

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does every proposal submission need to be endorsed by an ACI Technical Committee?

Yes, an important requirement of the CRC Grant Proposal Guide is endorsement of the research concept by an ACI Technical Committee. You must contact an ACI Technical Committee Chair by the listed due date to request endorsement and get your topic on that respective committee's fall convention agenda. You should also ask the Chair if they are seeking research on particular topics or needs or are open to unsolicited proposals.

2. What is the maximum available funding per project?

The maximum available direct funding that may be requested per project is \$50,000 (USD).

3. Can I submit more than one proposal at a time?

No, A PI is allowed one funded/open research project at a time. You may submit a new application if your current funded project will be completed before the new one begins.

4. My proposal was not chosen for funding. May I submit the same proposal the next year?

Yes, PIs have re-submitted proposals after addressing reviewer comments. There is a place in the online application form to note if the proposal was submitted previously and to comment on any changes/improvements.

5. Does the Executive Summary need its own page, like the title page? Is the recommended 300 words the maximum?

Yes, please create a separate page for the executive summary and limit it to 300 words maximum.

6. Do I need to have a Project Number before submitting the proposal?

No, the online application system (OpenWater) will assign an application number once you have started your proposal submission. Remember to save the work on your application before closing or logging out of the program. Confirm that you have completed and submitted your application by the posted deadline.

7. Does the ACI Foundation/Concrete Research Council provide grants internationally?

Yes, international applications are welcome.



8. Does the ACI Foundation/CRC provide grants to commercial companies?

Yes, however, the ACI Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization and must abide by the following guidelines:

- The final results of funded research must be made available in the public domain without restriction.
- Research that uses proprietary or sole-sourced products will be considered for funding as long as the goal of the research is to advance the public body of knowledge in a particular area of study and not for the sole benefit of the product.

9. What are the chances of my proposal being funded?

The portion of proposals that become funded projects depend upon the availability of program funds and the number of applications. On average, the ACI Foundation receives about 40 applications and has funded the top 8 proposals (4 proposals per category: materials / structures) for the last several years. All submitted proposals will be reviewed, scored, and ranked. Top proposals are balloted by the CRC to recommend funding. The ACI Foundation Trustees then provide final approval of all funding.

10. What does CRC mean by “a limit of 15% overhead or indirect return?”

The ACI Foundation limits institutional overhead to no more than 15% of the approved direct cost of the grants that it awards. In the proposal, the waived indirect return (or overhead) must be listed in the proposed budget and the research entity must execute a contract with the ACI Foundation that coordinates payments with milestone deliverables.

11. What type of items are considered direct versus indirect costs?

Direct costs would include items such as: salaries, overhead for those salaries such as tax or insurance. Indirect costs would include items such as: rent, bonus, profit sharing and overhead expenses.

12. Does the proposal section “Funding” need a detailed project budget with allocations and justification?

Yes, a summary budget should be part of the 5-page proposal body. The reviewers should be able to understand the total project cost, the amount of funds requested of the ACI Foundation, all co-funding, whether money or in-kind funds. The budget should also outline personnel time, travel, materials/supplies, tuition, and direct and indirect costs in a simple table.

13. When will we find out if we have received the grant?

Within 1 - 2 weeks after the spring ACI Concrete Convention.



14. The RFP does not stipulate a project duration. What duration is envisioned?

While the Grant Guide does not stipulate a project duration, the review task group would assess the project timeline as part of the proposal review. The reviewers look at total project scope versus cost. If the grant is leveraged well to a large project budget, a 3-year duration might be reasonable. If the budget is limited to the maximum grant of \$50,000, a 1-year duration is reasonable. Overall, most of the awarded projects range from 2 to 3 years in duration.

15. The RFP states that cost sharing is encouraged, but if awarded, proof of cost sharing is required. This seems like a contradiction, please explain.

For the proposal: Cost sharing is encouraged, not required. The ACI Foundation likes to leverage their funds, so that might mean a proposal that has cost sharing is rated higher by the reviewers.

For approved projects: If your proposal is approved for funding and cost sharing has been indicated in the proposed budget, the ACI Foundation will not execute the research contract or disperse any funds until the co-funding is documented in written commitments by the entities involved. If the Foundation approves a project that has no co-funding/cost sharing, then there is no requirement for commitment letters.

16. Is there a specific format for the ACI technical committee endorsement?

Yes, the endorsement process has been automated and is now part of the online application program. Details are explained in the ACI Technical Committee Endorsement Instructions.

Below is an outline of the basic steps:

- PI should contact the appropriate ACI Technical Committee Chair(s) by September 1st to request review of a research proposal for endorsement.
- If the Chair says yes, PI should confirm the method of review/assessment: *the Committee may want a written summary, a brief presentation to the committee at the fall convention meeting or an online meeting).*
- PI will enter the Chair's NAME and EMAIL in the online application section for endorsement. *(Tip: Endorsement from one ACI Technical Committee is mandatory, but there are spaces for up to 3 committee endorsements. Be sure to click "send now" for the endorsement request to be immediately sent to the Chair.)*
- PI does not need to have their proposal application finished to submit an endorsement request to an ACI Technical Committee.
- ACI Technical Committee Chair will be sent an email alerting them to the endorsement request. The email will have a link directly to the endorsement form and once submitted the information will be saved online in that specific proposal application.