FPTR
FOUNDATION FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY RESEARCH

2026 Promotion of Doctoral Studies Scholarships
Doctoral Candidates
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

You must use the Foundation's online application platform on ProposalCentral.com to submit your application by 4:59 p.m. EST, January 20, 2026

Program name on ProposalCentral.com: Promotion of Doctoral Studies II

1. GETTING STARTED

1.1. Set up an Account

Applicants who already have a ProposalCentral account may skip this section. Select the "Applicant or Awardee" tab before you log in via the ProposalCentral.com website page.

If you do not have an account, go to the ProposalCentral.com website page. Choose the "Applicant or Awardee" tab. You have two options to create your account. One is to click on "Need an account," then enter your first and last name, email address, create a password, choose a challenge question, and provide the answer to it. The other option is to create an account using your existing ORCID ID.

1.2. Navigate to the Application Form

1.2.1. Click on the Applicant tab

If you have not linked your ORCID ID to your ProposalCentral account, click on the Professional Profile tab and connect your ID.[1] If you are all set, skip this step and proceed to click on the "Grant
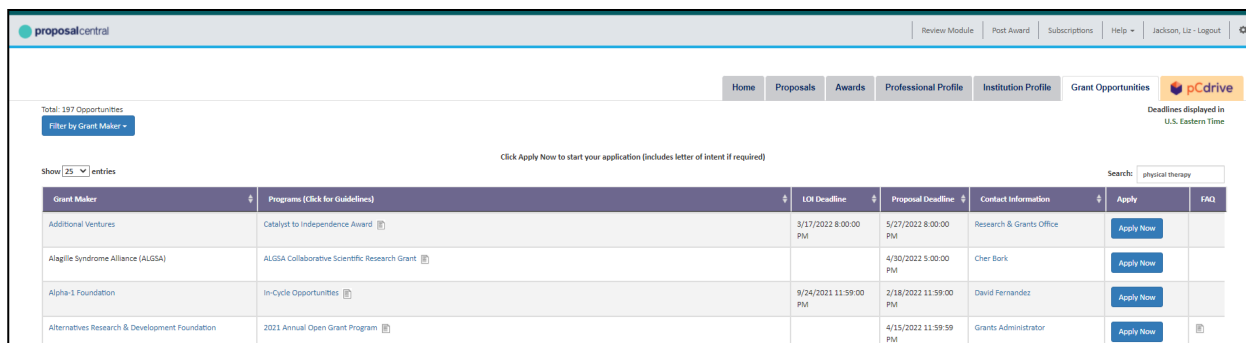

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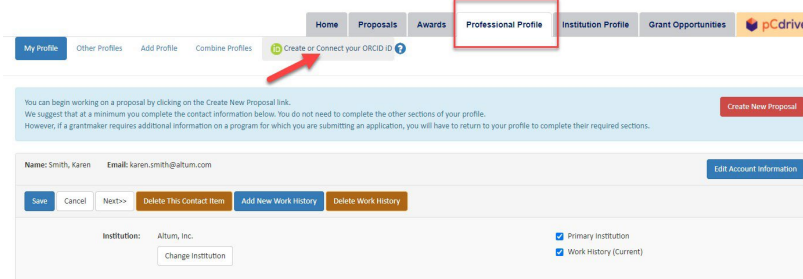
[1] You will be required to have an ORCID ID if you are awarded a Foundation grant. If you want to create one while creating your ProposalCentral account, click on "Login with ORCID" button as your sign in. You will land on the ORCID sign in, where you will click on this link, "Don't have an ORCID ID yet? Register now." Once you have your number, you still need to create your ProposalCentral account and link your ORCID ID before you can use it to log on.

Opportunities" toward the right on the main tabs menu.

1.2.2. Click on the Grant Opportunities tab

Navigate to the "Grant Opportunities" tab and enter "Foundation for Physical Therapy Research" into the search box. You will get the list of all the Foundation grants.

Scroll down to find **Promotion of Doctoral Studies I** on the list and click the **"Apply Now"** button. You will be taken to the application. *If you scroll down and do not see it, look at the right corner below the list and click on the right arrow to go to the second page of Foundation opportunities.*

1.2.3. Create and Save Your Application

We strongly recommend that you complete the first section, General Information and Title, in case you create multiple versions and need to tell them apart.

Click on "Save" for the system to create an application form you can revisit as many times as you wish prior to submission. You cannot delete an application once created.

Once you complete the first section and saved it, you will be able to save your content whenever you click "Save" or "Next" on each page. Prior to saving this first section, an exit would not save the application, and you could not proceed to the next sections of the application.

You may exit the application by clicking the "Exit" button.

1.2.4. Resume Work on an Unfinished Application

To resume your work, login to ProposalCentral.com. You will land on the "Home" tab page. You will see your application listed. Click on the application identifier number associated with it to access the application.
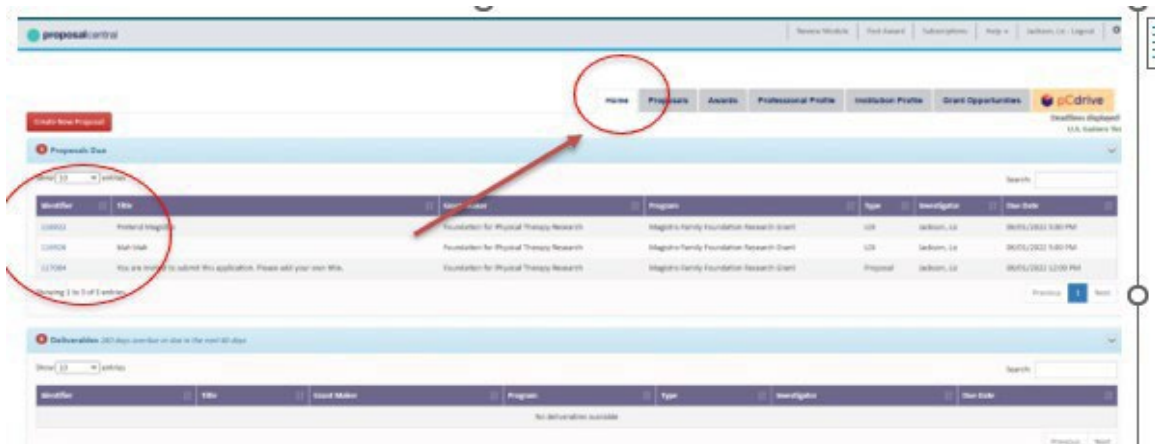
You are able to work on any portion of the application as many times as you like until you click "Submit."

1.2.5. Quick Access to the 2026 PODSI Guidelines

You can find a link to the 2026 PODSI guidelines in the box beneath the table of contents on the left side of the application.

2. Questions

For questions about the getting set up or the application itself, please contact Mary (MaryNusloch@foundation4PT.org), the Scientific Programs Specialist.

For any technical assistance in using the Foundation's application platform on ProposalCentral, please contact **pcsupport@altum.com** or call **800-872-2562** or **703-964-5840.** Their support hours are 8:30 AM to 5:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. They do not answer questions about the application itself, only how to navigate the application form on the platform.

> Before you contact the Foundation or ProposalCentral,
> Please read these instructions carefully and consult the FAQ on the
> Scholarships page of the Foundation website.

These instructions are for doctoral candidate applicants only. They correspond to the **Promotion of Doctoral Studies II** application form on ProposalCentral.com.

Read the guidelines and these instructions carefully and thoroughly. The Foundation has changed requirements since last year.

Sign up for the FAQs update mailing on the website to stay abreast of important clarifications, corrections, and more detailed guidance in response to applicants' questions.

General information

The multiple sections of the application are listed along the lefthand side of the screen once you open the application form. Each section has required information that must be entered or uploaded before your application is considered complete and can be submitted to the Foundation.

Use the "Validate" button throughout the process to see a list of requirements for submission that still need to be completed.

Required fields are marked with a red asterisk *. If one of these fields are left blank, your application will not fully validate. You will not be able to submit your application until you enter the missing information.

Section 1: GENERAL INFORMATION AND PROJECT TITLE

Provide a title that reflects your intended area of research. Applicants have to provide a research plan for the scholarship period. Consider a title that will reflect that plan. Once you have entered a title and clicked on save, your application has been created on the ProposalCentral system, and you may exit or continue working on it by clicking next.

Section 2: Download Templates

This section provides all the Word® templates and their detailed instructions that you need to complete each one. Required templates have been pre-formatted.
DOWNLOAD THE TEMPLATES TO ENSURE YOU ARE USING CORRECTLY FORMATTED AND THE MOST UP-TO-DATE VERSIONS.

Section 3: Enable Other Users to Access Your Application

This page allows you to give other users access to your grant application. Because your program director or department chair is required to sign your application, you will add them in you Key Personnel section. Once you have added them there, ProposalCentral automatically adds them to this section with "edit" rights so that they can sign. You need not add them here.

Section 4: Applicant

Contact information from your Professional Profile on ProposalCentral), including your primary institutional affiliation, is pre-loaded into this section of the application.

Note: If the required fields are incomplete or incorrect in this section, changes must be made in your Professional Profile, not in this section. You can go directly to it by clicking the button "Edit Professional Profile." Alternatively, you may exit the Applicant section and use the Professional Profile tab in your ProposalCentral management window (located in a different ProposalCentral browser window than the application).

Section 5: Institution Information

The institution is the one at which you are enrolled for your doctoral studies. By default, the one you chose in the Applicant section will appear here automatically.

To change the Institution, choose from the list of institutions and press the button "Change Institution." The initial list contains only the following: the current institution, the institutions that you listed in your Professional Profile, and any other institutions that include your UserID in their access list. Use the Search option to search for the other institution profiles available in ProposalCentral. Results of the Search will be added to the list of institutions. To change the Institution, choose from the new list of institutions and press the button "Change Institution." If, after changing the Institution, you need to update the contact information that appears below it, you can click "Edit Institution Profile" to go directly to that Institution Profile (this button is only available if you have Edit access to the selected Institution Profile). If you cannot access that field, you must ask your institutional official for assistance.

Section 6: Key Personnel

You are required to add at least one mentor (if adding more than one, add all that you will be listing in your Mentor Information and Support template) and program director or department chair. The system should allow you to proceed after adding at least one mentor and program director or department chair. You do not need to add the person(s) providing a blinded letter(s) of recommendation.

To start an entry, enter their email address and click the "Add" icon.

Each person you add will need to have the following information provided:

    Role: Select the person's role from the list

    Other Role: For a role not listed in the drop-down list

    Effort: % mentoring effort this individual will provide

    First Name: Enter first name.

    Middle Name or initial: Enter middle initial or name (optional)

    Last Name: Enter last name. PUT ONLY THE LAST NAME HERE.

    Licenses, Degrees, and Certifications Obtained: Here is an example of what goes in this field: PT, DPT, PhD. **DO NOT** ADD THESE ABBREVIATIONS IN THE LAST NAME FIELD!!

    Position Title: Enter current position title

    Institution: Search and Select or manually enter their current employer

    Department:

    Street Address:

    City:

    State:

    Zip Code:

    Day time Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

    Key Personnel Biosketch: Attach completed biosketches (required for all mentors supporting your training who are listed in this section and in the Mentor Information and Support template).

Click Save and Close window once each person's information is complete.

Do **not** upload biosketches for yourself, your program director or department chair or the person(s) providing a blinded letter of recommendation.
You will upload your biosketch in the Attachments section. The others do not provide biosketches.

Section 7: Blinded Letter(s) of Recommendation

You must enter at least one person to provide this letter. The maximum number allowed is two.

Do not ask any mentor to provide a blinded recommendation.

Please enter the e-mail address of the person who will provide the blinded letter of recommendation in the "enter email address" box. Then click the plus sign to add them. If this e-mail address is already in the system, an immediate option to 'Send E-mail' will appear. Click 'Send E-mail.'

(If the e-mail is not in the ProposalCentral system, enter a first and last name when requested. Then click 'Send E-mail'). After 'Send E-mail,' click 'Close Window.'

The table below will refresh listing the new person. An email will be sent to that person that will include a link to the ProposalCentral website and instructions for how to provide the recommendation letter for your

scholarship application.

At least one person must respond for your application to be complete. When they submit their letter, the Response column will update to Submitted. You will not be able to view the letter, but you can monitor here whether a person has sent the letter.

If the person clicks on the upload link more than three times without uploading their letter, the link expires. The link also expires two weeks after you send them the invitation. In either case, you must resend the invitation by repeating these steps.

Section 8: Eligibility

You will be asked to respond to each of these questions, and all answers must be yes for you to be eligible to apply for a scholarship:

1. Will you possess a U.S. PT or PTA license by September 1, 2026?
2. Enter the license number or expected date it will be issued.
3. Are you enrolled in an eligible[2] accredited academic doctoral program?
4. Do you **explicitly state in your research plan** how your research addresses one or more priorities in the APTA research agenda or in a publicly available academy research agenda? Failure to state this link explicitly will result in disqualification from review.
5. Do your listed mentors meet the eligibility requirements?
6. Are you in good standing with the Foundation?[3]
7. Are you committed to practicing in the PT profession in the U.S. or its territories?
8. Do you intend to pursue a career in physical therapy-related research?
9. Are you a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident?
10. You will have passed the requirements for doctoral candidacy before September 1, 2026?
11. Do you intend to teach in a PT education program?

Section 8: Progress Report

The first subsection (summary) must have text in order for your application to validate. For any information request that does not apply, enter N/A. If you are or have been a PODS awardee, please indicate that fact in your report.

Section 9: Abstracts and Research Keywords

Lay Abstract. Please describe your research area in simple, non-technical, non-jargony terms for a professional audience that may not be familiar with research. This one may be posted on the Foundation website and should not contain proprietary information. **This field has a character limit of**

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[2] An eligible doctoral program is one that is fully accredited and provides an academic doctoral degree that provides the research knowledge and skills to conduct physical therapy research, for example, a PhD, DSc or EdD. DPT degrees are not eligible.
[3] Good standing applies to any applicant who has held an award or grant from the Foundation. It means they have satisfied all obligations associated with that funding according to the terms and conditions of the contract.

2,000 (approximately a half page).

Technical Abstract. Describe where you are in the educational process and your proposed area of research concentration. Be as specific as possible given the current phase of your education. Include a description of how your research relates to science and evidence supporting physical therapy practice. Be as specific as possible while avoiding jargon or abbreviations. Do not include citations in this field. **This field has a character limit of 3,000 (approximately a half page).**

Research Keywords. Select at least five (5) keywords that describe the technical aspects, specialty areas of research, populations, and other main characteristics of your program of study and research plan. **The Foundation uses these keywords to match your application to appropriate reviewers.** Click on the + sign to add words. You will be able to remove words that you decide not to keep on the list. The more specific word you can add, the better your application will be matched to the expertise of the reviewers.

Section 10: Budget Period Detail

You must enter the following information:
Start Date: 9/1/2026
End Date: 8/31/2027

Personnel Costs: Enter your full name. Choose "Applicant" under Role.
Requested Support: $15,000.00 (you must request this amount)

You may choose to enter the full amount as payment to yourself. ProposalCentral has a fixed label, salary & wages, but your scholarship is neither. It is a stipend. You may use the other headings to break down your costs as you wish. Should you be awarded a scholarship, the Foundation will provide you with guidance on costs that require prior approval and costs that require receipts.

You will be able to change the amounts and how the funds are allocated in your budget if you are awarded a scholarship.

Regardless of how you decide to break down your budget, you remain 100% liable for knowing your tax obligations and for meeting them. Having your institution receive your funds does not affect tax liabilities associated with an award.

Section 11: Budget Summary

This is section that ProposalCentral generates automatically. You cannot change any of this information. You do not need to take any action.

Section 12: Attachments

Please keep these instructions in mind when completing the required templates and uploading them and any required or optional attachments that do not have templates. The blinded letter(s) of recommendation are not managed here. You will not see them, and you do not have to upload them.

- **Attachments must be submitted in Adobe PDF format**.
- **Page limits are set according to the PDF pages, not the Word pages**.
- **Templates or instructions** for application information requirements can be found in section 2 of the application.
- **All required templates** have been pre-formatted and contain specific instructions for completing them. Please follow the instructions closely. Failure to follow them could result in your application not advancing to review.
- **Do not change any page formatting.** If you do and it means your attachment exceeds the number of pages allowed, your application will not validate, and you will not be able to submit it until you fix it. You may change the column width in filling in tables in the templates.
- **Always use the templates provided in the online application.** Do not use the copies of them provided in the appendix.

The following templates are required:

Confirmation of enrollment. Have your Program Director or Department Chair complete the form as directed. Since they are a listed user with edit access, either they or you can upload it. If they upload it, please check that it has been correctly completed prior to submission.

Applicant Biosketch. This template is set up differently from the mentor biosketch template and from the NIH format. Please be sure to use the template provided.

Mentor Biosketch. You must upload a completed biosketch (using the template provided) for each mentor you have listed in section 5.1. of the Mentor Information and Support template. A mentor's biosketch is limited to 5 pages.

Mentor Award Record. This is a separate attachment template that your only mentor or, if you have more than one, the mentor who is providing the most mentoring support, needs to complete. This record is more comprehensive than the information provided in the mentor information and support attachment, which covered only support that had direct bearing on your training.

Do **NOT** provide a biosketch for the following people: (1) the person(s) providing the blinded letter of recommendation; and (2) your program director or department chair.

> **All biosketches except the applicant's are uploaded in the Key Personnel section of the application. The upload button appears at the end of the dialogue box when you are entering their information. You may proceed without uploading a biosketch, but you will not be able to validate and submit your application until it is uploaded.**

Letter(s) of Support. You are required to provide letters of support from any mentor listed in section 5.1. of your Mentor Information and Support template. All letters need to follow the instructions that you will download in section 2 of the application. The following people do NOT submit a letter of support: program director or department chair, or the person(s) submitting a blinded letter of recommendation.

Mentor Information and Support. You and your mentor(s) will complete this template as directed in the template instructions.

Training Objectives and Plan. You need to complete this template. Your mentor(s) should have this information as a reference in working with you to finalize your training plan and the support they will provide. There is a 4-page limit.

Research Plan. You should develop this plan with input from your mentor(s). There is a 7-page limit.

References. Use this template to list references cited in your application. You may also list directly relevant references that you do not cite. This template has a 3-page limit. If you do not cite any works, then you still must indicate that there are none and upload it.

Transcripts and Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training. Please provide an unlocked official transcript signed by the registrar for every **academic** institution listed in your biosketch. The transcripts can be copies of official transcripts with seals and registrar signatures. Printouts of grades from student accounts are NOT acceptable. Transcripts that cannot be read will be returned.

Please include the official transcript of your most recent (fall 2025) semester. Any courses not listed in your most recent transcript must be listed in section D in your biosketch. Please contact Mary (MaryNusloch@foundation4pt.org) if you cannot include your most recent semester transcript by the submission deadline. You will need to submit it prior to the review phase (approximately one week after the submission deadline).

Please add your **human subjects protection training certificate** at the end of your compiled transcripts. It must be the certificate, and it must be for human subjects protection training. Do NOT include the course transcript.

You must compile all official transcripts together in a single Adobe PDF file. Scan these documents so that the most recent grades are listed first and oldest are listed last. Do not submit a transcript with access date expirations or permission controls.

Section 13: Demographic Information (optional)

Your information will be deidentified. This section is not shared with reviewers. The Foundation uses this information to monitor its commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Section 14: Validate

You may use this function at any time in preparing your application. ProposalCentral will provide a report confirming any required documents or information that you still need to provide in order to submit your application.

Section 15: Required Signatures and Print

You must have two e-signatures in order to submit. You must e-sign your application to certify and submit it. Your program director or department chair must also e-sign and certify your application in order for it to be submitted. They must be listed in your contacts and have edit rights (see section 3 above about adding contacts).

Section 16: Submit

You will be able to submit only when all required documents have been successfully uploaded and required information in the application has been provided. The validate function will identify anything that is missing.

Once you have submitted, you may unsubmit your application and continue to work on it up to the submission deadline. Once the deadline has passed, you will not be able to make any changes unless so directed by the Foundation during the compliance with requirements review.

For any questions about the application requirements, please be sure to check for updates and FAQs. You can sign up to receive them via email by filling out the form on the scholarships page on the Foundation website. If you still have questions, contact Mary (MaryNuslock@foundation4pt.org). She will respond during normal business hours.

For questions or problems using ProposalCentral, contact PCSupport@altum.com, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.– 5:00 p.m. EST. By phone (toll-free): 800 875 2562 (Toll-free U.S. and Canada) or +1 703 964 5840.