



Osteology Foundation

Seed Research Grant for China - Application Guidelines

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1 General information

The Osteology Foundation aims to support scientific research and education projects in the field of oral tissue regeneration. To actively promote **clinical research**, the Osteology Foundation awards grants to selected researchers yearly.

Our funding programmes provide funding for both early-career and established researchers, and teams who present with a track record in generating and translating basic research findings towards clinical application. We specifically seek to bridge the gap between basic science and clinical practice by bringing scientific discoveries to the every-day clinical practice. To this end, the Osteology Foundation wants to support researchers in China for the clinical development of medical/dental treatments, therapies, diagnostics, and care delivery. Thereby, interdisciplinary (collaborative) research involving basic scientists and clinicians, as well as research groups from different universities/entities, is strongly encouraged.

Scope of the Seed Research Grant for China

For the year 2026, projects proposed in the scope of the Seed Research Grant for China must be clinical in nature and must demonstrate clinical relevance for evidence-based dental/medical practice for the benefit of human health and clinical care.

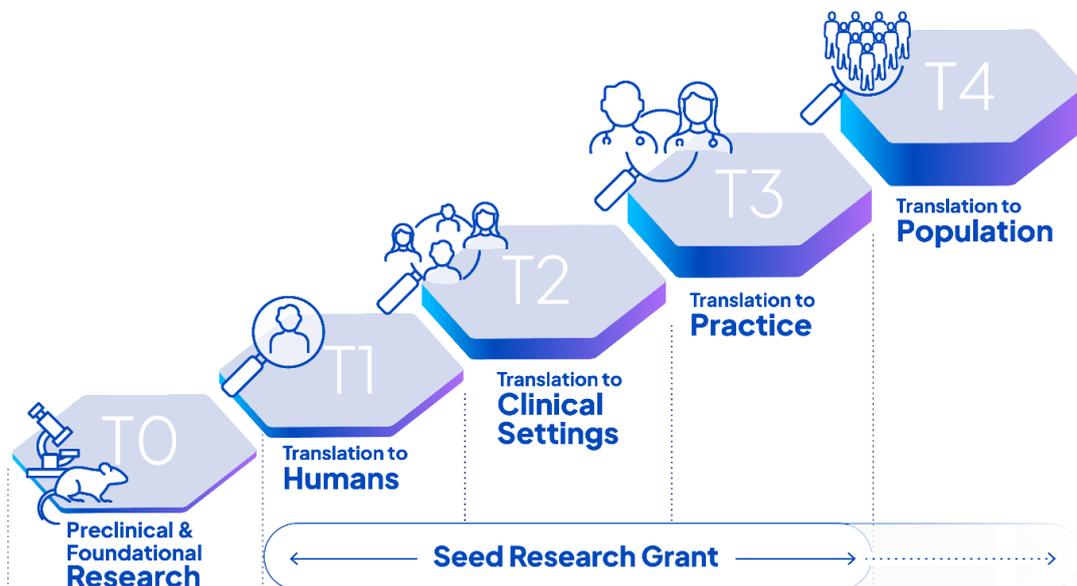


Figure 1: The clinical research spectrum and corresponding focus

The Osteology Foundation accepts only clinical research proposal submissions. This means that preclinical and foundational research (T0) is not eligible for submission. Hence, submissions are restricted to T1-T4 categories:

- T1 refers to studies translating basic research into a potential clinical application.
- T2 refers to efficacy studies, in which new interventions are trialled under optimal conditions.

- T3 refers to effectiveness studies, where promising interventions are trialled in real-world settings. Research exploring translation to clinical settings and practice through the implementation of validated treatment concepts and technologies in a real-world setting is included in this category.
- T4 refers to impact studies, which examine the impact of a new intervention/guideline at a population level.

Research Focus Areas

Patients' oral health and well-being is at the core of the Osteology Foundation's mission. As contemporary oral medicine evolves from pure curative and reactive treatments to more preventive and personalised approaches, the Osteology Foundation wishes to place greater emphasis on clinical research in the area of precision oral medicine fostering preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic solutions. At the same time the Osteology Foundation wishes to involve the active participation of patients in research.

To achieve this vision, the Seed Research Grant programme will prioritise **clinical research** in the field of oral and maxillofacial tissue regeneration. The Osteology Foundation encourages interdisciplinary, cross-cutting research and platform developments in the following focus areas:

- **Bio-functionalisation¹ of regenerative biomaterials**
- **Prognostication of regenerative wound healing**

Submissions outside of these focus areas are also eligible. However, applications must still be in the field of oral wound healing and tissue regeneration.

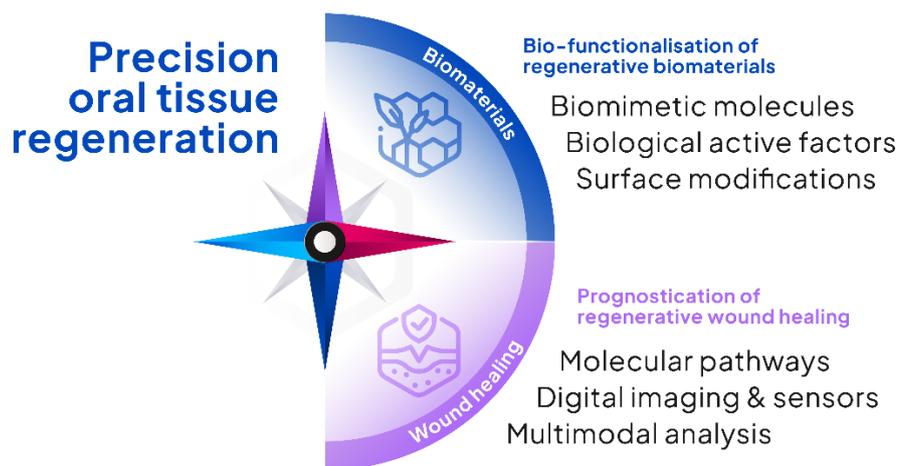


Figure 2: Osteology Research Compass for targeted research with examples in each focus area

¹ Definition of bio-functionalisation: <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-824064-9.00021-6>

2 Before applying – good to know

To improve the efficacy of handling applications and to facilitate objective project comparison, please note that incomplete applications as well as those that deviate from the given guidelines (e.g. exceed the permitted length and/or deviate from formatting guidelines) will be rejected.

2.1 Eligibility

The funding programme “**Seed Research Grant for China**” is open for researchers, who are based in China and affiliated with a Chinese higher education (academic) institution.

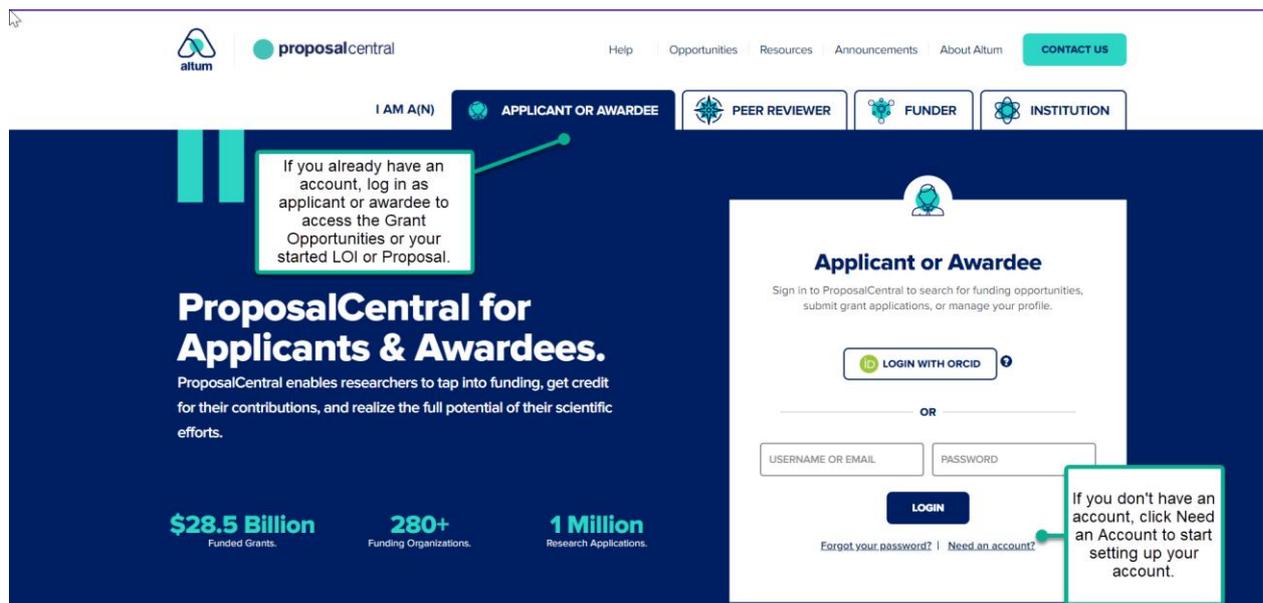
2.2 Application process

The application process consists of one single stage. Applicants submit the full proposal of their proposed project by the deadlines published on the Osteology Foundation website. Following revision by the Scientific Advisory Team, the members of the Science Committee will discuss the evaluation results, thoroughly review the detailed study proposals, decide about the final grant recipients, and confirm the amount of funds to be awarded.

All applicants will be informed about the decision of the Science Committee during the same year. Exact notification dates are announced on the Osteology Foundation website.

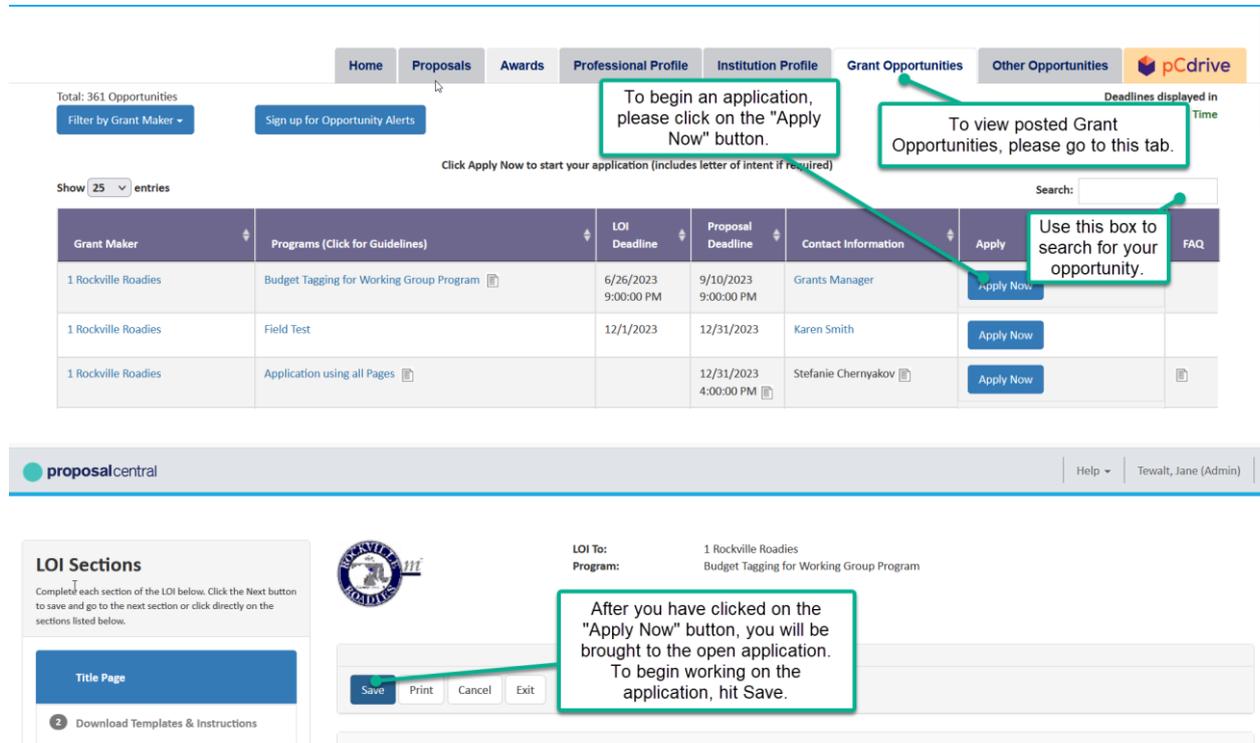
2.3 Application platform

All application documents must be submitted electronically via the online application system supported by ProposalCentral: <https://proposalcentral.com/>. If it is the first time you log in onto the system, **please ensure you have enough time to create a new account** (step needed only once) by following the instructions below.



The screenshot shows the ProposalCentral website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the altum logo, the text 'proposalcentral', and links for Help, Opportunities, Resources, Announcements, About Altum, and a CONTACT US button. Below the navigation bar, there is a section titled 'I AM A(N)' with four tabs: APPLICANT OR AWARDEE (selected), PEER REVIEWER, FUNDER, and INSTITUTION. The main content area is dark blue with white text. On the left, it says 'ProposalCentral for Applicants & Awardees.' and 'ProposalCentral enables researchers to tap into funding, get credit for their contributions, and realize the full potential of their scientific efforts.' Below this, there are three statistics: '\$28.5 Billion Funded Grants', '280+ Funding Organizations', and '1 Million Research Applications'. On the right, there is a login form titled 'Applicant or Awardee' with the text 'Sign in to ProposalCentral to search for funding opportunities, submit grant applications, or manage your profile.' The form has a 'LOGIN WITH ORCID' button, a 'OR' separator, and two input fields for 'USERNAME OR EMAIL' and 'PASSWORD'. A 'LOGIN' button is below the input fields. At the bottom of the form, there are links for 'Forgot your password?' and 'Need an account?'. Two callout boxes with green borders and arrows point to the 'Need an account?' link and the 'LOGIN WITH ORCID' button. The first callout says: 'If you already have an account, log in as applicant or awardee to access the Grant Opportunities or your started LOI or Proposal.' The second callout says: 'If you don't have an account, click Need an Account to start setting up your account.'

Please type in „Osteology“ in the search bar (see screenshot below), to find all grant programmes for which you can apply:



The screenshot shows the Osteology Foundation grant application portal. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Home, Proposals, Awards, Professional Profile, Institution Profile, Grant Opportunities, and Other Opportunities. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the navigation, there is a section for "Total: 361 Opportunities" with a "Filter by Grant Maker" dropdown and a "Sign up for Opportunity Alerts" button. A table lists several grant opportunities with columns for Grant Maker, Programs (Click for Guidelines), LOI Deadline, Proposal Deadline, Contact Information, and Apply Now buttons. A search box is also present above the table. Below the table, there is a section for "LOI Sections" with a "Title Page" button and a "Download Templates & Instructions" link. The "LOI To:" section shows the selected grant program: "1 Rockville Roadies Budget Tagging for Working Group Program". A "Save" button is visible at the bottom of the LOI section.

To begin an application, please click on the "Apply Now" button.

To view posted Grant Opportunities, please go to this tab.

Use this box to search for your opportunity.

After you have clicked on the "Apply Now" button, you will be brought to the open application. To begin working on the application, hit Save.

2.4 Funding details

- It is understood that the Osteology Foundation may not provide the total amount of funding required to perform the planned study.
- A grant application submitted to the Osteology Foundation must not be submitted in parallel to another funding organisation or research grant provider (e.g. company) with identical scope and/or content. If so, the Osteology Science Committee may exclude the application from the granting process, unless a clear alternative plan is presented, should both requests for funding be awarded. Transparency is key.

2.5 Ethical approval

The approval of the relevant animal care committee/institutional human subjects review board of the respective official (national) body must not be submitted at application stage, although an already available ethical committee clearing of the study might work in support of your application. When the study is accepted for funding, a copy of the ethical approval document must be submitted to the Osteology Foundation and is a necessary condition to obtain any funding from the Osteology Foundation. In lack thereof, the funding decision may be retracted.

2.6 Guidelines for clinical research

Any clinical trial shall be registered through an international clinical trials registry prior to the trial start. The registry that is recommended by the Osteology Foundation is: <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov/>

The trial registry number (ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier or similar) as well as the approval of the institutional human subjects' review board shall be submitted to the Osteology Foundation before the start of the trial and is a prerequisite for the transfer of funding.

All clinical studies submitted to the Osteology Foundation must be in compliance with the current version of the [Declaration of Helsinki](#) and the ICH Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Guideline or ISO EN 14155 standard (as far as applicable), as well as all national legal and regulatory requirements.

Moreover, the Osteology Foundation requests to follow the [CONSORT statement](#) and related checklists for setting up a study protocol for a randomized controlled clinical trial.

To strengthen the reporting of observational studies the Osteology Foundation requests to follow the [Strobe Statement](#) and related checklists.

Lastly, the [ID-COSM initiative reached a consensus on a core set of mandatory outcomes for clinical trials](#) in implant dentistry and/or soft tissue/bone augmentation in mid-2023. Adoption in future protocols and reporting on the respective domain areas by currently ongoing trials will contribute to improving evidence-informed implant dentistry and quality of care. All clinical trials commencing after 31 July 2024 must include these outcomes for consideration for publication in COIR, for example. In this light, the Osteology Foundation strongly encourages adherence to the ID-COSM minimum set of core outcomes for all grant applications.

2.7 Submitting person

Please note that it is not accepted to apply in the name of a third person. Principal Investigators should use their own account to submit and electronically sign their applications. Hand-written signatures are not necessary. All co-applicants will automatically receive a notification of submission. Each research group/department may submit only one application per round.

3 Review process

The Osteology Foundation ensures strict confidentiality of all applications and applying research teams, as well as of the results of the review process. The application information will be shared only among the reviewers and the necessary Foundation members, and only for the purpose of evaluating the said application.

All applications will be reviewed based on predefined awarding criteria, covering:

- Clinical relevance
- Originality of hypothesis
- Methodology
- Facilities and qualifications
- Financial feasibility and credibility. Proposals that ignore the budget guidelines highlighted below, especially regarding material sponsorship agreements (support letters), may be desk rejected.

All applications are reviewed by a Scientific Review Board consisting of 1 member of the Science Committee and 3 members of the Osteology Scientific Advisory team. Their names are published on the Osteology Foundation website.

As a matter of policy, the Osteology Foundation does only provide reviewer feedback upon request of the applicant.

4 Full proposal

All application documents must be submitted electronically via the online application system. To ensure a comparable format for all applications, the space for entering the project information is limited. All information must be provided in English. Applications submitted in other languages will be desk-rejected.

Further details on each step of the application can be found on the online application tool. Below, a summary of the application requirements is provided.

4.1 Summary of requirements for submission

- Provide detailed information on study design (e.g. study hypothesis, control and test groups, primary outcome), applicants, and funding. Please see below for further details.
- Provide the following documents:
 - Detailed study proposal – max. 12 pages
 - Overhead policy – max. 2 pages
 - CVs (template provided) – max. 2 pages
 - Proof of submission to/approval by ethics committee when available
 - Budget overview (template provided)
 - Corporate support letter(s)/sponsorship agreement(s), if materials are needed and not budgeted for
 - Graphical abstract – max. 1 page
- Respect the page limits and formatting guidelines and ensure that all information is included before submitting your application.
 - Font: Times New Roman, font size 12, line spacing 1.2
 - Page margins: 2.5 cm (left, right, top), 2 cm (bottom)
- Use the available templates, when available
- Upload PDF files only

4.2 Further details and definitions

An **early-career researcher** is defined as a dependent researcher who has a maximum of **five years' academic research experience** following the completion of their PhD degree, or completion of clinical training (residency programme) and provide demonstration of enrolment in a research programme (i.e. PhD).

Early-career researchers are considered to be under close mentorship; hence they must clearly describe if their research is an independent, well-framed project and/or embedded as a sub-project into a larger project (e.g. larger clinical trial) and the roles/responsibilities/project ownership of their mentors in these projects. The submission of a sound project plan with realistic targets/outcomes and funding allocation (budget) is mandatory. A letter of institutional support is requested and is a prerequisite for submission by an early-career researcher.

Every other researcher is considered an established researcher, having both:

1. At least five years' academic research experience following the completion of their clinical training/PhD (or equivalent) degree.
2. Track record of funding (principal investigator of at least one completed and fully funded grant/project) and publications (at least 5 first- or last-author publications + 5 other publications).

4.3 Budget plan – further tips

- The reviewers from the Osteology Foundation and the Science Committee should be able to understand the budget details easily. To ensure this, provide a thorough explanation for each budget category in both your detailed study protocol and the Budget Overview sheet.
- Plan your resources carefully and demonstrate efforts to reduce redundancies or unnecessary costs.
- On the **Budget Overview sheet**, provide details of the factors used to determine the costs of each budgeted item and personnel costs. Include all items that are necessary to conduct the project.
- Make sure to list and clarify which items are to be funded by the Osteology Foundation, and which are to be funded by other sources.
- Within your **detailed study protocol**, provide a justification of the listed budget items, as well as a detailed description why a budget item is important for the project and how the budgeted amounts will be used (e.g. what are the duties of the technical staff or what kind of supplies or material is needed for histomorphometry, animal care costs, patient related costs within clinical studies, ...). This will allow reviewers to estimate the realistic costs of the research project.
- Note that all amounts are in Swiss Francs (CHF).
- Please consider the following restrictions when developing your Budget Plan:
 - **Personnel:** Faculty salaries must not exceed 20% of the total requested funding amount. Additional salaries for consultants (e.g., technicians, statisticians, or similar support roles) may be requested up to an additional 5% of the total funding. Under no circumstances should the total amount dedicated to all salaries exceed 25% of the requested funding amount. The amount of effort spent by each contributor to the project must be clearly indicated as % FTE.

Example: if the PI is a full-time (100%) researcher and plans to work on this project for 4h per week (i.e. approx. 10% FTE), they will indicate a project involvement of 10% on the Budget Overview sheet, and the corresponding fraction of the salary.

All personnel included in the project must be listed in the budget plan with base salary and their role and involvement in the project. If the staff is already paid by the institution, please list them anyway on the budget template, with the corresponding % of involvement in the project, and indicate 0 on the column “Amount requested to Osteology”.

- **Equipment:** New equipment or extensions to existing equipment which are necessary for conducting the project can be budgeted. Basic laboratory equipment (e.g. microscope, cell culture incubator) is assumed to be available at the lab and is therefore excluded from funding.

- **Supplies:** This area includes all materials needed to conduct the proposed research. **Every single item must be budgeted.** For example, the quantity, type and cost of biomaterials or dental implants must be included into the budget plan. Itemize supplies in separate categories (e.g. cell culture material, general laboratory supplies, histology material, augmentation materials, implants, ...). If **other sources of support** cover any of these items, e.g. through material sponsorship agreements, it is also mandatory to list these costs and the respective financial support for it. In such cases, please **provide support letters (e.g. from the respective company)**. If a letter of support is not available, all materials MUST be budgeted for.
- **Travel expenses:** Only expenses directly related to the project are covered (e.g. investigator meeting, travelling to external research sites), if necessary to the success of the project and justified.
- **Clinical studies:** Consider recruitment costs, patient care costs, medication, fees for ethic committee or notified bodies, etc.
- **Publication costs:** Publication costs for open-access publication. Max. 5% of total requested amount.
- **Overhead contributions** are only made up to a maximum of 10% of the total project costs. As a prerequisite for funding of any overhead costs, the principal investigator or coordinating investigator must submit a copy of the official overhead regulations (only an excerpt with the most relevant information, maximum of 2 pages) stating the amount of requested overhead fees. An acknowledging letter including a statement to honour the policy of 10% of total project cost, or a letter with an indirect cost waiver reduction (if your Institution's overhead costs are higher) from your grants office, can also be considered.
- **Other expenses:** Any project-related costs which do not fall into any of the above categories.

5 After acceptance

5.1 Osteology Foundations grant database

When submitting a proposal to the Osteology Foundation, the principal investigator and all co-applicants agree that the following information will be published with a delay of 6 months after a positive funding decision within the grant database of the Foundation's website.

The following information may be publicly disclosed: Year of funding, Funding programme, Investigators, Project title, Academic affiliation, Country, Region, Amount of funding, Project status and Link to publications, Graphical abstract, Layman summary.

5.2 Funding policy

The maximum funding amount for each project proposal is **CHF 10'000**.

Upon the acceptance of the proposal, and submission of the IRB approval documentation (if applicable), the grant will be paid in **one instalment**.

5.3 Exclusion from further research funding by the Osteology Foundation

Principal investigators who received funding from the Osteology Foundation will be excluded from funding for the two years following their funding notification.

5.4 Open-access publication

Manuscripts originating from the funded project must be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals with open access. **Fees for open access publication** must be included in the budget plan but **must not exceed 5% of the total funding amount**.

5.5 IRB approval

Please reserve enough time to obtain approval from your national institutional human subjects' review board (IRB), when necessary. The **IRB approval is prerequisite for the payment of any funds**. If a copy of the IRB approval is not received by the Osteology Foundation after 9 months from the notification of acceptance, we reserve the right to withdraw the funding decision.

5.6 Acknowledgements

Financial support provided by the Osteology Foundation should be acknowledged in the publication(s) resulting from this support in the following way:

"The project was supported by a grant [Osteology project number] from the Osteology Foundation, Switzerland."

5.7 Monitoring of funded projects

All funded projects will be monitored for progress semi-annually. The progress report shall give an update on the milestones reached and the timeline for the remaining term of the project according to the accepted proposal.

5.8 Project extensions

Projects can be extended twice at no costs for the Osteology Foundation for a maximum of 1 year at a time. To request a no-cost extension, please contact the Osteology Office (grants@osteology.org).

5.9 Termination of projects

Projects that exceed the maximum project duration including the duration of the no-cost extensions will be terminated by the Osteology Foundation. The remaining funds will no longer be available. Moreover, the Osteology Foundation reserves the right to terminate projects that do not regularly, at least on an annual basis, report on the status/progress of the funded study. The annual progress report is a prerequisite to release remaining funds. If such progress reports are not submitted in due time to the Osteology Foundation, funds will be frozen, and the corresponding financial account will eventually be liquidated. If a copy of the IRB approval is not received by the Osteology Foundation after 9 months from the notification of acceptance, we reserve the right to withdraw the funding decision. The Osteology Foundation reserves the right to decide on an individual project basis.