideration.

**GFPT PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING PRIORITIES**

GFPT supports only those studies which are provided by physical therapists, or selected components of the study are provided by physical therapist assistants, under the direction and supervision of physical therapists.

Guidelines for distribution of funds and criteria for selecting recipients are established by the GFPT Board of Directors and their designees. Final approval for projects is made by the GFPT Board of Directors.

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***Funding Objectives***

The intent of GFPT is to fund the highest quality, scientifically based, and clinically relevant research with priority given to projects with a clinical application. Proposed studies should add to or refine the body of knowledge on which physical therapist practice is based using any of a variety of recognized investigative methods, such as experimental, descriptive, or correlational. Proposed studies should begin to address the most critical questions in clinical practice. **The project should be a collaborative venture between two or more partner organizations or institutions. Investigators are not limited to designs that would require patient/subject encounters. All research designs are eligible for consideration.**

***Funding Priorities***

Studies should have inter-organizational collaboration and seek to do one or more of the following:

- Evaluate the clinical effectiveness of therapeutic interventions
- Assess the interaction between patient characteristics and therapeutic methods
- Explore the scientific basis for interventions used in physical therapy
- Investigate the impact of healthcare delivery models to physical therapy outcomes
- Include multidisciplinary teams proposing innovative research projects that address healthcare quality, cost, and/or access.

In addition, priority will be given to studies which:

- Have direct application to the practice of physical therapy
- Address the need for measurable outcomes
- Ask a new question important to intervention or its validation
- Address a previously asked question with a new methodology, different sampling strategy or a different form of analysis
- Demonstrate sufficient potential for completion of the project

***Limitations of Use***

No funds will be approved to finance cost overruns or deficits on existing projects or to finance projects already in progress. A 6-month, no-cost extension may be granted. If the PI requests a second 6-month, no-cost extension, a spend-down plan must be provided to support the need for the extension. No further extensions will be granted.

***Other Support***

All sources of support for the proposed project must be identified in the online application.

***Payment of Funds***

Funds will be sent directly to a designated official of the U.S. Sponsoring Organization/Institution for administration through its financial office. Funds are only available for research performed in conjunction with research-supporting U.S. institutions.

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***Schedule of Payment***

For a one-year grant, funding will be delivered in a payment of 100% each, within 30 days of award notification. For a two-year grant, funding will be provided in 50% payments, with the second occurring at the 12-month mark of the project.

Any deviation from this schedule must be requested in the application and approved in writing by GFPT prior to the beginning of the Period of Performance. Payment will be contingent upon receipt of Progress Reports indicating that satisfactory progress has been made in completing work on the proposed timetable, including a report of expenditures with receipts or other verifying information. Failure to supply Progress Reports will result in termination of the award.

***Policy Governing Use of Subjects in Research***

**Vertebrate Experimental Animals:** If vertebrate experimental animals are involved in the study, the plan must include specific procedures for review of the protocol in compliance with federal policy on the humane handling of animal subjects. Also, the institution's Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) must have approved or given a waiver for the project. Proof of IACUC Approval is not required at the time of application. If your project is awarded, the first award payment will not be issued until proof of IACUC Approval is submitted to the Scientific Program Administrator.

**Human Subjects:** If data is to be collected on human subjects, or if data used in the project contains identifiable private information that can be linked to human subjects, the plan must include specific procedures for review of the protocol and securing informed consent of subjects in compliance with federal policy on protection of human subjects.

Proof of IRB Approval is not required at the time of application. If your project is awarded, the first award payment will not be issued until proof of IRB Approval is submitted to the Scientific Program Administrator. The IRB approval must be on the sponsoring institution's letterhead and signed by the appropriate institution official. If the proposed project has more than one site, IRB Approval or Exemption **must** be obtained for every site in the project. Also, the institution sponsoring the project's research must be covered by an assurance agreement indicating compliance with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations governing the protection of human subjects.

In addition, if data will be collected on human subjects, or if data used in the project contains identifiable private information that can be linked to human subjects, the Principal Investigator and all key personnel involved in the conduct of the study must provide certificates demonstrating completion of a human subjects' protection training course. You must provide training validity dates for your particular course as part of your application package and the training must be current according to the dates listed on the certificate.

The NIH Office of Extramural Research's "Human Participant Protections: Education for Research Teams" training course (<https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>) is an example of a course that meets this requirement. Should this link not work, please go to the main website for NIH's National Cancer Institute (<http://www.cancer.gov/>) and type "human participant protections" into the search engine window. The course will be among the top links on the page of search results.

GFPT will not accept a letter in lieu of a certificate indicating that a human subjects protection training course has been taken.

If the GFPT applicant is a current or prior GFPT funding recipient, he/she must be considered in good

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standing with GFPT in order to be eligible to apply. “Good standing” is defined as having followed all guidelines as specified in the grant application and procedures, including ethical research practices and adherence to financial and reporting guidelines.

If an award is given to a GFPT applicant that is currently supported by another GFPT funding mechanism at this mechanism’s application deadline but concludes before the Period of Performance begins (start date of the award), then award is contingent upon the successful submission and approval of the current funding mechanism’s Final Report. Further, there can be no overlap between GFPT funding mechanism periods of performance.

**Physical Therapist Assistant applicants, please note:** GFPT supports only those intervention studies in which the interventions are provided by physical therapists, or selected components of the interventions are provided by physical therapist assistants under the direction and supervision of physical therapists.

***Ineligible Requests***

Under no circumstances will funding be provided for expenses or debts incurred before the award date of the grant.

If the applicant is a current GFPT funding recipient and is operating under a No-Cost Extension (NCE) agreement, no PENDING applications for this funding mechanisms will be considered. Further, there can be no overlap between GFPT funding mechanism periods of performance. A Principal Investigator can only be the PI or co-PI on one project, although may be a participant in a second project. If the applicant is a current or prior GFPT funding recipient and has not complied with reporting or obligation requirements associated with the prior or a current award, he/she will not be considered in good standing with GFPT and is not eligible for a GFPT funding mechanism. The Principal Investigator must hold a Georgia physical therapy license.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF GFPT AWARD**

***Non-Compliance***

A recipient is defined as the Principal Investigator. Failure on the part of the recipient to comply with the policies governing the grant (including policies governing publications, presentations, and press releases) may be grounds for early termination of the grant and/or denial of any future consideration for funding from GFPT. Failure to comply with the policies governing this award will result in the recipient NOT being considered in GOOD STANDING with GFPT. **If the grantee is NOT considered in GOOD STANDING with GFPT, the grantee is NOT eligible to apply for any other GFPT funding mechanism.**

Should the recipient encounter problems during the GFPT Period of Performance related to progress or other matters related to the grant, GFPT may request additional information from which a decision to continue or to terminate the GFPT award can be made. In cases of early termination by the GFPT, the recipient and Sponsoring Institution will be notified in writing sixty (60) days before the grant is terminated.

***Research Integrity***

GFPT expects that the highest ethical standards and compliance with public laws and regulations will be adhered to by all recipients when undertaking any type of research supported by GFPT funds. It is expected that recipients will:

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- Be intellectually honest in proposing, performing, and reporting research
- Be accurate in representing contribution in research proposals and reports
- Be collegial in scientific interactions, including communications and sharing of resources
- Be transparent in conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest
- Ensure the protection of human subjects in the conduct of research in compliance with the Department of Health and Human Services' regulations governing the protection of human subjects
- Ensure humane care of animals in the conduct of research in compliance with Public Health Service's policy on humane care and treatment of laboratory animals
- Adhere to the mutual responsibilities between investigators and their research teams.

**Reporting**

Recipients shall provide reports to GFPT following the schedule guidelines described below. Failure to submit a report by the stated deadline will delay or jeopardize continued or future support by the GFPT. If the recipient fails to comply with reporting requirements, he/she will NOT be considered in GOOD STANDING with GFPT and will NOT be eligible to apply for any other GFPT funding mechanism. If funds are to be paid on an alternate payment schedule, the reporting schedule will be adjusted accordingly.

**Progress Report:** All recipients shall e-mail Progress Report(s) to GFPT Board of Directors. For a 1-year grant, one Progress Report is due 6 months into the grant year. A grant with a 2-year Period of Performance will require Progress Reports at 6 months, 12 months and 18 months. A Progress Report shall include:

1. A brief summary of work completed to date, including a discussion of major problems (if any) encountered, such as reasons for not being able to recruit sufficient participants for the study (if applicable);
2. A plan to remedy the problems;
3. An explanation and justification for any deviation from the original plan of action; and
4. An explanation of any proposed changes to the plan.
5. Report of expenditures, including receipts or other verifying documentation.

In addition, the report(s) should include a list of presentations, abstracts, and articles published or submitted for publication related to the study.

The recipient is also required to submit electronic copies (hard copies are acceptable only when electronic copies are unavailable) of the following:

1. Copies of abstracts and articles related to this project;
2. Copies of any survey instruments developed or used in the course of the project;
3. Copies of measurement instruments developed or used in the project; and
4. Any other information pertinent to the research project.

**Failure to submit a Progress Report on time may delay or forfeit the release of the next increment of funding.** In addition, a sub-committee of the GFPT may review Progress Reports and make recommendations for non-competitive renewal for Year 2.

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**Final Report:** All recipients are expected to submit a Final Report to GFPT within thirty (30) days of completion of the GFPT Period of Performance. Failure to submit a Final Report will exclude the recipient from any future GFPT funding as the recipient will not be considered in good standing with GFPT. Further, any pending funding award from GFPT will be contingent upon the submission and approval of a Final Report if there is overlap between the current Period of Performance and the other funding mechanism's application deadline. The Final Report should be submitted electronically to the Scientific Program Administrator. The award recipient must also submit the project findings for presentation at the annual APTA Georgia ImPacT meeting following the conclusion of the project.

It must include:

1. A detailed account of expenditures from the Sponsoring Institution (including but not limited to that portion paid for by the grant)
2. Work completed during the course of the research
3. Explanation of any changes to the original plan
4. Plans for future research projects related to the study
5. Plans for dissemination of information related to the study
6. Copies of abstracts and articles since the last Progress Report that are related to this project

Recipients are also required to update the electronic abstract with the following information and e-mail it to the GFPT Board of Directors at the time the Final Report is submitted:

1. Findings: Results from the project
2. Lay Language Summary: An *updated* description of the project in terms a non-physical therapist can understand that includes a *summary of the project findings*, suitable for distribution and publication
3. A complete list of all presentations, abstracts, and articles submitted, in press, or published that are related to this study

***Request for Approval of Changes***

**Changes to the Budget:** A budget shall be submitted by the grantee and approved by GFPT prior to the commencement of any research. The recipient must obtain written approval from GFPT if expenditures are expected to deviate significantly (see below) from the distribution in the approved budget. If the deviation is significant, a revised budget must be submitted to GFPT for consideration. GFPT shall have thirty (30) days to review any request for approval of a revised budget.

GFPT may approve or not approve changes at its discretion. The award maximum specified in the grant will not be increased.

***Changes less than 20%:*** GFPT does not require pre-approval of a departure from budgeted amounts as long as the departure does not exceed twenty per cent (20%) in any line item. However, any departure from the original budget must be explained fully in the progress and yearly reports.

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**Changes greater than 20%:** Transfers between line item in excess of twenty per cent (20%) and requests for expenditures in categories not initially included in the approved budget may be interpreted as representing changes in the overall plan of action. Accordingly, prior GFPT approval is required for all changes in line items of greater than 20%.

**Changes to the Plan of Action:** The recipient must obtain written approval from GFPT before making any material change in the plan of action, timetable for completion (including no-cost extensions), acquisition of subjects, etc. Requests for changes to the plan must be made in writing to GFPT thirty days (30) prior to the expiration of the original grant Period of Performance.

In the event that a NCE is granted, no PENDING applications for another GFPT funding mechanism from the recipient will be considered until the term of the extension has expired and the recipient has met the reporting and obligation requirements of the award.

**Changes in Status of Grant Recipient:** The recipient must notify GFPT upon becoming aware of any changes or pending changes (e.g., changes in key personnel) that may prevent accomplishment or substantially alter the goals and objectives of the research program. Such notice must be received by GFPT within five (5) days of the recipient's becoming aware of any such change or pending change. GFPT may request additional information from which a decision to continue or to terminate the GFPT can be made. GFPT, in its sole discretion, shall determine whether the change jeopardizes the recipient's ability to complete the research program and whether funding of the project shall continue. In cases of early termination, the recipient and Sponsoring Institution shall be notified by GFPT in writing sixty (60) days prior to the termination of the GFPT. The Sponsoring Institution should be aware that if the decision is made by any party to terminate the grant, any unpaid award increments may be forfeited or pro-rated and/or unused funds already awarded will be requested to be returned to GFPT.

If the recipient fails to notify GFPT at all or not within the specified time period, they will not be considered in good standing with GFPT, and will not be eligible to apply for any other GFPT funding mechanism.

GFPT may not consider future funding requests from the Sponsoring Organization/Institution and will deny future funding to the recipient if credit acknowledgement is not included

**PROJECT SPECIFIC GRANT APPLICATION FORMAT**

Applications should consist of, in this order:

- Cover Sheet
  - Title of the grant
  - Name and address of each PI and co-investigator
  - Dollar amount requested
  - Purpose that the grant addresses
  - Sponsored Program's official and signature
  
- Table of Contents (with corresponding page numbers for each section listed below)

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- Section 1: Abstract
  - 1 page maximum
  - Background, Purpose, Design, Methods, Data Analysis, Significance
- Section 2 – 5: Research Plan (10 page maximum)
- Section 2: Specific Aims and Hypotheses Make sure to state the purpose of the grant in this Section
- Section 3: Significance
- Section 4: Innovation
- Section 5: Approach
  - This should include: design, subjects, methods, variables, data analysis, power analysis, limitations, potential problems and risks
- Section 6: Bibliography
- Section 7: Subject recruitment plan (also see Appendix G)
- Section 8: Appendices
- Appendix A: Timeline
- Appendix B: Budget and Budget Justification. If you have a 2-year grant, your budget must be broken down into Year 1 and Year 2. (Carefully read the paragraph on funding above as it relates to allowable use of funds)
- Appendix C: Biosketches and Role of each investigator
  - Role of each investigator - List each investigator's name and indicate the role of each investigator (Limit: 1 page)
  - Biosketches: NIH format (3 page maximum for each):
    - Name and Position Title
    - Education / Training (Institution and Location, Degree, Year, Field of Study)
    - Positions Held and Honors
    - Publications
    - Funding History; to include: funding agency, title of the project, a brief description of the project, amount of funding, percentage effort, year(s) of funding.
- Appendix D: Facilities
- Appendix E: IRB Informed Consent and Approval statement of submittal for approval
  - IRB Informed Consent Form with statement of IRB approval OR the consent form which will be/is submitted for approval
- Appendix F: Other: Data collection forms, surveys, etc.



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- Appendix G: Letters of support from clinical partners and referring sources to support ability to recruit subjects
- Appendix H: Previous funding
  - Please submit as Appendix G, a brief summary (1 paragraph per project, with a total of 1 page maximum), to include: title of the funded project, date of funding and results of previous funding, and number abstracts and publications as a direct result of funding.
- Appendix I: Resubmission. Was this grant previously submitted to the GFPT? (not applicable in first year of GFPT grand funding)
  - Please submit Appendix I: Resubmission. This section is limited to 2 pages, and should address the major differences between the current and previous grant application. It should address the reviewer's comments and clearly identify how these comments were addressed in the current grant application. Do not use text shading or any indication in the grant application as to the changes made, but rather indicate section and page as needed where previous review comments were addressed.

**FORMATTING**

When formatting the application, margins must be at least 1 inch. Font must be either Times New Roman 12 point or Arial Regular 11 point. The applicant's last name and page number should appear at the top of every page, starting with page 1 with the first page of Section 2 (Specific Aims and Hypotheses).

Applications for this grant must be submitted online as a single PDF to: <mailto:info@gfptonline.org> with the email subject line "**GFPT Research Grant – November 1, 2023.**"

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & QUESTIONS**

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