ORGANIZATION FOR AUTISM RESEARCH
"Research that helps families today."

2019 APPLIED RESEARCH COMPETITION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Pre-proposals due March 25, 2019

1. Background. The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) seeks proposals for its 2019 Applied Research Competition. Through this competition, OAR intends to promote evidence-based practices delivered from research in the following areas:

- The analysis, evaluation, or comparison of current models of assessment, intervention, or systems of service delivery, including policy analysis
- Applied aspects of educational, behavioral, or social/communicative intervention
- Effective intervention across the lifespan for individuals considered to be severely impacted by autism
- Adult issues such as continuing education, employment, residential supports, sexuality instruction, quality-of-life determinants, and "later intervention"
- Issues related to family support, social and community integration, assessment and intervention with challenging behavior, and the use of technology in support of learners with ASD

2. Objective. OAR seeks to fund studies that expand the body of knowledge related to autism intervention and treatment, produce practical and clearly objective results, have the potential to impact public policy, and provide outcomes that offer to enhance quality of life for persons with autism and their families. While applicants are always free to submit on any relevant area of research or intervention, this year, OAR is placing an emphasis on research that addresses the following targeted areas:
- Community-Based Assessment and Intervention for Challenging Behavior
- Effectiveness of Augmentative Communication Systems
- Improving Access to and Effectiveness of Existing Systems and Services
- Integrated Employment
- Intersectionality, Equity and Diversity
- Mental Health Assessment and Intervention
- Mid-life and Older Adults
- Residential/Community Services and Supports

While there is no guarantee of funding, studies that address these topics will receive additional scoring credit during the review process. Studies may range from one to two years.

3. Eligibility. International researchers are eligible to apply. At least one member of the research team must hold a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent degree and maintain a faculty position or equivalent at a college, university, medical school, or other research facility.

4. <u>Evaluation Criteria</u>. OAR's Scientific Council and adjunct review panel will evaluate the proposals OAR receives for scientific and technical merit. Review criteria for the evaluation include:

- **Significance** – Does the study address an important problem or address the needs of a currently underserved cohort of individuals? How will the study advance scientific knowledge in the field? Can the outcomes be readily translated in support of evidence-based practice? Does it have the potential to impact public policy?
- **Approach** - Are the concepts, design, methods, and analyses adequate and appropriate? Are potentially confounding variables accounted for?
- **Innovation** - Does the project employ novel approaches or methods? Are its aims original? Does it have the potential to advance our understanding of ASD?
- **Investigator** - Is the investigator and/or research team appropriately trained and well-suited to carry out the research?
- **Environment** - Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to its probability of success? Does the work take advantage of any unique features of the environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements?
- **Practical relevance -** How relevant is the study and its outcomes to the everyday challenges posed by autism? Does it offer practical findings? Are they generalizable beyond the research setting? Can key components be readily replicated?

OAR's Board of Directors makes grant awards based on these evaluations and the recommendations of the Scientific Council. OAR places special emphasis on studies that will likely produce outcomes that are meaningful to the autism community and have potentially broad application to the practical challenges autism presents.

5. <u>Competition.</u> With this year's competition, OAR will consider awarding up to 8 grant awards for $40,000 each. pre-proposals are due by March 25, 2019. In June, OAR will invite selected applicants to submit full proposals, complete the final review in November, and announce grant recipients in December. OAR will notify all applicants of their status and offer feedback from the review panel after each round of the competition.

6. <u>Information for All Applicants on Uses of OAR Funds</u>. Although OAR does not require a budget for the initial application (preproposal), questions regarding OAR's funding policies often arise when prospective researchers initiate a grant proposal. All applicants should review OAR's funding guidelines before applying for a grant. The guidelines are posted on OAR's website. Studies designed to evaluate a potentially commercial product must include a strategic marketing plan for the product(s) and an acknowledgment that OAR will be reimbursed from the profits based upon a mutually agreed reimbursement plan.

7. <u>Overview</u>. The application and review process will proceed in two distinct phases: (1) open application and initial review and (2) invited proposals for final review.

   a. **<u>Open Application and Initial Review</u>**
   During this period, OAR will accept pre-proposals prepared in accordance with the following guidelines. Interested researchers must submit pre-proposals via OAR's online application no

later than **Monday, March 25, 2019 at 11:59pm EST**. Screening and review will begin immediately following the closing date. The objective of the initial review process is to identify those proposed studies which best meet the criteria described above; those studies will then advance to the full proposal phase. OAR will notify all applicants of the results by June 2019.

b. <u>Final Review</u>
Once the initial review is complete, OAR will invite those researchers whose pre-proposals are selected to submit full proposals for further review. The closing date for full proposals is Monday, **August 5, 2019.**

Following a preliminary peer review and scoring, OAR's Scientific Council will conduct the final review at its annual meeting in November. OAR's Board of Directors will meet at the same time, receive the report and recommendations of the Scientific Council, and approve the grant awards. **OAR will announce awardees in early December 2019; funding will begin on or after January 1, 2020.**

8. <u>Online Application Process</u>. This application is available online at https://researchautism.org/research-grants/apply-for-a-grant/applied-research/. Due to the increasing number of applications OAR receives each year, compliance with all administrative requirements is essential. For a more detailed description of what is required in the preproposal, including character limits per section, please refer to the online application.

<u>Overview of the Preproposal</u>. The preproposal is a scaled-down version of the full proposal and focuses primarily on the study's topic, design, methodology, and expected outcomes.

a) **<u>Cover Letter</u>**. Self-explanatory.

b) **<u>Preproposal</u>.** The preproposal includes the following items/areas:

- o Project Title
- o Background (10,000 character limit)*
- o Methodology (5,000 character limit)
- o Evaluation/Data Analysis (5,000 character limit)
- o Outcome Recommendations (3,000 character limit)
- o Biographical Information

All character limits include spaces

For more information, contact OAR's Research and Programs Director at research@researchautism.org or 703-243-9762.