PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS

General Grants

New Investigator Grants

Athletic Training Education and Practice Grants

Professional Football Athletic Trainers Society Foundation (PFATS Foundation) Special Request for Proposals

Updated June 2025

PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS
(this applies to all NATA Foundation Grant Proposal Categories except for Doctoral and Master's Grants)

Introduction:
Proposals in all topic areas relevant to athletic training will be considered, with the highest quality of these being chosen. An investigator may be the primary investigator on 2 grant proposals per grant cycle.

Pre-proposal Submission
Applicants interested in applying for a Professional Research Grant must first submit a pre-proposal. After a pre-proposal is accepted, applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal by the February 15 application deadline. Requests to extend this timeline may be considered under special circumstances. Failure to submit a full proposal in the same grant cycle will require that a new pre-proposal be submitted.

Funding Availability for 2025-2026 Cycle

Proposal Category	Total Cost Limit (Direct + Indirect Costs)	Indirect Cost Rate	Study Period
General	$50,000	10%	3 years
New Investigator	$20,000	10%	3 years
Athletic Training Education and Practice Grants	$20,000	10%	3 years
PFATS Foundation Special RFP	$20,000	10%	3 years

The NATA Foundation permits indirect costs up to 10% of the total direct costs.

Eligibility Requirements

General, Athletic Training Education and Practice Grants, PFATS Foundation Special RFP Grant Categories:
Any health care professional, researcher, or educator may apply for a research grant. However, either the Primary Investigator, or Co-Primary Investigator must be a BOC certified athletic trainer, a member of the NATA, and hold an NPI number. The grant applicant must be the individual whose research project is to be supported by the requested funding.

New Investigator Grant Category:
Principal Investigator (PI) must be a current NATA member and BOC certified athletic trainer in good standing, and hold an NPI number.

PI has not received a single research/project grant greater than $50,000 (total costs) (PI or Co-PI). PI must hold the academic rank no higher than assistant professor at the time of original submission or re-submission

Submission Instructions

1. Applications that do not conform to these formatting and content instructions will be returned without review.
2. Please read and follow the enclosed instructions and policy statements concerning research involving human and animal subjects.
3. All documents, disclosures, and signatures related to this proposal are submitted electronically via the NATA Application Manager website. If you are a NATA member, you will use your nata.org login credentials for access to the site. Log in to this site early in the proposal preparation process to familiarize yourself with the format of the required submissions. If you do not have nata.org login credentials follow the instructions on the website landing page.
4. All documents, disclosures, and required signatures must be completed in Application Manager prior to the submission deadline of 11:59 pm central standard time (CST) on February 15.

If you have questions, please contact Research Committee Chair, David Bell, PhD, ATC, FNATA drbell2@wisc.edu.

All grant applications must follow the same format. A research grant application must clearly and succinctly describe the overall project. **The review panel must be able to evaluate a proposal based solely on the materials presented in the proposal and appendices.** Applicants are encouraged to be as precise and detailed as possible.

The NATA Foundation staff and Research Committee Chair, upon receipt of the full grant application, will conduct a mechanical review. This is to confirm that the application includes all requested materials and is presented in the prescribed format. If deficiencies in the proposal are noted, the proposal will be returned to the Principal Investigator without review. The Principal Investigator is permitted to revise and resubmit the proposal so along as the resubmission is received by the application deadline. The prescribed grant application format is as follows:

APPLICATION CHARACTERISTICS

- The NATA Foundation Professional Research Grant Program follows the National Institutes of Health R03 application format.
- Total Page length: 7 page maximum (1-page Specific Aims + 6-page Research Strategy) with no less than 1/2 inch margins and font size $\geq$ 11.
- Proposals that are re-submissions should also include a 1-page Response to Comments
- Researchers may request support for up to a 3-year project performance period and total costs of:
    - General Grant Category: $50,000.
    - New Investigator Grant Category: $20,000.
    - Athletic Training Education and Practice Grant Category: $20,000
    - PFATS Foundation Special RFP: $20,000
- Indirect costs of 10% of direct costs may be requested for any of the above grant categories.
- Preliminary data are not required, but may be included if available.

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

All elements of the submission should be uploaded in one single PDF document.

ABSTRACT (limit to 200 words)

The abstract will be viewed as a stand-alone document (not included in 7 pages maximum). State the rationale, hypotheses and specific aims of the proposal. Describe concisely the research design, methodology, statistical analysis and expected outcomes. This is not included in the 7-page limit.

SPECIFIC AIMS (1 page limit)

Investigators should include: 1) relevant background information, 2) the overall project objective, 3) the specific aim(s) accompanied by hypotheses, if applicable, 4) the general approach to be taken to achieve the aim(s), 5) the project's potential impact on the athletic training profession, and 6) how the project aligns with the NATA Foundation Research Priorities and the Athletic Training Research Agenda.

A well-written specific aims page should provide an overview of the entire project, and clearly establish an Athletic Training related problem, the gap in the knowledge needed to address the problem, and why this project will fill this critical gap. It should explain the overall significance of the project as well as the long-term goal of the application or investigator(s). Ideally, the aims should be related, but not dependent, upon each other. Hypotheses should be included whenever possible, though it is recognized that not all aims will require hypotheses. References to others' ideas or previous research are required to be cited in the specific aims page.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS (1 page limit)

For resubmissions only: A single page response directly addressing comments provided by the review panel from the previous submission. This section should clearly identify the major differences between the current and previous proposals. Paragraphs that contain major revisions should be clearly identified for the reviewers. This may be accomplished with font style (bold or italics) or a solid line in the left margin.

RESEARCH STRATEGY (6-page limit)

Within the Research Strategy, the applicant should structure the application with sections on **Significance**, **Innovation**, and **Approach**. When reviewing, the reviewers will consider all of the criteria below in the determination of scientific and technical merit, and give a separate score for each. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact. For example, a project that by its nature is not innovative may be essential to advance a field.

> **Significance.** Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? Is there a strong scientific premise for the project? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice be improved? How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive this field? How does this project align with the NATA Foundation Research Priorities and the Athletic Training Research Agenda?
>
> **Investigator(s).** Are the PIs, collaborators, and other researchers well suited to the project? Do New Investigators have appropriate experience and training? Do established investigator(s) have an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)? If the project is collaborative or multi-PI, do the investigators have complementary and integrated expertise; are their leadership approach, governance and organizational structure appropriate for the project?
>
> **Innovation.** Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research or clinical Athletic Training practice or education paradigms by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions novel to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions proposed?
>
> **Approach.** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? Have the investigators presented strategies to ensure a robust and unbiased approach, as appropriate for the work proposed? Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and a timeline

for success presented? If the project is in the early stages of development, will the strategy establish feasibility and will particularly risky aspects be managed? Have the investigators presented adequate plans to address relevant biological variables, such as sex, for studies in vertebrate animals or human subjects? If the project involves clinical research, are the plans for 1) protection of human subjects from research risks, and 2) inclusion of minorities and members of both sexes/genders, as well as the inclusion of children, justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed? Are the statistical approaches well explained and adequately powered.

Environment. Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the project proposed? Will the project benefit from unique features of the scientific environment, subject populations, or collaborative arrangements?

APPENDICES

Beyond the Research Strategy, the additional information outlined below should be uploaded as appendices. These pages do not count against the Research Strategy 6 page limit. Additional content addressing the research approach that is included in an appendix will not be considered.

Appendix A: Timeline

Should clearly identify a progressive timeline (including specific dates) for completion of the project. At the time of submission, the timeline should clearly show that the study has NOT already started (i.e. data collection begun). The only exception is that the IRB process may have been initiated, but no subject recruitment or actual data collection should be underway.

Appendix B: Additional Materials

Appendix B should contain materials that support the Research Approach. When available and applicable, the following materials should be presented in this appendix:

1. Informed consent form
2. Survey instrument(s)
3. Interview script(s)
4. Multi-PI and/or multi-site plan
5. Power Analysis and Power Calculation methods and rationale for proposed sample size
6. Measurement capabilities, validity and reliability of instruments (including questionnaires)
7. Additional materials, e.g., Latin Square table or technical drawings, may also be included.

Appendix C: Budget and Budget Justification

This appendix must include the overall budget for the complete project and be formatted using the *Budget Table Template.* Specific notations should be made as to which items will be covered by the funds requested from the NATA Foundation. Following the itemization of the budget, a justification for each budgeted item must be included. Other sponsors (i.e. sources of funding, in-kind or donated items, etc.) and the nature of their support must also be indicated.

The following must be specifically addressed:

Salaries/Wages: All monies that will be used to provide salaries, hourly wages or assistantships for this project. If salary is requested, identify the percentage of effort and base salary used for the calculation. For example: 10% effort and a salary of $40,000 per year = $4,000 requested for salary support. If salary support will be donated, this must be stated along with the effort percentage.

Fringe Benefits: The current percentages and amounts of money that will be used to pay fringe benefits and other payroll expenses for those persons receiving salaries, hourly wages or assistantships.

Equipment & Supplies: This includes all purchases necessary to complete the project that will be acquired through funds provided as part of the grant. Specify the company, model and cost of individual equipment items in the justification. General supplies do not need to be itemized.

Travel Costs: The principal investigator (PI) or a pre-approved co-PI will be contractually obligated to present the results of the study at a future NATA Annual Meeting. Therefore, the presenter's travel cost to and from the convention is a bona fide budget item. Two nights lodging and per diem expense for two days are allowed, in addition to transportation costs. Travel expenses for data collection are also allowable.

Indirect Costs: Grant monies may be used to pay indirect (overhead) costs. The NATA Foundation will pay up to 10% of the direct costs of the project as indirect costs for General and New Investigator categories.

Appendix D: Personnel

This appendix must include a biographical sketch for each individual (key personnel) involved with the project, formatted using the either the *Biosketch Template* or the standard NIH biosketch format. Key personnel typically include all individuals with doctoral or other professional degrees. However, in some projects, this will include individuals at the master's or baccalaureate level, provided they contribute in a substantive way to the project's scientific development or execution. Each completed sketch must not exceed two pages and must include: name; position title; role in proposed project; chronological summaries of educational background and employment history (years, degrees, institutions, departments, positions); chronological listing of all publications of the past three years and representative earlier publications pertinent to the proposed project; research funding history. A template biosketch can be found on the NATA Foundation website.

Appendix E: Facilities

This appendix will contain a description of the facilities that are currently available for the completion of the project. If a facility (*e.g.*, laboratory, high school, clinic, etc.) will be used that is not controlled directly by the unit employing the Principal Investigator, a letter from the facility's director, indicating that the facility will be available for the duration of the study, must be included.

Appendix F: Articles and/or additional information (optional)

This appendix may include copies of published or in-press manuscripts (maximum of three) that support the work proposed in this application. This section may include additional information or materials that the Principal Investigator wishes to provide in support of the grant proposal.

Appendix G: References

Provide complete bibliographic information for references cited in this proposal. The use of AMA style is recommended.

BUDGET TEMPLATE

The budget table template below is to be used with the grant application. Please modify as needed to address the needs of each application, but the overall categories and annual categorization should remain.

Personnel	Base Salary	Total Effort	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Researcher 1	$ 75,000	5%	$ 3,750	$ 3,750		$ 7,500
Researcher 2	$ 68,000	5%	$ 3,400	$ 3,400		$ 6,800
Researcher 3	$ 92,000	5%	$ 4,600	$ 4,600		$ 9,200
Hourly support	$10/hour	50hours	$ 500	$ 500		$ 1,000
Consultant			$ 1,000	$ 1,000		$ 2,000
Fringe						
Researcher 1		30%	$ 1,125	$ 1,125		$ 2,250
Researcher 2		30%	$ 1,020	$ 1,020		$ 2,040
Researcher 3		30%	$ 1,380	$ 1,380		$ 2,760
Other Costs						
Supplies			$ 1,200	$ 1,200		$ 2,400
Stipends (50 participants)	$25 each		$ 1,250	$ 1,250		$ 2,500
Travel - NATA meeting				$ 2,500		
Direct Costs			$ 19,225	$ 21,725		$ 40,950
Indirect Costs		10%	$ 1,923	$ 2,173		$ 4,095
TOTAL			$ 21,148	$ 23,898		$ 45,045

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
(DO NOT EXCEED TWO PAGES)

NAME	POSITION TITLE
Role in Proposed Project	

EDUCATION/TRAINING (*Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, and include*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE *(if applicable)*	YEAR(s)	FIELD OF STUDY

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

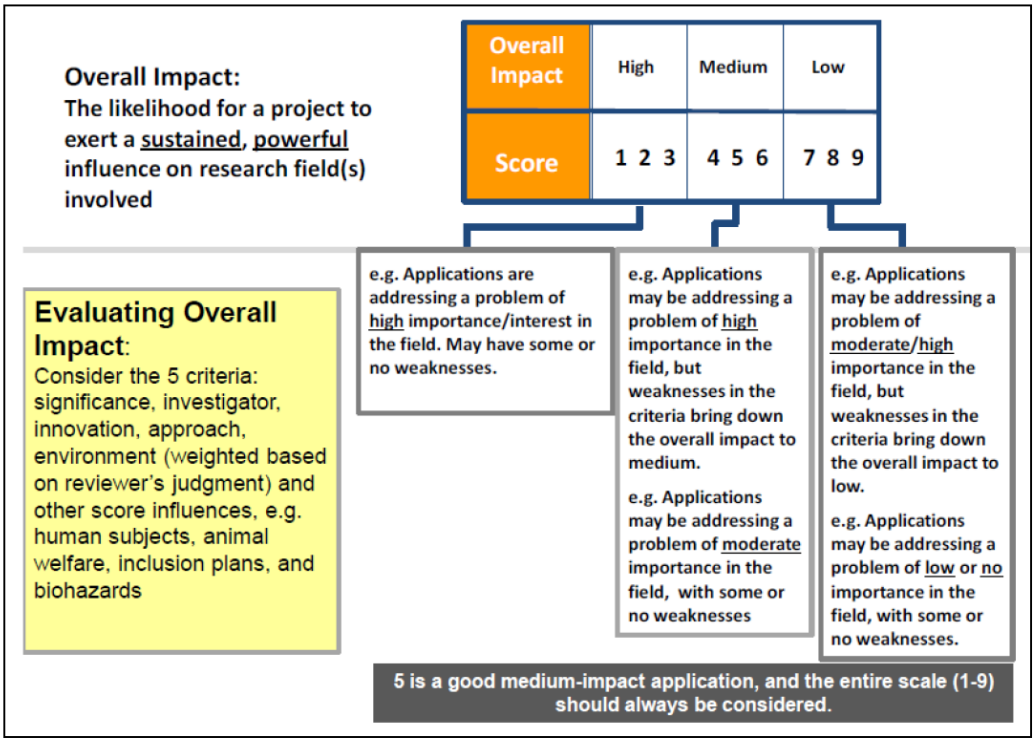
PUBLICATIONS SUPPORTING PROPOSED WORK

FUNDING HISTORY

SCORING

NATA Foundation grant applications are scored using the NIH scoring system, a 9-point rating scale (1 = exceptional; 9 = poor) in whole numbers (no decimals) for each section (ie Significance, Innovation, etc) and Overall Impact for all applications. Scores of 1 or 9 will be used less frequently than the other scores, while 5 is for a good medium-impact application and considered an average score. The Overall Impact score is based on the reviewer's overall impression of the application as they see fit. Note that an application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact and thus, deserve a high impact score. See the figure below for an explanation of scoring.

Each grant application will be reviewed by three qualified individuals. Prior to the Foundation meeting review, the Overall Impact scores are averaged and rank ordered. The top 50% of applications will be discussed with score adjustments made as deemed appropriate. Recommendations for funding are based on the rank order of the final Overall Impact scores and funding priorities.



Overall Impact or Criterion Strength	Score	Descriptor
High	1	Exceptional
	2	Outstanding
	3	Excellent
Medium	4	Very Good
	5	Good
	6	Satisfactory
Low	7	Fair
	8	Marginal
	9	Poor