

THE ACI FOUNDATION'S CONCRETE RESEARCH COUNCIL

GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDE

This guide outlines requirements for the preparation and submission of proposals to the Concrete Research Council (CRC) of the ACI Foundation. Members of the CRC are not allowed to submit proposals.

CRC Objective

Advance the knowledge and sustainable aspects of concrete materials, construction, and structures by soliciting and selecting research proposals, assisting in financing them, and publishing results, in coordination with ACI Technical Committees.

Funding Policy

The ACI Foundation will impose a limit of 15% to indirect costs (overhead) by research organizations to any research it funds. The organization must waive the remainder of the indirect costs.

Award Amount

- The ACI Foundation will fund up to \$50,000 per project for direct costs.
- The ACI Foundation will also cover up to an additional 15% of the direct cost of institution overhead. Thus, the total amount awarded could be a maximum of \$57,500. [Example A: \$50,000 project + \$7,500 IDC (15% of \$50,000) = \$57,500 awarded. Example B: \$45,000 project + \$6,750 IDC (15% of \$45,000) = \$51,750 awarded.]

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

CRC research proposals will be evaluated using the weighted criteria below:

1. **Relevancy and Potential Impact of Research** (10-point weight): Is there potential for this research to advance ACI standards, advance the state of the science of the concrete industry, improve current industry products or systems, or provide thrust into new markets? Is it innovative?
2. **Supplemental Support** (5-point weight): Are there significant co-funding sources identified for the proposed research and/or what is the potential for additional external funding beyond the proposed research?
3. **Overall Quality** (5-point weight): Are the objectives and scope clearly identified? Is there a research plan and a budget? Can the research plan be accomplished within the budget? Is the proposal well written?
4. **Researcher Capability** (5-point weight): Are the researchers experienced on the subject matter? Are there suitable facilities and equipment available to perform the proposed work? If principal investigators have received previous funding from the CRC, their past performance regarding timely communications and meeting established milestones & deliverables will also be considered.

5. **ACI Committee Engagement** (5-point weight): Will the committee form a task group and identify a 'champion' to serve in an advisory capacity to the PI? Will the committee dedicate meeting time to hear status reports and discuss implementation of the results?

Awarded Proposals

- Principle investigators are permitted to hold intellectual property, but the final results of ACI Foundation funded research must be made available in the public domain without restriction.
- The ACI Foundation will consider funding research that uses proprietary or sole-sourced products as long as the goal of the research is to advance knowledge in a particular area of study and not solely for that product.
- The ACI Foundation will create a contract with the research entity prior to any project work or funding. As part of the contract, it is mandated that the overhead or indirect return be set at no more than 15% of the direct cost of the research funding requested from the CRC. *Any overhead over the maximum allowed 15% that is waived by the research entity shall be indicated on the budget table as waived overhead, separate from other co-funding.* Non-compliant proposals in this regard shall be returned without review.
- A schedule of payments contingent upon milestone deliverables will be contained in the contract. Deliverables will include status reports and a final report provided to the ACI Committee that has endorsed the research and to the ACI Foundation / CRC. Final approval of each deliverable will include approval by the advisory team.
- If principal investigators from two organizations are collaborating on the research, the award must be to a single organization, which will then subcontract with the second organization.
- A principal investigator is allowed one funded/open research project at a time.
- Commitment letters from all co-funding organizations are required before any contracts are executed or funding dispersed from the ACI Foundation.
- The PI's performance in submitting timely status reports to both the CRC and the supporting ACI technical committee will be reviewed when assessing future submissions.

Where and How to Submit Proposals

Submitted proposals will be evaluated by CRC members, ACI reviewers, ACI Staff, and ACI Foundation Staff. Anyone who evaluates a proposal is reminded that the contents of each application are confidential and should be used solely for evaluation purposes. All reviewers must agree to and abide by ACI Foundation's [Conflict of Interest](#) policy.

A link to the online application program is available on the [Research Webpage](#) beginning August 1 and ending at 11:59 pm (Eastern Time) on December 1 of the year in which the proposal is submitted. The following information is to help you prepare for entering the required data and forms to the application program.

If you have any questions regarding the proposal requirements or process, please contact ACI Foundation Assistant Director, Tricia G. Ladely (Tricia.Ladely@acifoundation.org).

REQUIRED PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Title Page must include:

- **Contact information** for the Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI (*if applicable*) and administrative/contracts persons that may submit on behalf of the PI.
- **Proposal Title.**
- **Executive Summary*** (300 words or less)
 - Description of objectives of the proposal.
 - Description of significance/impact of the project.
 - Description of how the ACI technical committee that endorsed your research will use the intended results of the research.

**Content may be used for promotional purposes.*

Main Body of the Proposal (*maximum of 5 pages in 12-point font, the title page does not count as part of the proposal body*) must include:

- Objectives
- Significance/Impact
- How the ACI committee will use the intended results.
- Project description that includes enough detail to understand how the research will be performed.
- Matrix of tasks and schedule of completion, including reports.
- List of anticipated products, such as potential ACI document or code changes, published papers, presentations, or conference proceedings.
- Advisory Team members, who shall be at a minimum, a primary champion or task group from the ACI technical committee that supports the research, and an industry liaison. If additional ACI committees will support the research, also list the committee representatives as members of the advisory group.
- Table of funding that includes all support such as:
 - Total budget
 - Co-funding from organizations other than the institution
 - Net value of waived institution overhead or planned co-funding (if not in place yet).

Supporting Documents must include:

- **Endorsement:** a **minimum of one endorsement** is required from an ACI technical committee that supports the research. You may provide others if multiple committees are endorsing the work. (**Note: the endorsement process and form are now automated and part of the online submission program.**)
- **References**
- **Qualifications:** of the investigator(s) and/or institution(s). Limit biographical sketches to two pages per investigator, and include professional preparation, appointments, publications (*up to five relevant*), synergistic activities, and collaborators and other affiliations.
- **Letters of Support:** from the industry are optional, but strongly encouraged, and can be uploaded to your online application.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO AUTHORS

Presentation Opportunity

The CRC has a collaborative arrangement with ACI Technical Committee 123, *Research and Current Developments*, who sponsors at each convention a Research in Progress Technical Session where researchers can present their ongoing research. Each fall, a spot will be held for a CRC sponsored project. Consider applying to present at this session; be sure to mention that the project is being sponsored by the CRC when applying.

Duration of the Proposed Research

Reviewers of CRC research proposals compare the total project scope against the cost. If the money is leveraged well to a large project, a 3-year duration may be reasonable. If the budget is limited to \$50,000, a one-year to 1.5-year duration is reasonable.