

## Pediatric Research Alliance 2026 Pilots: FAQ

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### ELIGIBILITY

**Q. What are the GRA-affiliated research institutions?**

A. Emory University, Georgia Tech, Georgia State, University of Georgia, Medical College of Georgia, Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse School of Medicine, Mercer University, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Q. How can I be sure I am meeting all the eligibility requirements in terms of engaging a researcher from the Emory Department of Pediatrics and/or Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta?**

A. All applications must include measurable effort from at least one researcher and/or clinician team member who is on the professional staff at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta or who is a primary faculty member in the Emory Department of Pediatrics. Adjunct appointments, secondary appointments, and non-paid appointments at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta or in the Department of Pediatrics do not meet this criterion. **IMPORTANT: While a co-investigator may meet this requirement on center applications, the principal investigator on all Junior Faculty Focused applications MUST be on the professional staff at Children’s or have a primary faculty appointment in the Emory Department of Pediatrics. All faculty employed by the Pediatric Institute are eligible to apply. Arrangements can be made for researchers who have academic appointments in depts other than DOP, aren't members of Peds Institute, and have clinical responsibilities at Children's on a case-by-case basis.** For questions and clarifications, please contact [Stacy Heilman](#).

**Q. What does it mean to be on the professional staff of Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA)?**

A. According to CHOA’s Professional Staff Organization Manual, professional staff means “all physicians, dentists, and psychologists who are granted appointment to the Children’s Professional Staff and clinical privileges to treat patients at or through any of the components of Children’s.” A psychologist is “a doctor of psychology (“PhD” or “PsyD”) licensed to practice in the State of Georgia.”

**Q. Are staff scientists eligible to apply for these grants?**

A. Yes, staff scientists are eligible to apply based on the [School of Medicine PI Eligibility Policy](#), which states: “All levels in the Staff Scientists job series, with the approval of his/her Faculty supervisor and Department Chair, may submit proposals. The supervisor will be responsible for providing space in his/her laboratory for the conduct of the research described in the Scientist’s grant application and provide a letter outlining the commitment...” The application form includes space for staff scientists to upload this faculty supervisor approval letter.

**Q. Are exceptions ever made to the requirement to have measurable effort from at least one researcher and/or clinician team member who is on the professional staff at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta or who is a primary faculty member in the Emory Department of Pediatrics?**

A. In rare circumstances, an exception to this rule has been granted to accommodate, for example, CHOA Research Scholars or individuals recruited by CHOA or the Emory Department of Pediatrics. If you do not

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meet this criterion but believe you may qualify to apply for a pilot grant, please email your request with written justification to [Stacy Heilman](#) (cc: Julie Hawk) no later than June 1, 2025

**Q. If I received a pediatric research center pilot in the past, am I eligible to receive another pilot in 2025?**

A. Yes, if you are in compliance with the requirements of your past pilot award. All center pilots awarded in 2011 or later required the PI to submit a proposal for extramural funding within one year of the end date of the pilot project. Unless no cost extensions (NCEs) were granted, pilots awarded between 2012 and 2023 should have concluded by 6/30/2023 and have submitted an extramural research proposal by 6/30/2024. If you received a pilot between 2012 and 2023 and would like to apply for a 2025 pilot but are not sure if you are in compliance, please contact Julie Hawk to confirm your eligibility. To request a waiver of this extramural funding application requirement, please [click here](#).

**Q. What happens if I receive a pilot but do not apply for extramural funding within one year of the end date of the pilot project?**

A. Failure to apply for extramural funding within one year of the end date of your pilot project will make you ineligible to receive any additional pilot funding from the Pediatric Research Alliance and may make you ineligible to receive core subsidies. Center directors and the Research Operations Council (ROC) will consider requests for a waiver or extension of this requirement on a case-by-case basis. To request a waiver of the extramural funding application requirement, please [click here](#).

**Q. How many faculty level investigators must be engaged in the research project proposed?**

A. All pilot applications must involve at least two faculty level investigators, each of whom makes a meaningful contribution to the research project. This may be accomplished through a PI and co-investigator(s) arrangement or multiple-PI arrangement: whichever makes the most sense for the project proposed. **On Junior Faculty Focused applications, the mentor fulfills the requirement for a second researcher.**

**Q. Can a post-doc be a PI on a pilot?**

A. A post-doc cannot be a PI on a pilot because a post-doc cannot fulfill the requirement to submit an extramural research proposal within one year of the end date of the pilot.

**Q. Where can I find more details regarding new investigator status?**

A. Please visit the NIH [New and Early Stage Investigator page](#).

### EFFORT & BUDGET

**Q. What are the most common budget mistakes seen on pilot applications?**

- A.
- Not using the required budget templates.
  - Not completing all fields on the required budget templates (e.g. PI name and project title).
  - Allocating more than 25% of the total budget towards PI salary.
  - Allocating more than \$1,500 towards travel.

**Q. Are there any restrictions on the use of funds?**

- A. Funds may not be used for:
- Computers
  - General electronics, including smartphones and tablets
  - Software
  - Equipment

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- Service contracts
- Food

In addition to the above list of prohibited budget items:

- The maximum amount that may be applied toward PI salary plus fringe is 25% of the total budget. In a \$50,000 budget, only \$12,500 may be allocated to PI salary/fringe.
- A maximum of \$1,500 may be applied to travel, including registration fees, airfare, hotels and printing.
- Funds may not be used to build infrastructure, including to build or purchase databases unless the application specifically states that the project will be collecting preliminary data for a subsequent extramural grant application.

Computers may be considered with strong justification that they will be used exclusively for this project and a description of what will happen to the computer once the pilot study is over. Any approved computer purchases will be owned by Emory University.

Re-budgeting of any category by 25% or more will need approval from the center director or program officer.

**Q. Are any other funds available to help with publication costs?**

A. Yes. Emory University's Open Access Publishing Fund provides funds to make it easier for Emory authors to publish in open access (OA) journals and books when no alternative funding is available. The goal is to foster the exploration of new and innovative publishing models across research communities. [Please click here for more information.](#)

**Q. What format should I use for my budget?**

A. You must use the budget templates provided in the RFA. These templates include separate tabs for each institution/consortium.

**Q. What is the time frame for these grants?**

A. All pilots will have a project period of October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026.

Funds not spent by the end of the project period will be returned to the Pediatric Research Alliance. If a pilot grant recipient discontinues his/her faculty appointment during the funded period, any unspent funds will be returned to the Pediatric Research Alliance.

**Q. Are no cost extensions (NCEs) allowed?**

A. One NCE may be requested per pilot project. The NCE must be requested with written justification at least 60 days before the project end date. NCEs will be reviewed and approved at the discretion of the center director and research financial manager on a case-by-case basis. Only one NCE (maximum of 12 months) may be requested.

**Q. What information do I need to provide for each consortium?**

A. If your project includes costs at more than one institution, the costs for each institution must be reflected in a separate budget. In addition, a separate statement of work for each consortium site must be included with the application. It is the PI's responsibility to ensure that costs for each consortium are captured accurately and that all calculations, including fringe, are correct. Please note that Children's Healthcare of Atlanta costs are separate from Emory University costs and should be reflected in a separate consortium budget and statement of work.

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**Q. Is a minimum required effort for PIs?**

A. *This answer is institution specific:*

- Emory applicants have no minimum effort requirement.
- GA Tech applicants must request at least 1% effort in accordance with GA Tech's Minimum Effort Policy.

**Q. What is Georgia Tech's Minimum Effort Policy?**

A. Georgia Tech policy is that a Principal Investigator (PI) or other senior researcher must devote at least 1% effort – or a level of effort as required by sponsor – on an ongoing basis over the term of a sponsored project award. After the award is granted and accepted, the PI and key personnel are committed to provide that proposed level of effort over the budget period unless the sponsor permits otherwise. The committed effort, whether mandatory or voluntary, will be separately budgeted and accounted for by way of either the sponsored project or a companion cost sharing account. The full policy is available [here](#).

**Q. Can effort be cost shared?**

A. Yes, effort can be cost shared or donated from another source as long as your department/institution allows it.

**Q. When effort is stated with no compensation, must effort be cost shared?**

A. *This answer is institution specific:*

- Emory applicants do not need to cost share if Emory is prime on the application but must cost share if Emory is the subcontract institution.
- GA Tech applicants must cost share regardless of whether GA Tech is prime or the subcontract institution.

**Q. Can budgets be used to support staff such as outreach workers and post-doctoral fellows?**

A. Yes, funds can be used to support any personnel deemed necessary to carry out the specific aims of the project, including the PI.

**Q. Should the NIH cap be used for salary?**

A. Yes, if faculty salaries exceed the [current NIH cap](#), then the NIH cap should be used in the budget.

**Q. How do I find out and confirm the cost for services through Children's Healthcare of Atlanta?**

A. To request help with your Children's Healthcare of Atlanta budget and associated costs, contact [GrantsAdmin@choa.org](mailto:GrantsAdmin@choa.org).

**Q. Are indirect costs (overhead) allowed to be budgeted?**

A. No, indirect costs are not allowed on these budgets. The Letter of Agreement states your department's understanding of this limitation.

**Q. Is Emory School of Medicine G&A assessed on these pilots?**

A. No, Emory SOM G&A is not assessed on these pilots and should not be included in the budget request.

**Q. If I have a graduate student working on the project, do I have to pay for her/his tuition?**

A. Yes. For both Emory and Georgia Tech graduate students, you must budget for tuition, stipend, fringe and fees in direct proportion to the student's effort on the pilot grant. To find out a specific Emory graduate student's stipend and fee amounts, contact [Kristen Ivory](#).

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**Q. What fringe rate should I use?**

A. The budget templates contain accurate fringe rates for Emory University, GT Tech and Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. If another institution is included on your budget, you must use proper fringe rates for that institution. Please consult with your department business representative to ensure correct fringe rates are used. The signature on the Letter of Agreement confirms that correct salary information and fringe rates have been used for all budgets associated with a proposal.

**Q. Do I need to route my application through OSP before submitting it?**

A. *This answer is institution specific:*

- Emory applicants do not need to route their applications through OSP prior to submission. If a proposal is selected for award, then routing may be necessary.
- GA Tech applicants must submit the proposal through the OSP database and complete and submit the internal routing sheet with department approval, signatures, statement of work, detailed budget and budget justification.

**Q. How many Letters of Agreement do I need and who should sign them?**

A. You need a Letter of Agreement from the corresponding department leadership for every non-Emory Department of Pediatrics or Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta faculty member and staff member with effort listed in the budget. Typically, your division chief or department head will sign this letter, but an authorized department business representative may also sign the letter.

**Q. How do I submit the required letters?**

A. Signed and scanned versions of the required letters should be uploaded to your application in the designated spaces.

**Q. Who is my financial analyst?**

A. Financial analysts in the Emory Department of Pediatrics are assigned by division:

- Allergy, Cystic Fibrosis, Pulmonology, Sleep: [Donna Pinkney](#)
- Infectious Disease, Neonatology: [Margie Varnado](#)
- LOBP: [Jerilyn Williams](#) and [Bill Ollinger](#)
- Endocrinology, Nephrology, Neurology, Palliative Care, Rheumatology: [Kimille Miller](#)
- Heart Center (Cardiology), Critical Care, Hospitalists: [Nadia Williamson](#)
- Marcus: [Courtney Glass](#)
- Leukemia Lymphoma, Neuro-Oncology: [Melissa Maxwell](#) and [Ashley Crawley](#)
- Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition, General Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine,: [Preethi Rosslow](#)
- BMT, Gene Therapy, Hematology, HemThrom, Sickle Cell, Solid Tumor, Survivor: [Melissa Maxwell](#) and [Ashley Crawley](#)
- If you are outside the Emory Department of Pediatrics and unsure who your financial analyst is, please contact your division’s business manager for assistance.

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## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

**Q. When is my application due?**

A. Thursday, June 25, 2026 before 11:59pm Eastern time.

**Q. What are the most common pilot application mistakes?**

- A.
- Not completing all fields for all investigators and collaborators. *The fields are not required fields on the application form because having more than two investigators is not required; however, if you do have individuals in these roles, all the fields for that person are required.*
  - Not proofreading documents carefully before uploading them (e.g. uploading a blank Target Enrollment Table or unsigned Letter of Agreement).

**Q. Is institutional signoff required?**

A. No, institutional signoff is not required. The only signature required is on the Letter(s) of Agreement.

**Q. May applications be submitted via email or in paper format?**

A. No; all pilot applications must be submitted electronically through the online application portal. There are separate portals for Center Awards, Junior Faculty Focused Awards, and Program Planning Pilot Awards. Links to all three portals are in the website version of the RFA.

**Q. Should the proposal include page numbers and a table of contents?**

A. The research plan, which is uploaded as a PDF, must include page numbers. A table of contents is optional.

**Q. What format should I use for my biosketch?**

A. NIH made significant changes to biosketch requirements effective January 25, 2026. You must use the format required after January 25, 2026 including the requirement to switch to SciENcv to update your biosketch. You will not have to have the certified PDF, but it does need to be in the updated format that SciENcv produces. For questions about how to access SciENcv, contact [Julie Hawk](#).

**Q. What is the difference between “Research Support” in section D of the biosketch and the separate “Other Support” document I am being asked to provide?**

A. “**Research Support**” is the standard section D of NIH Biosketches **prior to May 25, 2021**. This section is no longer part of the biosketch. The “**Research Support**” section includes all ongoing/current grant funding and past research funding that completed during the last 3 years. Person months effort and direct costs are not included in this section. “**Other Support**” is a list of all ongoing/current grant funding and grant funding that is pending review. This section should include person months effort for each section and annual direct costs for each study listed. Please note that you should request your Other Support information from your RAS contact with sufficient lead time before the grant is due.

***Both sections should include both federal and non-federal support and all Children’s funded pilots, including past, present, and pending pilots.***

**Q. Will reviewers have access to my LOI or Concept Form?**

A. No, the full application must stand on its own.

**Q. Are letters of support allowed?**

A. Yes, letters of support are allowed. Letters of support also are encouraged for JFF applications.

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**Q. Are appendices allowed?**

A. No, appendices are not allowed.

**Q. Can my application include multiple PIs?**

A. Yes, multiple PIs are allowed. One PI must be named the Administrative PI, and your application must include an explanation of how the authority and responsibility of the PI will be shared.

**Q. Must partnerships across institutions reflect multiple PI arrangements with equal effort by faculty investigators at each institution (i.e. 50/50 partnerships)?**

A. No, when reflecting effort from multiple institutions, applications may, but do not need to be submitted via the multiple PI arrangement and collaborations may, but do not need to reflect equal effort and 50/50 partnerships by the faculty and their participating institutions.

### RULES ON SUBMITTING MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

**Q. Can I submit more than one application?**

A. Yes, you may submit more than one application as long as the aims of each application are scientifically distinct. However, each PI may only be awarded one pilot per cycle (see below). Applications with the same or overlapping aims may not be submitted. If you submit more than one application with the same or overlapping aims, none of your applications will be reviewed or considered for funding.

**Q. Can I submit the same application to different centers?**

A. No. Per the above Q/A, you may not submit the same application, or applications with overlapping aims, more than once per cycle. If you submit more than one application and the aims of the applications overlap, none of the applications will be reviewed or considered for funding. You can, however, select up to two centers that your application could be affiliated with.

**Q. Can more than one of my own applications be funded?**

A. Although you may submit more than one application as PI if they are scientifically distinct, if both are reviewed favorably and selected for award, you may only accept funding for one of them and will be required to decline the other.

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