

American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery Foundation Humanitarian Resident Travel Grants—Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Humanitarian Resident Travel Grants

Thank you for your interest in joining a humanitarian medical mission. Here are some questions and answers, but if you have additional questions, please email humanitarian@entnet.org and we will be glad to help.

1. I am an Academy Resident Member interested in going on an overseas medical mission. How do I apply for an AAO-HNSF travel grant for \$1,000?

Resident members who are PG3, PG4, or PG5 are eligible to apply but priority will be given to PG4 and PG5 residents, because of their more advanced surgical training. Download the application at www.entnet.org/Community/public/Resident-Travel-Grant.cfm. For missions in the first six months of the year (January through June,) the application deadline is November 30 of the previous year. For missions in the second six months (July through December,) the deadline is May 31 of the same year. If you apply too far in advance (more than six months ahead), we will ask you to resubmit updated information.

2. As an Academy Fellow-in-Training (or Member-in Training,) can I apply for a resident travel grant?

Yes, if you are still studying in an otolaryngology program.

3. I received a humanitarian travel grant; can I apply again?

No, you are not eligible for a second travel grant.

4. As a resident, who is not an Academy member, am I eligible for a travel grant?

No, you must first join the Academy, but, if you are a candidate for membership, you can apply.

5. As a board-eligible or board-certified otolaryngologist, can I apply for a fellowship for a mission of more than three months?

Yes, we have a limited availability of funds for such a fellowship. To learn more, please contact humanitarian@entnet.org.

6. Can you advise me on finding a mission I can join?

Please contact Academy staff at humanitarian@entnet.org for a list of organizations that arrange overseas missions. In addition, contact Academy staff with your travel dates/availability, preferred destination, and clinical specialty. Allow several months to find and confirm your mission arrangements.

7. Are there other sources of mission information?

Our Humanitarian Efforts Committee, Section on Residents and Fellows (SRF), and your own otolaryngology department are good sources. At the AAO-HNSF annual meeting or the mid-winter Board of Governors or summer Joint Surgical Advocacy Conference, pick up information or ask questions at our Humanitarian booth or display table. At the annual meeting, you can also visit the Humanitarian roundtable at the SRF Assembly, or attend the Humanitarian Open Forum to pick up pointers from colleagues returning from missions.

8. Do you have advice about joining an overseas medical mission?

Yes, please read James D. Smith, MD's "What to Expect from a Medical Mission" at <http://www.entnet.org/Community/public/Medical-Mission.cfm>

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9. Any advice on the travel grant application?

After completing the professional and personal information, write a detailed and specific project plan. Attach a short version of your CV (no more than three pages), including relevant background on previous volunteer work in the US and/or overseas. A CV longer than three pages will be truncated at the third page. Include letters of reference (PDF) from your department chair and/or training program director. Other reference letters from a board-certified otolaryngologist who will supervise you, and (optional) a physician with whom you have worked and/or (optional) a non-medical friend. Submit your application and documentation by email as a single PDF attachment. If it is larger than 6 MB, mail it on a CD.

10. What does the selection panel look for in an application?

The panel gives weighted scores to preparation/planning, degree of need in the area, level of training, and motivation or history of volunteerism. The panel looks for your prior experiences, preparedness, ability to make an impact, and motivation/plans for future humanitarian work.

11. What should I include in the project plan?

The sponsoring organization can give you details on the country, hospital or clinic, goals, and professional composition of the team. On your return, you can re-purpose your project plan to write articles for the *Bulletin*, your departmental newsletter, and, when you start your practice, even your practice website.

12. Do I need a support letter from my department chair or residency training program director?

Your department chair or training program director needs to confirm that time will be made available for you to leave the department for the mission. It is an opportunity for your chair or program director to recommend why you deserve the travel grant. To give your chair or program director time to write the recommendation, be sure to check with your department secretary three or four weeks before the application deadline. Especially around Thanksgiving in November and the COSM meetings in May, many chairs and program directors are away from their offices. Late arriving letters of reference will not be included in your package.

13. What other letters are required?

If you are not supervised by a faculty member from your department, you need a letter from a board-certified otolaryngologist or plastic surgeon who will supervise you on the mission.

14. Should reference letters be sent to the Academy?

No, please ask your references NOT to mail, fax, or email their letters separately to the Academy. These must be included as PDFs with your application package, so allow time for your other references to write on your behalf. Letters arriving by mail or fax will be discarded.

15. How should I follow up my application?

We will notify you on receipt of your emailed application package, including any questions about missing documents. Late applications cannot be reviewed because many missions depart early in the cycle and we try to notify residents before they leave.

16. When will I be notified?

The applications go to the panel for review immediately after the deadline, and the notifications are sent out about three weeks after the deadline. Award notifications also go to the department chairs.

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17. How are travel grants paid?

After notification, our accounting staff sends a W-9 form for completion. As soon as the staff receives your completed W-9, a \$1,000 check is cut and mailed to the address stated on the application form. If you prefer to have the check made out to your department, you do not need to complete a W-9 form.

18. If I don't get a travel grant, what should I do?

The travel grants have become highly competitive, so not every applicant is successful. We do have some tips on other sources to assist your fundraising, such as family, friends, faith communities, and corporate support from pharmaceutical and medical device/instrument companies. Some departments are starting to budget for travel grants. You are welcome to apply again at a future date, and, since travel grants tend to go to senior residents, you may have a better chance the following year.

19. What should I do on my return?

Please send us a short report (200-300 words) for the *Bulletin* with two or three photos showing physicians caring for patients. Photos must be high definition (.JPG 300 DPI) sent as separate attachments, not embedded in the Word document. Include written captions in a separate Word document to go with the photos, identifying individuals by name. To learn about *Bulletin* style, go to www.entnet.org/EducationAndResearch/upload/Bulletin_Submissions.pdf. In addition to writing about your destination, type of mission, Academy members on the team, and surgical/clinical care, please write about your personal impressions and experiences.

20. Can residents record in their surgical case log the procedures they perform on a mission?

At this time, procedures performed by residents on volunteer missions cannot be recorded in their surgical case logs.

Some letters of reference writers will note the resident's surgical experience from the mission, which may help with hospital privileges or gaining further training. Residents can include the surgical experience from the mission (with or without actual case numbers) in their CVs.

21. Any other follow-up?

Yes, we encourage you to share your humanitarian experiences with other residents. We welcome you to attend annual meeting activities, especially the Humanitarian Open Forum and spending time at the Humanitarian booth in the registration area. If you wish to report on your mission at the open forum, please contact humanitarian@entnet.org.

To learn more about the Humanitarian Resident Travel Grants or the Humanitarian Efforts Program, please email humanitarian@entnet.org or call Catherine R. Lincoln, CAE, MA, Senior Manager, International/Humanitarian at 1-703-535-3738. American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery Foundation
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