

STRIDE Mentored Research Scholarship Award Guidelines

Funding Award Information	
Award	STRIDE stands for Standing for Research Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity. It is AOTF's standing committee to develop, direct, and evaluate AOTF initiatives to promote diversity & belonging, combat racism, heal trauma, achieve equity, and social justice. STRIDE aims to identify and address any barriers in our community to support full inclusion and learn more from our stakeholders about experiences that could inform us about how to do better and promote the kinds of reflections and insights that fuel change. While some of these actions build on existing initiatives within AOTF, others represent new steps that the Foundation will be enacting in direct response to recent events. Read full action plan.
Funding	The awardees will receive financial support (up to US \$10,000) to enable them to meet with their mentors, participate in lab meetings, and build critical knowledge and skills through training in research methods and processes.
Payment of Funds	<p>Awardees will have funds sent directly to them. Funds are only available for a research experience done at U.S. non-profit institutions.</p> <p>For release of funds, please forward the following information to AOTF: W-9 form for the Awardee</p> <p>Blank W-9 Form: https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf</p>
Proposed Timeline	<p>Awardees are expected to work approximately 10 hours per week (excluding holidays) over the 22-week experience. Funding provided by the Foundation should be utilized during the proposed research experience timeframe. Awardees should ensure completion of their experience within the following award period for timely dissemination of outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award period start date: September 1, 2026 • Award period end date: January 31, 2027 <p>This award does not allow for an extension of the research experience timeframe</p>
Final Deliverable	Upon completion of the experience, awardees will prepare and present their research experience through a final poster at an AOTF event during the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference.
Criteria for Evaluation for Application	
Application Review Criteria	<p>Every application is reviewed by experienced researchers from the AOTF's STRIDE committee. They will be using a scoring rubric that addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of goals: How clearly the applicant describes the research experience they are seeking, why they are pursuing it, and how it aligns with their future work in occupational therapy research.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant experience of coursework: Examples of prior research related experiences and/or relevant coursework • Academic benefit: How the proposed research experience and scholarship will support applicant's academic development. • Personal benefit; How this research experience and scholarship will contribute to the applicant's personal growth. • Professional benefit: How this research experience and scholarship will enhance the applicant's professional goals in occupational therapy. • Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion: A clear description of applicant's lived/personal experience reflecting the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion as an occupational therapist and/or an occupational therapy student • Quality of recommendation: The strength and relevance of the applicant's recommendation letter.
Award Requirements	
<p>The Awardee will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and submit an individualized development plan with their mentor prior to the start of the award period, that will focus on developing research experience (i.e., literature review, training in qualitative methods, quantitative methods, etc.) • Participate in person or virtually in weekly/biweekly individual meetings with the mentor, weekly lab meetings and/or training to carry out expected research experience. • At the end of the award period, work with mentor to prepare a poster on their mentored research experience and submit it for feedback from STRIDE committee, prior to attending and presenting it in-person at the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference. • At the end of the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference, send their research fund expense report along with the receipts (of all non-stipend expenditures, per financial audit requirements) and a check for all unused funds to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attn: Jeanne Cooper AOTF, 12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 520 Rockville, MD 20852 • Complete a post-program evaluation/feedback/survey form so that AOTF may assess the program's strengths, impact and areas for growth.
<p>Awardee's Poster Presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and present a poster to be displayed at the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference to showcase their learning as a STRIDE awardee. • Poster guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail your research experience (reporting on completed research project data is not expected nor required) • Include AOTF's logo and QR code of the STRIDE webpage on AOTF's website

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include your mentor's name and role as a collaborator • Include the progress towards your Individualized Development Plan (IDP) (e.g., facilitators, barriers, modifications made, etc.) • Indicate how this experience contributes to your long-term research goals and the steps you plan to take next • Send your poster outlines to research@aotf.org according to the award timeline for STRIDE sub-committee feedback • Incorporate poster feedback from STRIDE sub-committee and send updated draft to mentor for review and final approval • Attend the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference to present your poster. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must be physically present throughout the duration of the poster session to engage with and answer questions regarding your experience. • AOTF will allow awardees to budget up to \$1,400 for conference-related expenses. This includes 1-day of conference registration and meals, travel to conference, and 1 night hotel reservation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To keep costs low and reasonable, awardees must book their flights and hotels at least 30 days prior to the conference's start date. ▪ If an awardee does not need the full \$1,400 for conference-related expenses, they may put these funds towards other AOTF-approved expenses. ▪ A check for all unused funds, along with receipts, must be mailed back to AOTF by the end of the conference date. • The Foundation may reach out to request the awardee's consent to use information from their proposal and/or poster presentation for media announcements and other communications to promote public awareness and demonstrate accountability for funding awards.
<p>The Mentor will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide the mentee towards specific research related skills such as combinations of the following: formulating a research question, research design and methods used to study relevant research questions, development of study protocols, qualitative/quantitative data processing methods related to the research area of the mentee, literature appraisal, review and synthesis, team science skills: collaboration, roles, communication, and negotiation. • Provide instruction, direction, challenge and support to the mentee during the research process by actively engaging with the applicant throughout the research experience (e.g., weekly individual meetings, weekly lab meetings, and training to carry out expected research experience). • Monitor the mentee's research activities and provide feedback (specific weekly/biweekly mentorship plan).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the actual mentorship process relationship and expectations for both mentor/mentee for future career development. • Offer informal guidance and direction regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Future prospects for research engagement for the applicant ○ Networking possibilities ○ Regional & national conference opportunities within your discipline • Mentor the applicant to prepare and present their final poster at an AOTF event during the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference to showcase their work. • If possible, attend the 2027 AOTA INSPIRE conference. • Complete a post-program evaluation form so that we may assess the program's strengths and areas for growth.
Changes in the Research Project and Extensions	
<p>Changes to the Individualized Development Plan (IDP)</p>	<p>The following should be included in your IDP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your goals • Your plan of action • Your timeline for achieving goals <p>The awardee must obtain written approval from the Foundation before making any substantial change to the plan of action, timetable for completion, etc. Requests for changes to the plan and timeline must be made in writing.</p> <p>Awardees should email an updated copy of their Individualized Development Plan to research@aotf.org. The awardee's mentor should sign off on the plan and be cc'd on the email request.</p> <p>The Foundation shall have thirty (30) days to review such requests and respond in writing to the awardee.</p>
<p>Changes to the Budget</p>	<p>The applicant must obtain written approval from the Foundation before making any substantial change in the budget. The Foundation shall have thirty (30) days to review any request for approval of a revised budget. The Foundation may approve or not approve changes at its discretion. If the request is made less than thirty (30) days prior to the next scheduled payment, the monies may be held until approval of any changes is given.</p> <p>In order for a revised budget to be approved, the applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email a copy of their revised budget with changes highlighted to research@aotf.org.
<p>Non-Compliance</p>	<p>Failure on the part of the awardee to comply with the policies governing the grant may be grounds for early termination of the grant and/or denial of any future consideration for funding from the Foundation.</p>

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	<p>Should the awardee encounter problems during the grant period, the Foundation may request additional information from which a decision to continue or to terminate the grant can be made. In cases of early termination of the grant, the awardee will be notified in writing fifteen (15) days before the grant is terminated.</p>
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