



National  
**Eczema**  
Association

## RESEARCH GRANTS – CONDITIONS OF AWARD

*Effective January 2023*

E-mail: [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org)

**OUR VISION:**

A world without eczema

**OUR MISSION:**

NEA is the driving force for an eczema community fueled by knowledge, strengthened through collective action and propelled by the promise for a better future.

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## OVERVIEW

The National Eczema Association (NEA) has been funding peer-reviewed research since 2004 as the largest private non-profit source of eczema research support. We provide emerging and established scientific investigators with highly sought-after grants to explore new, high-impact avenues in adult and pediatric eczema research. Ideally, all awards will generate data that can support a much larger grant proposal.

- **Engagement Research Grant**  
Small research grants for emerging investigators intended to explore a new research concept, pilot a new experiment or undertaken a novel or secondary data analysis.
- **Childhood Eczema Challenge Grant**  
This collaborative grant with the Pediatric Dermatology Research Alliance supports targeted clinical research investigations focused on pediatric eczema. This award is intended to stimulate early and mid-career scientists as they seek to build and sustain careers as research investigators and future thought leaders within this critical field of study.
- **Catalyst Research Grant**  
Designed to support talented early career scientists on the path toward becoming the next generation of eczema thought leaders by supporting hypothesis-driven research projects.
- **Spotlight Research Grant**  
This award is intended to promote research in topic areas of special interest that relate to NEA's advancement of our overall research priorities for eczema. The availability of this grant category will be determined on an annual basis; topics of special interest may vary.
- **Eczema Champion Research Grant**  
Encourages proven researchers to continue research on emerging or ongoing challenges in eczema or bring their expertise to the field of eczema.
- **Impact Research Grant**  
Encourages research collaboration across departments and institutions to foster multidisciplinary insights in the science and treatment of eczema.

Proposals submitted for consideration of a NEA grant should address one or more of the below research priorities:

- Cutting Edge Basic & Translational Science
- Eczema Heterogeneity: Novel Insights



- Innovations in Clinical Practice & Care
- Understanding & Alleviating Disease Burden
- Eczema Prevention

This document outlines information on the NEA grant submission and peer review process, and the policies and procedures for award administration during and after the grant period.

Please direct any additional questions not covered in this document to: [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org).

## NEA RESEARCH AWARDS ELIGIBILITY & BUDGET RESTRICTIONS

### Engagement Research Grants

#### Eligibility

Assistant Professors (or equivalent) without current or previous NIH R funding as a Senior or Co-PI, Post-doctoral fellows, Medical Residents or Fellows, Research Associates, Nurse Practitioners/Physician Assistants, Medical and Pre-Doctoral students/fellows are eligible to apply. Previous recipients of NEA research grants still meeting these eligibility criteria may apply.

The applicant must be personally and actively responsible for the conduct of the proposed research. The applicant need not be a United States citizen and the research need not take place in the United States.

#### Budget

Applicants may request up to \$5,000 (USD, direct costs only). This is a 1-year non-renewable grant. Indirect costs are not allowed.

Grant funds may not be used for salary, stipend, training experiences, equipment over \$1,000 (including computer hardware or software), or travel/conference-related expenses.

### Childhood Eczema Challenge Grant

#### Eligibility

Early and mid-career investigators (Associate Professor level or below and within 15 years of finishing training) are eligible to apply. Applicants need not be trained in pediatric dermatology but must hold the degree of MD and/or PhD (or equivalent) and be eligible to apply for grants under the guidelines of their host institution. Applications may be submitted by either a single investigator or multiple investigators at multiple institutions. Applicants need not be United States citizens and the research need not be conducted in the United States. Applicants may not hold current R-level funding from NIH (or equivalent) as PI or Co-PI, however recipients of past or current NEA and/or PeDRA grants are eligible to apply.



### Budget

Applicants may request up to \$50,000 (USD, direct costs only). Indirect costs are not allowed. Salary and fringe benefit support are allowed. Staff salary support should be commensurate with the percent effort dedicated to the project and explained in the budget justification. PI salary support must adhere to the current allowable NIH salary cap: [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm).

### **Catalyst Research Grants**

#### Eligibility

Assistant Professors (or equivalent) without current or previous NIH R funding as a Senior or Co-PI, Post-doctoral fellows, Medical Residents or Fellows, Research Associates, and Nurse Practitioners/Physician Assistants are eligible to apply. Previous recipients of NEA research grant still meeting these eligibility criteria may apply.

The applicant must be personally and actively responsible for the conduct of the proposed research. The applicant need not be a United States citizen and the research need not take place in the United States.

#### Budget

Applicants may request up to \$50,000 (USD, direct costs only). This is a 1-year non-renewable grant. Indirect costs are not allowed.

Salary/fringe benefit support for Assistant Professors (or equivalent) should be commensurate with the percent effort dedicated to the project, using the current allowable NIH salary cap:

[https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm)

For all other applicants, a maximal 50% effort with associated salary/fringe is allowable for the PI role. Additional research staff support should also be commensurate with project percent effort.

### **Spotlight Research Grant**

#### Eligibility

Assistant Professors (or equivalent) and above, post-doctoral fellows, Medical Residents or Fellows, Research Associates, and Nurse Practitioners are eligible to apply.

The principal investigator must be personally and actively responsible for the conduct of the proposed research and eligible to apply for research grants under the guidelines of the applicant's host institution. The principal investigator need not be a United States citizen and the research need not take place in the United States.

#### Budget

Applicants may request up to \$60,000 (USD; direct costs only). Indirect costs are not allowed on NEA research awards.



Salary/fringe benefit support for the principal investigator should be commensurate with the percent effort dedicated to the project, using the current allowable NIH salary cap:

[https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm)

Additional research staff support should also be commensurate with project percent effort and is unrestricted, except for research fellows which is limited to 50% effort.

### **Eczema Champion Research Grants**

#### Eligibility

Associate Professors and above that have or have had national-level funding as a principal investigator (or Co-PI) within the past 5 years on an R01 grant or its equivalent (e.g., VA Merit Award, NSF grant, NIH program project or cooperative grant, PCORI grant or similar).

Previous recipients of NEA Catalyst Research Grants, and other NEA Research Grants (2018 and prior) are also eligible to apply provided the following criteria are met:

- The NEA research grant has been completed and final scientific and financial reports have been received by NEA.
- At least (1) one peer-reviewed publication has been published or accepted for publication from the NEA-supported research.

The principal investigator must be personally and actively responsible for the conduct of the proposed research, and eligible to apply for research grants under the guidelines of the applicant's host institution. The principal investigator need not be a United States citizen and the research need not take place in the United States.

#### Budget

Applicants may request up to \$100,000 (USD, direct costs only). This is a 1-year grant with the option to undergo a competitive renewal for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year of funding. Indirect costs are not allowed.

PI salary/fringe benefit support should be commensurate with the percent effort dedicated to the project, using the current allowable NIH salary cap:

[https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm)

Additional research staff support should also be commensurate with project percent effort and is unrestricted, except for research fellows which is limited to 50% effort.

### **Impact Research Grants**

#### Eligibility

This is a multiple Principal Investigator award. Co-Principal Investigators that are Associate Professors and above that have or have had national-level funding as a principal investigator (or Co-PI) within the past 5 years on an R01 grant or its equivalent (e.g., VA Merit Award, NSF grant, NIH program project or



cooperative grant, PCORI grant or similar). Co-Principal investigators must be from different academic/research institutions. Applications with representation of different academic departments is also strongly encouraged.

Previous recipients of NEA Catalyst and Eczema Champion Research Grants, and other NEA Research Grants (2018 and prior) are also eligible to apply provided the following criteria are met:

- The NEA research grant has been completed and final scientific and financial reports have been received by NEA.
- At least (1) one peer-reviewed publication has been published or accepted for publication from the NEA-supported research.

Each principal investigator must be personally and actively responsible for the conduct of the proposed research, and eligible to apply for research grants under the guidelines of the applicant's host institution. The principal investigator need not be a United States citizen and the research need not take place in the United States. The PI team will determine which organization will receive funding and serve as the fiscal agent for the grant.

#### Budget

Applicants may request up to \$150,000 (USD, direct costs only). This is a 1-year grant with the option to undergo a competitive renewal for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year of funding. Indirect costs are not allowed.

Co-PI salary/fringe benefit support should be commensurate with the percent effort dedicated to the project, using the current allowable NIH salary cap:

[https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm)

Additional research staff support should also be commensurate with project percent effort and is unrestricted, except for research fellows which is limited to 50% effort.

### **GRANT SUBMISSION**

Applications for NEA grants are available on the NEA website:

- Engagement
- Childhood Eczema Challenge Grant
- Catalyst
- Spotlight
- Eczema Champion
- Impact

The available number of grants and the corresponding application deadlines will be posted to the NEA website annually each May. Applications should be submitted as a single Word or PDF document to [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org). An email confirming application receipt will be issued.

### **Award Period**

Approved research projects are expected to begin on January 1. Requests to amend this start date must be submitted via email to [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org). Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed.

### **Concurrent Awards**

Applicants may submit simultaneous separate proposals for NEA Research Grants for which they are eligible, however successful applicants will only receive funding for one NEA award during any funding cycle. Successful applicants may also hold concurrent NEA awards provided their awards are in good standing and have complied with all reporting requirements.

### **Salary Support**

Principal Investigator (PI) salary/fringe benefits are permitted on NEA awards, except for Engagement Grant applications. Budget justifications must include the percent effort associated with the requested salary support. Awards are not meant to be a major source of a PI's salary.

Salary requests for Assistant Professors and above should not exceed the current allowable NIH salary cap: [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap\\_summary.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/salcap_summary.htm). For Catalyst grants, PI applicants other than Assistant Professors, a maximal 50% effort with associated salary/fringe is allowable.

Research staff support for fellows is limited to a maximum of 50% effort on any NEA grant; other staffing is unlimited in effort. Stipend support for medical student/graduate student/assistants is not permitted on NEA research grants.

### **Equipment**

Requests for major equipment purchases (over \$5,000/unit) are not generally considered. Equipment purchased using a NEA award is for the use of the PI and his/her collaborators. Title to equipment shall be vested in the institution with which the PI is associated. In the event NEA authorizes the transfer of a grant to another institution, equipment necessary for continuation of the research project purchased with the grant funds may be transferred to the new institution. Title to such equipment shall be vested in the new institution.

### **NEA Study Recruitment Services**

If NEA recruitment support is requested for the proposed research, cost for these services must be included in grant budgets. Please contact [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org) in advance of grant submission to determine the appropriate amount to include in the submitted budget.

## REVIEW PROCESS

Applications received by the yearly deadlines will initially be reviewed for completeness, meeting of eligibility criteria, and alignment with NEA's research priorities. Incomplete or ineligible applications will be returned to the submitter without further review.

Submitted applications that are complete and meet all eligibility criteria will undergo Committee peer review using current National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant scoring criteria (e.g., significance, approach, innovation, investigator, environment), on a scale of 1 (highest) to 9 (lowest).

Direct costs will be reviewed for consistency with the proposed methods and specific aims and overlap with any current or pending funding project support from other entities. Budgetary adjustments may be made by the review panel or NEA.

Recommended grants from the peer review process are put forward for NEA Board of Directors approval.

An award or declination letter will be sent to the applicant advising him/her of funding or non-funding. A summary of the peer review committee's deliberations will be provided to the applicant. Applications that are not funded may be revised and resubmitted in the next funding cycle. Resubmitted applications will require the same level of detail and compete on an equal basis with all other new applications.

For successful awards, an award agreement will be sent via e-mail for execution by the PI and the sponsoring institution. Awards funded by NEA begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> (except in pre-arranged instances.) Please refer to the award letter for the starting date and relevant funding disbursement contingencies.

## POST-AWARD POLICIES

### Disbursement of Funds

Upon receipt of an executed grant agreement, funds will be disbursed by NEA directly to the sponsoring institution (i.e., the named institutional fiscal officer designated in the application), which in turn will be responsible for payment to the awardee.

For Childhood Eczema Challenge, Catalyst, Spotlight Research, Eczema Champion and Impact grant awards, NEA remits the full grant amount over three (3) approximately equal installments coincident with the grant start date, and receipt and approval of Interim and Final Reports. For Engagement grants, full disbursement of the grant funds will be made at the onset of the grant award period.



Principal Investigators should coordinate with their host institutions and any Co-Investigators to ensure that payment is received and distributed as necessary.

### **Research Assurance Forms**

NEA will not support research involving human subjects or animals without prior receipt of Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval documentation.

A copy of a current approval letter must be on file with NEA for the duration of the research award. Failure to meet this requirement will result in withholding of funds and possible termination of the award.

### **Use of Funds**

Funds may not be transferred to other accounts, individuals, or used for any other research purpose. Transfers between budget categories in the approved NEA research grant may be made at the discretion of the sponsoring institution except for equipment, travel, or other items not specifically identified in the approved budget in excess of \$1,000, for which pre-approval in writing by NEA must be obtained.

Unless prior approval has been obtained from NEA, expenditures for these items are likely to be disallowed and are recoverable by NEA.

### **Research and Financial Reports**

Standard forms to facilitate the submission of research and financial reports are available on the NEA website. Instructions and due dates for all reports will be emailed to the grantee and the named administrative official during and prior to the end of the award.

Interim Report: A report of scientific progress for Childhood Eczema Challenge, Catalyst, Spotlight, Eczema Champion and Impact research projects is due within thirty (30) days of the mid-point of the grant award period. Failure to meet this requirement will result in withholding of the 2<sup>nd</sup> installment of grant funds until the report is submitted and may result in early termination. An additional interim report may be requested at NEA's discretion based on reported progress toward project specific aims. Interim reports are not required for Engagement grant projects.

Final Report: A final scientific report for all research projects is due no later than thirty (30) days after termination of the grant award period. This report additionally should include reprints or preprints of submitted abstracts or articles related to results accomplished under the grant. Manuscripts will be respected as privileged communications. Failure to submit a final report will result in withholding of the final installment of grant funds for Childhood Eczema Challenge, Catalyst, Spotlight, Eczema Champion and Impact awards until the report is submitted, and potential forfeiture of remaining funds. Investigators who fail to comply with final report submission

will also not be permitted to apply to NEA for future research grant support. A final report for Engagement awards is due no later than thirty (30) days after the noted award end date.

Financial Report: A full account of all expenses made in connection with the research grant is due no later than sixty (60) days after sponsoring institution receipt of the final grant payment installment from NEA for Childhood Eczema Challenge, Catalyst, Spotlight, Eczema Champion and Impact Awards. A final financial report for Engagement awards is due no later than 60 days after the noted award end date. Unexpended funds remaining at the end of the grant must be returned to NEA. NEA is not responsible for over-expenditures of grants.

### **No-Cost Extension**

One (1) extension of the grant term without additional funds may be approved for Childhood Eczema Challenge, Catalyst, Spotlight, Eczema Champion and Impact awards when requested and justified in writing to NEA at [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org). Extensions of term may be requested for either six (6) or twelve (12) months. Engagement awards are not eligible for no-cost extensions.

A request for an extension must include: 1) a report of the research progress, and 2) the amount of money to be carried into the extension period, including a statement of why funds were not used in the original grant period. A request for an extension must be made at least thirty (30) days before the termination date of a grant.

The decision to grant an extension will be at the sole discretion of NEA.

### **Early Termination of Award**

Grounds for early termination of an award will be deemed to exist:

- 1) if the awardee requests, in writing, that the award be terminated for any reason;
- 2) if the awardee is unable to carry out the research or training at the original institution;
- 3) if the sponsoring institution requests in writing that the award be terminated because of the awardee's termination of his/her academic appointment;
- 4) if the awardee changes any significant aspect of the award from that which was originally approved by NEA, such as specific aims;
- 5) if research progress is considered unsatisfactory after evaluation of an interim report or due to non-receipt of an interim report;
- 6) lapses in IRB or IACUC approval; or,
- 7) if the awardee is found by an institutional investigation to have committed scientific misconduct or fraud.

Final scientific and financial reports resulting from early termination are due to NEA within thirty (30) days of the termination date along with any unused portion of grant award funds. Any remaining grant funds yet to be disbursed are forfeited.

### **Change of Institution – Grant Transfer**

Recipients of Childhood Eczema Challenge, Catalyst, Spotlight, Eczema Champion and Impact awards may request the transfer of their grant from one institution to another. Requests for transfer must be requested in writing to [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org) and will be considered on a case-by-case basis after full details of the new research environment have been provided. NEA may approve such transfers or terminate the award and request for the remaining award balance be returned. Engagement awards are not eligible for institutional transfer.

Additional transfer documentation will be required including:

- Written authorization from administrative official at the new institution accepting the award
- Letter of release from present institution relinquishing the award
- Updated Address of PI and Organization
- Signature page with PI and Institutional Official Signatures
- Description of any changes to the original protocol
- Updated IRB/IACUC forms, as applicable
- A financial accounting from the present institution within 30 days of the transfer

An official letter will be sent to the awardee as soon as all transactions concerning an approved transfer have been completed. Payments to the new institution will not be sent until a final accounting and a check for any unexpended funds have been received from the original institution and the transfer has been approved by NEA.

### **Publication and Media Acknowledgements**

NEA expects that the results of supported research will be published in appropriate peer-reviewed scientific and/or medical journals. Open-access of publication is encouraged. The responsibility for publication lies with the PI. NEA must be acknowledged in all dissemination materials related to research supported in full or in part by NEA. The following acknowledgment, or its equivalent, should be used: "This investigation was supported (in part) by a research grant from the National Eczema Association <<insert NEA grant ID>>", or "<<Principal Investigator Name>> is a recipient of a research award from the National Eczema Association".

As soon as a manuscript is accepted for publication, a copy of it, with the name of the journal and the expected date of publication, should be sent by email to NEA at [grants@nationaleczema.org](mailto:grants@nationaleczema.org).

Awardees are required to update NEA with any additional publications that occur after the termination of the award. NEA should also be notified if a press release from the institution or journal is being prepared for distribution so that we can answer inquiries that may be directed to us because of media coverage, as well as develop our own communications plan. Manuscripts will be respected as privileged communications.

## LEGAL POLICIES

### **Liability/Limitation on Damages/Indemnification**

- a) NEA shall have no liability to the grantee or the grantee's institution, affiliates, officers, directors, trustees, employees, agents, or subgrantees for any claim, loss, damage, or injury incurred during the performance of the agreement and in connection therewith, unless due to the intentional misconduct or gross negligence of NEA.
- b) NEA shall not be liable to grantee with respect to any subject matter of this agreement for any special, indirect, incidental, consequential, punitive damages, or lost profits, under any contract, negligence, strict liability or other legal or equitable theory.

Grantee and its institution will indemnify, hold harmless, and defend NEA from and against all claims, demands, actions, liabilities, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees and litigation costs) resulting therefrom, or arising out of, or related to, the execution of this agreement by the grantee, but only in proportion to and to the extent such claims, demands, actions, liabilities, damages, and expenses are caused by or result from negligent or intentional acts or omissions of Grantee. To the best of its knowledge after reasonable inquiry, at the date of signature of the present Agreement, grantee is not aware that its work and deliverables under this agreement will infringe or otherwise violate intellectual property rights of any third party.

### **Inventions/Intellectual Property**

Recipients of NEA research grants shall adhere to the intellectual property policies of the grantee institution, including, if required, the assignment to the grantee institution of title in any invention work to which they have contributed. If any Intellectual Property is generated as a result of this Award, it will remain the property of the Grantee Institution and co-owners.

All inventions made with the support, in whole or in part, with research grants from NEA shall be reported by the grantee institution as part of the Final Scientific Report in confidence to NEA.