

## **Biotechnology Funding in the AO Foundation**

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Chairman, AO Research Fund

[www.aofoundation.org/aorf](http://www.aofoundation.org/aorf)

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### **Background and Introduction:**

The AO Research Fund has existed since 1983 and its principal function for some years has been to offer research grants in the general areas of interest to the AO Foundation and primarily seed money for young research workers. Applications were open to anyone and funding was up to a maximum of CHF 60,000 for 1-3 years with little monitoring.

The mission of the AORF now is to support basic scientific, pre-clinical and clinical research in all areas of trauma, surgery of the musculo-skeletal system and related problems.

It still provides predominantly seed money to individual researchers and research groups, finances pilot studies and supports investigation of new and unconventional ideas or hypotheses. These are called Start Up grants and are for a maximum of CHF 60,000 for up to 2 years.

But now it also funds projects focused on specific clinical problem areas (the AO Clinical Priority Programmes) as defined by the Academic Council. These are called Focus grants and are for a maximum of CHF 100,000 for up to 3 years.

The principal clinical areas encompass general trauma, spine, cranio-maxillofacial and veterinary surgery.

### **What about Biotechnology?**

In recent years, Biotechnology has figured highly among applications and grants awarded.

### **How are grants obtained?**

There are two deadlines per year:

February 15

August 15

All details are on the AO website at

[www.aofoundation.org/aorf](http://www.aofoundation.org/aorf)

Application forms are available for downloading and are submitted by email

Forms must be submitted in full and must comply exactly to the guidelines available. In particular the finances must be well documented. Normally we do not accept applications for salaries for investigators. Forms which fail to comply are returned without review.

All applications are reviewed by two reviewers who are usually members of the AORF Commission but may be external reviewers. Focus grants in the field of Biotechnology are also reviewed by two members of BAB and the four reviewers will try to agree a recommendation.

All decisions are made by the AORF Commission which meets twice a year.