

**SCLERODERMA CLINICAL TRIAL CONSORTIUM**  
**2024 Request for Grant Applications**  
***for Proposals to Advance the Objectives of the SCTC Working Groups***

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the 2024 SCTC Working Group Research Grants is to provide support for projects that advance the mission of the SCTC and enhance the productivity of current or new Working Groups. Applicants must be from SCTC member institutions whose membership is current and in good standing at the time of application. Applicants should be a member of a current working group, and the proposed projects should involve collaborative efforts. More than one project application can be submitted from a working group, but a maximum of one project will be funded per working group. Applicants may not apply with the same project to both the working group and Betty Benedict awards in the same calendar year.

**DEVELOPING THE PROPOSAL:** Existing or prospective working groups have the opportunity to propose projects for Working Group Research Grant funding at the virtual SCTC Working Group meeting in the Spring of each year to gain feedback from SSc community and build collaborative groups of relevant stakeholders. Presentation of proposals at the WG meeting is not required for a submission. Similarly, we encourage applicants to discuss projects at working group annual meetings to build collaboration.

**FUNDING LEVEL:** A maximum of four awards of up to \$25,000 (USD) for a one-year are anticipated. The SCTC will consider continued funding for past awardees based on merit and depending on availability of funds.

**PROGRESS REPORTS:** The awardee is expected to provide a progress report nine months after the initial award date (March 1), including an accounting of funds used. Those groups who do not provide a progress report will not be eligible to apply for continued funding. Each funded Working Group is expected to present updates at the SCTC Annual General Meeting during the American College of Rheumatology Convergence and at the virtual Working Group Update Meeting held in the first quarter of each calendar year.

**COSTS:** This award is meant to support the actual project and no indirect costs are permitted.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** The deadline for receipt of the application is midnight (U.S. Eastern Time) on April 1, 2024.

**REVIEW AND RANKING OF THE APPLICATIONS** will be done by the SCTC Scientific Research Committee. The decision to fund individual projects will be made by the SCTC Executive Committee by June 15, 2024. Funding would begin July 1, 2024. The Executive Committee reserves the option of not funding any applications if none meet the standards and expectations set forth. The Committee may seek clarification from applicants and may fund portions of proposals.

**CRITERIA FOR FUNDING:** Projects will be judged based on scientific merit, contribution to the mission of the SCTC as stated on the website (<https://sclerodermaclinicaltrialsconsortium.org/index.php>), feasibility, budgetary factors, and the extent of collaborative effort. Applicants are strongly encouraged to be inclusive in participation of centers and junior investigators. Special consideration will be given to new Working Groups.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE APPLICATION:** Applications should use Arial font, 11-point type, single-spaced with ½ inch margins, and preferably be submitted as one document (pdf). The application should follow this format:

- Title page, including the application title, Principal Investigator's name, email address, and Institution, amount of funding requested, name and address of institutional official who would process the grant.
- Key Personnel page (including collaborating investigators), listing positions and institutions.
- Budget and budget justification

- Biosketch of Principal Investigator and key personnel in NIH format
- Introduction: For resubmissions only (either Working Group or Betty Benedict prior submissions), please include up to 1-page of point-by-point responses to reviewer comments.
- Body of grant: This portion of the application cannot exceed 3 pages (excluding references, tables, and figures) and must include a project summary, specific aims, and the approach to accomplish these aims. Applicants are encouraged to include a plan for continued funding after the one-year period ends. Applications are strongly encouraged to specifically include the involvement of trainees or junior faculty investigators and detail the exact roles on the project and anticipated credit/authorship of the trainees/junior investigators. Similarly, collaborative/multicenter projects will be favored.
- If the above project includes Human Subjects, please submit an up to 2-page document which includes documentation of approval by the relevant Institutional Review Boards/Ethics Boards.
- Please submit plans for material transfer or data use agreements.
- If the proposed project involves an intervention, please include a plan for safety monitors or safety board, if applicable.
- Letters of support/agreement from collaborating investigators