

Senior Research Grant Guidelines

Updated August 2026 • Indiana Academy of Science

Questions: grants@indianaacademyofscience.org

I. Summary

The Indiana Academy of Science (IAS) Senior Research Grants Program provides funding of up to \$5,000 to eligible Academy members, or to students and other eligible researchers they sponsor, for novel scientific research. Funding may support supplies, travel and field expenses, research assistants, project-specific equipment, specialized computing, and other costs essential to the proposed investigation when those costs comply with these guidelines.

Applications are due March 15 and September 15 each year and must be submitted through the authenticated IAS membership portal. Applicants should allow time to complete required sponsor and institutional approvals before the deadline.

II. Program Background

The Senior Research Grants Program is supported by income from the John S. Wright Fund. Since 1964, these funds have supported scientific research aligned with the Academy's mission and advancing science within Indiana. The Research Grants Committee administers the program, maintains these guidelines, reviews eligible proposals, and determines awards.

The program welcomes scientifically meritorious self-contained studies, pilot projects, and projects that may support future research. A proposal does not need to lead to a large external grant; modest, locally focused work may be fully consistent with the IAS mission.

III. Eligibility

Applicants must meet all applicable requirements:

- The primary applicant must be a current IAS member in good standing and must have been a member in good standing during the preceding year, except when applying as an eligible student or other sponsored researcher under the provision below.
- A student, postdoctoral associate, non-permanent faculty member, or other applicant who is not chiefly responsible to the institution for the research program must have a faculty/research sponsor who meets the IAS membership requirement and accepts fiscal and administrative responsibility.
- Only one proposal may be submitted by an applicant in a funding cycle. Previous IAS grant recipients may apply, but prior award history is considered during review and all required reports must be on file.
- Awards are made to the applicant's affiliated institution or organization, not to an individual. The application must include approval from an official with appropriate institutional authority.
- The applicant and sponsor, when applicable, must remain active IAS members throughout the grant period and until required reports and presentation obligations are fulfilled.
- Individuals with a prohibited conflict of interest or conflict of commitment, including individuals participating in the review or award decision when IAS policy bars their financial benefit, are not eligible to benefit from the award.

- Applicants must be willing and able to meet all reporting, presentation, membership, acknowledgment, financial, and promotional requirements in these guidelines and any post-award recipient agreement.

IV. Review Process

Eligibility and completeness are confirmed before scoring. Each eligible application is reviewed by multiple members of the Senior Research Grants Committee using the following 100-point framework. Committee reviewers complete Sections I–III only; the Research Grants Committee Chair completes Sections IV–V.:

Review category	Points	Subcategories considered
Scientific Merit and Proposal Quality	42	Abstract; problem statement and justification; literature review; objectives and methodology; investigator qualifications; dissemination plan; organization and writing quality.
Budget Evaluation	18	Completeness; justification; alignment with IAS guidelines; feasibility; equipment-limit compliance; non-duplication of other support.
Impact and Alignment with the IAS Mission	20	Contribution to Indiana science; substantive student involvement; self-contained value or credible future project trajectory.
IAS Engagement and Service	14	Length of membership; IAS leadership, committee, or section service; participation in meetings, programs, events, and outreach.
Previous IAS Grant History	6	First-time applicants receive the greatest preference; points decrease for more recent IAS awards.
TOTAL	100	

The committee evaluates proposals on their merits under the published framework. Outreach may encourage applications from less-represented disciplines or institutions, but undisclosed institutional or disciplinary preferences are not part of individual merit scoring.

V. Online Application Requirements

Applications must be completed in the IAS membership portal. The portal will verify membership, collect structured responses, route required attestations, and accept proposal documents. Applicants should review every entry before final submission. A complete application includes:

- Verified applicant identity, IAS membership record, institution, department, contact information, applicant status, and years as a faculty member or researcher in Indiana.
- Project title, IAS scientific field or section, funding request, project dates, and research-risk status.
- A proposal document containing an abstract of no more than 300 words; problem statement and study justification; literature review; research objectives, scope, and methodology; investigator qualifications; dissemination plan and expected timeline; and references cited.
- A detailed budget and budget justification identifying each cost, explaining its necessity, and confirming that IAS support will not duplicate current or pending funding.
- A current and pending support document for the PI and each co-PI, including other grants, startup funds, institutional resources, and pending requests relevant to the proposed work.
- A project-context statement explaining whether the work is self-contained, a pilot project, or part of a larger program, plus its self-contained value and/or potential to support future research or funding.
- A description of undergraduate or graduate student involvement and the project's contribution to science in Indiana.
- A record of IAS membership, leadership or service, committee or section work, meeting participation, events, programs, and outreach.
- Sponsor information and certification when required.

- Prior IAS award information, related IAS presentations or publications, and any required progress or final reports.
- Institutional approval and financial/payee contact information.
- IRB, IACUC, recombinant-DNA, or other research-risk approval or exemption documentation when applicable.
- Required certifications concerning accuracy, non-duplication of funding, conflict of interest, conflict of commitment, and compliance with IAS requirements.

The proposal narrative may be single- or double-spaced, must use a readable 10- to 12-point font and 1-inch margins, and may not exceed five pages excluding the abstract, references, budget, approvals, current and pending support, and other required attachments.

VI. Budget Guidelines

Allowable expenses

- Supplies directly consumed by the project.
- Vehicle travel within Indiana, including fuel costs and justified limited vehicle rental.
- Room and board at study sites.
- Wages for students or technicians, excluding the applicant, sponsor, and/or PI.
- Project-specific equipment totaling less than 50% of the IAS funding request.
- Specialized computers, software, server access, or computing time that is essential to the project, is not normally supplied by the applicant's institution, and is fully justified in the budget.

Non-allowable expenses

- Attendance at meetings, including registration fees.
- Publication costs.
- Institutional overhead or indirect costs.
- Salaries for applicants or sponsors.
- Pedagogical research.
- General-purpose computers, ordinary software, or computing resources normally supplied by the institution.
- Costs that duplicate or overlap other current or pending support.

Important: IAS will not pay non-allowable expenses, including salary or wage payments to the applicant, sponsor, and/or PI, or equipment costs equal to or greater than 50% of the IAS request. Budgets must include detailed justification for every requested item. Inadequately justified or non-compliant costs may be removed, and an application may receive partial or no funding if the remaining project is not feasible. This restriction keeps grant funds limited to project expenses and helps IAS avoid private-benefit concerns or treatment of grant payments as compensation.

VII. Award Administration, Reports, and Presentation

Before funds are released, recipients may be required to sign a post-award agreement confirming their responsibilities under these guidelines.

- Submit the final scientific report and complete financial accounting through the IAS online membership portal within six months after project completion. Email, paper, or other delivery methods do not satisfy the submission requirement unless IAS provides written authorization. Financial documentation and any returned funds must be uploaded together with a clear explanation.
- Fall-cycle recipients must present funded work at the IAS Annual Meeting occurring approximately 18 months after the award.

- Spring-cycle recipients must present funded work at the IAS Annual Meeting occurring approximately 12 months after the award.
- Maintain active IAS membership throughout the grant period and until all reporting and presentation obligations have been completed.
- Pay Annual Meeting registration fees from non-grant funds; meeting attendance and registration are not allowable grant expenses.
- Acknowledge Indiana Academy of Science support in every publication or presentation resulting from the funded research.

Failure to submit required reports makes the recipient ineligible for future IAS grants. Failure to present the funded research without prior IAS approval may result in a request for partial or full reimbursement of the award.

VIII. Modifications to Funded Projects

Requests for a project extension without additional funds, a budget reallocation, or continuation funding must be submitted in writing to the Research Grants Committee Chair before the applicable deadline or expenditure. Extensions may normally be granted for up to six months. No material change is approved until the recipient receives written confirmation from IAS.

IX. Deadlines and Communication

Applications are due March 15 and September 15 annually. The deadline is based on the time zone and submission time displayed in the IAS portal. Applicants are encouraged to submit early enough to resolve membership, sponsor, approval, or upload issues. IAS will announce material guideline or review changes before each application cycle.

X. Public Recognition and Promotion

To highlight funded research and member achievements, recipients agree to participate reasonably in IAS promotional and outreach efforts. Upon request, recipients must promptly provide:

- A professional headshot.
- The official grant project title.
- A short statement explaining their interest in and connection to the Indiana Academy of Science.

IAS may use this information in social media, newsletters, website features, press releases, and other Academy communications.