

Carolina Autism and Neurodevelopment Research Center Research Pilot Grant



Request for Proposals

Announcement Release Date	September 5, 2024
Application Receipt Date	November 15, 2024
Award Announcement Date	January 10, 2025
Funding Period	May 16, 2025 – August 15, 2026

Purpose: CAN research pilot grant funding is intended to advance multi-disciplinary research that has relevance for autism and neurodevelopment and will lead to extramural funding.

Eligibility: Eligible applicants include all tenure-track, clinical and research faculty who are employees of USC and who have independent research programs at USC. Faculty who have received CAN pilot funding in the past are eligible to apply; however, priority will be given to faculty who have not yet received funding. CAN research pilot funding cannot duplicate with other funding (e.g., ASPIRE, EXCEL). Proposals must represent multi-disciplinary integrated research, preferably in different disciplines or foci. Examples of successful proposals in the past include:

- Examining Neonatal Thermal Gradients and Heart Activity as Predictive Risk Factors for Autism in Premature Infants (Nursing, Psychology, Prisma)
- The Impact of Stress and Stress Reduction Strategies on Parent Fidelity and Child Outcomes (Education, Social Work, Communication Sciences, Psychology)
- Translational Investigation of Peripartum Sleep in Mother and Child: Relevance to Neurodevelopmental Disorders Research (Pharmacology, Physiology, and Neuroscience, Psychology, Computer Science)
- Model-driven Analysis of Autonomic Control in ASD using ECG (Computer Science, Psychology)

Funds Available: CAN pilot grants may be funded up to \$40,000. An applicant may request a project period of 15 months beginning May 16, 2025 and ending August 15, 2026. We anticipate funding up to 3 proposals.

Allowable Costs:

- Salary and fringe benefits of project personnel, including undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and technicians.
- While generally discouraged, up to one month of summer salary may be included for the PI(s).
- Equipment
- Project Supplies
- Animal Maintenance

- Travel essential to conduct the project; strong justification must be provided (e.g., conference travel not allowed).
- Graduate Student Tuition (summer months are encouraged given lower costs). Undergraduate tuition not allowed.

Application Procedure:

1. Develop a three-page proposal narrative that provides:
 - a. A brief discussion of the background and significance of the proposed idea, including its relation to autism and neurodevelopmental disorders. The text should be clearly comprehensible to academic scholars who are not experts in the applicant's field.
 - b. A detailed narrative of the project that includes the objectives, significance of the research, value of multidisciplinary approach, the research task, the specific outcomes of the project, a clear plan for leveraging this pilot award for extramural funding, and a timeline. A clear statement regarding how the project advances CAN's mission to improve the health and well-being of families and individuals with autism or neurodevelopmental disorders should be included.
 - c. Text should be single-spaced with margins not less than one-half inch and using a font size not less than 11 pt.
 - d. A cover sheet attached to the proposal (not counted in page limit) that includes the project title, the total budget request, the PI & co-PIs names, college/departments and lead PI's e-mail address. The cover sheet should include a brief summary (e.g., 3-5 sentences) of the proposed work.
2. Attach the following supportive documentation to the proposal narrative;
 - a. Bibliography (not counted in page limit)
 - b. Two-page NIH biographical sketch of the PI(s) and Co-I(s) that includes current and pending support.
 - c. A detailed budget and budget justification for total project costs consistent with allowable costs. Please use this [budget template](#) for expenses and include a word document for the budget justification.
 - d. If CAN funding has been issued to the PI(s) in the past, a brief appendix that includes the title and funding amounts of the award, along with a description of the impacts of the award, must be submitted with the application.
3. Submit the completed proposal by 5:00 pm on due date (November 15, 2024).
 - a. Email proposal to Sydney Arsenault at sydneya@mailbox.sc.edu

Review Process:

Applications will be evaluated by a committee of USC faculty affiliated with CAN who are not listed as PI or Co-I on any applications. A 9-point scale will be used to evaluate proposals based on these criteria:

- Does the proposal provide a compelling argument in addressing a knowledge gap?
- Does the proposed project advance CAN's mission?
- Are the proposed methodologies appropriate and accurate, and is the timeline reasonable?
- Does the proposal request a reasonable budget with a sound justification?
- Will the project significantly improve the chances of funding?

Contact for Information: Sydney Arsenault (sydneya@mailbox.sc.edu).