

The Deborah Munroe Noonan Memorial Research Fund

2025 Grant Program - Office Hours

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MEET OUR TEAM



Who We Are

Britta Magnuson, DMD (she/her)

Senior Scientific Advisor

Felicia Chen (she/her)

Grants Officer

Morenike Akinwolere, MSW (she/her)

Grants Coordinator

NoonanAwards@hria.org

Agenda



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Program Overview



Mission

The Deborah Munroe Noonan Memorial Research Fund, established in 1947 by Frank M. Noonan in memory of his mother, continues its proud tradition of supporting improvements in the quality of life for children with disabilities. Eligible organizations and target populations must be within the Fund's geographic area of interest of Greater Boston.

Scope of Supported Work

The Noonan Research Fund supports innovative clinical and service system research, pilot, and evaluation projects in the greater Boston area, designed to improve the quality of life for children and adolescents with disabilities as reflected in the target population description.

2025 Cycle Timeline



Date	Event
December 3, 2024	Initial Application Deadline
Mid-February 2025	Full Stage Invitation
Mid-April 2025	Full Stage Proposals Due
July 2025	Award Notifications Released
September 1, 2025	Award Begins

Eligibility



Applicant or Project Team

- Seniority and/or area of expertise do not affect eligibility
- Must hold a position at a nonprofit institution or organization within the Fund's geographic area of interest
- “Nothing about us without us”
- Neither an academic faculty position nor an advanced degree is required nor considered preferentially
- U.S. citizenship not required
- While not required for funding consideration, the Noonan Fund may support new or continuing collaborations on projects between academic institutions and/or other non-profit institutions

Participant Population

- Children and adolescents with a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional diagnosis who require a combination of special and or interdisciplinary services, individualized supports, therapies, or other forms of services or supports that are of lifelong or extended duration.
- Geographic area of interest (majority in Greater Boston as defined in guidelines)
- Inclusive of women and minority groups

Exclusions

- Basic science, direct service, primary prevention projects, device development, drug trials
- Capital Costs

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Initial Proposal

- A. Application Cover Sheet (form)
- B. Table of Contents (form)
- C. Project Summary (form)
- D. Non-Technical Overview (form)
- E. Organization and Collaborator(s) Profile (form)
- F. Initial Project Proposal (maximum of 2 pages, excluding references cited):
 - Background and Significance (up to $\frac{3}{4}$ page)
 - Specific Aims (up to $\frac{1}{4}$ page)
 - Potential Impact (up to $\frac{1}{4}$ page)
 - Project Design and Methods (1 page)
- G. Bibliography
- H. Project Timeline and Milestones Summary Table (1 page)
- I. Applicant and Key Personnel Bio-sketch/Resume/CV



Full Proposal – Additional Requirements

- Full Proposal (maximum of 10 pages, excluding references cited)
 - Background and Significance (2 pages)
 - Specific Aims (1 page)
 - Potential Impact (1 page)
 - Project Design and Methods (5 pages)
- Letters of Collaboration
- Budget Forms :
 - Ensure that personnel are supported
 - Provide rationale for supplies and additional costs
 - Include adequate supports for participation: transportation costs, reimbursable expenses, time away from work/school

Budget Guidance



- \$160,000 over 2 years
- Funds need to be equally distributed across each year of funding
- 20% indirect costs are allowable
- Funds may be used to support personnel, participant enrollment, small equipment purchases, supplies, travel, and other direct expenses that are needed for the project completion.

Program Emphasis



- Project addresses the improvement in the quality of life for children and adolescents with chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional disabilities.
- Project must provide comment regarding how outcomes of the proposed project and/or research will advance health equity.
- Project should include intentional processes that integrate people with lived experience in the decisions being made and meaningfully engage them in research activities that are meant to address the inequities they face.

Project Types



- Pilot Project -

A project that is a small-scale test of an intervention where the primary objective is to evaluate feasibility, duration, effectiveness, and/or other possible issues before implementation on a broader scale.

- Research Project -

A project where the primary objective is to test specific hypotheses about health and functional abilities of children with disabilities.

- Evaluation Project -

A project that collects, analyzes, and uses data to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of a program and to contribute to continuous program improvement

Selection Criteria



All projects will be evaluated based on:

- The potential impact of the proposed work on the intended community.
- The extent to which the proposal seeks to advance health equity and racial and ethnic equity.
- The extent to which the proposal includes and meaningfully engages people with lived experience in the research design and implementation.
- The significance and originality of the proposed project.
- The approach actively engages the population of interest throughout the project period.
- The project can be accomplished within the funding period for a two-year award based on a proposed timeline.
- The dissemination of the findings will be shared with the community/population served and other notable stakeholders.

Selection Criteria



Pilot Project

- Conceptualization of the intervention(s) to be evaluated, identified measures (structure, process, outcomes), and linkages between proposed intervention/activities, measures, and outcomes.
- The extent to which the applicant can measure feasibility, implementation, and/or effectiveness of the key intervention/activity.

Research Project

- Clarity of the stated hypotheses.
- Appropriate research design, including the selection and validity of independent and control variables, and outcomes. If qualitative research, describe in detail methodological and analytical plan for the stated research question.
- The study is sufficiently powered to answer the research question or hypothesis posed.

Evaluation Project

- The use of a formal evaluation approach. These may include measures related to the program logic model, or a quality improvement framework.
- The extent to which the applicant can evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the program
- The potential that the evaluation will lead to program improvement

Selection Criteria



Applicant and/or Project Team

- The project complements or enhances the applicant's previous and future professional work
- The team is reflective of the population served and/or engaged in research
- Appropriateness of personnel or consultants with expertise in skills necessary for the project such as quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis

Proposal Quality

- Persuasive and well-organized proposal that effectively communicates how the project will address the stated need or problem

Application Tips



- Make sure your proposal reflects the review criteria and program goals
- Tell the story and provide explicit reasons and statements regarding why your approach is promising
- Recruit the right team: Include appropriate collaborations and/or shared leadership if it benefits the project
- Be realistic (in timeline, budgets, etc.)
- Avoid jargon and abbreviations
- Be concise and clear (make it easy to read!)
- Point out pitfalls and include contingencies
- Seek feedback (internally, externally, and across disciplines)

Common Pitfalls to Avoid



- Link between problem and the proposed methodology is unclear
- Patient/population engagement is not present
- No statement regarding health equity
- No/limited description of sample size and statistics/evaluation methods
- No clear hypothesis/aims
- Lack of clearly budgeting what is needed to execute project
- Unrealistic timeline/Questions of feasibility
- Lack of topic/analysis expert
- Including jargon and abbreviations
- Overlap in funding

Examples of Reviewer Feedback - Strengths



Impact & Significance

- “Well-established organization seeking to expand on previous work and lay the groundwork for capacity building in the community. The potential impact for this project is large and will serve this community for years to come.”
- “The idea is original and has potential for great immediate impact in the Boston area, as well as impact in wide dissemination of the concept

Approach

- “The proposal shows a strong commitment to recruiting staff with lived experience.”
- “This proposal is very relevant to the Noonan Funds’ focus.”
- “Dissemination of the findings will be shared with the population served and other notable stakeholders.”

Sample Size & Statistics

- “The evaluation methods and approach are sound.”

Budget & Feasibility

- “I think it will be feasible within the program timeline. The recruitment plan is very good.”
- “The project includes clear, actionable goals.”
- “Reasonable timeline for achieving the project goals.”

Examples of Reviewer Feedback - Strengths



Project Team

- “The team is reflective of the population served and/or engaged in research.”
- “Strong research team, strong methodology, well qualified applicant but also surrounds themselves with a team that is very appropriate.”

Letter(s) of Collaboration

- “Letter of Support reflects a supportive environment.”
- “Very Strong, comprehensive.”

Proposal Quality

- “The proposal clearly links the background information and proposed work.”
- “The need is well defined and supported by the proposal.”
- “The research design, intervention and outcome measures are clear.”

Examples of Reviewer Feedback - Concerns



Impact & Significance

- “It isn’t clear how this approach is different from programs already present.”
- “How does this impact and affect the population associated with the geographic area of interest?”
- “More information is needed regarding how the current approach is driving inequities, and how the proposed approach will advance health equity.”

Approach

- “The patients/families/parents don’t seem to have been involved in the development of XXXX”
- “A significant weakness is the absence of clear hypotheses.”
- “Have the investigators thought through language/access/time barriers?”

Sample Size & Statistics

- “Sample size may be too small to yield actionable results.”
- “No discussion of sample size is offered and does not include inclusion/exclusion criteria.”
- “No information is presented as to how the experimental results will be analyzed and interpreted.”

Budget & Feasibility

- “The budget accounts for \$XX,XXX for personnel. The budget should also reflect the time needed for family engagement.”
- “The timeline does not indicate who will be involved in recruitment, which is time intensive.”

Examples of Reviewer Feedback - Concerns



Project Team

- “The team has background in XX but does not seem to include the appropriate family training/statistician/clinical care/community engagement background needed.”
- “The proposal should include how this works builds upon their background.”
- “There is no indication in the proposal regarding the relationship between the primary applicant and organization/school/community service XXX.”

Letter(s) of Collaboration

- “The letter doesn’t speak to how the organization will support the ongoing work in terms of facilities/training/mentorship/resources.”

Proposal Quality

- “The proposal could be improved by greater linkage between the background, significance, and the approach. It is hard to follow the logic.”
- “I am not able to read the caption under figure X, the text is too small.”
- “The proposal feels rushed, maybe the applicant cut and pasted wording from another application into this proposal.”
- “There are references to work in the letter and applicant resume/biosketch that don’t align with the current work.”

Q&A

Thank you for attending

View the Office Hours Recording
[HERE](#)

