



Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation

Statement of Research Priorities

Prologue

From our earliest days, the Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation (RLSF) has focused, as part of our mission and goals, to support research leading to better treatments and to find a cure for RLS.

A challenge to the Foundation is how best to allocate scarce research funding dollars between the nearer-term goal to improve treatments and the longer-term goal to find a cure.

The RLS Foundation Board of Directors has adopted the following guidelines for research funding prioritization. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework for board decisions in situations where demand for research funds exceeds available resources.

Basic Principles

1. The Foundation supports research that holds promise to find a cure, to improve quality of treatment or access to treatment, and to lessen suffering of those struggling with RLS.
2. The Foundation will fund only scientifically sound research conducted according to US and (where appropriate) international scientific standards and research protocols.

In deciding which projects to fund, the RLS Foundation Board Directors will consider the above Principles and the following Prioritization Factors:

Research Prioritization Factors

1. **Scientific quality:** The Foundation will, in general, give higher priority to proposals that are higher-ranked in terms of scientific quality rather than those of lower rank. Research proposals submitted for funding consideration undergo a rigorous NIH-style review and scoring process by leading scientists in the field. The chair of the Research Grant Committee of the Scientific and Medical Advisory Board shall present to the Board the results of each grant review with the scores for each proposal, and recommendations from the Research Grant Committee for funding.
2. **Potential Benefit to RLS Patients:** In consideration of projects that are of acceptable scientific quality, preference should be given to projects that are deemed likely to provide greater benefit to RLS patients.

3. **Relevance to Foundation Targets:** The Research Grant Committee shall create and regularly update a list of research targets that the Foundation considers essential and desirable, which shall be prominently posted on the Research and Grants page on the Foundation's website. Proposals that address those research subjects shall be given high priority.
4. **Timeliness:** If there are time-related factors associated with the project's expected results (for example, relevance to pending public policy issues or connection to funding streams that may only be available for a limited time), such projects should receive higher priority.
5. **Scientific Significance:** If a project has the potential to provide "game changing" results, it should be given higher priority than a project offering only incremental gains.
6. **Potential for Follow-on Funding:** If the above factors are approximately equal, priority should be given to projects that show the greater probability for follow-on funding from other funding sources (e.g. NIH or DOD).
7. **Speed of Outcome:** If the above factors are approximately equal, preference should be given to research projects that will provide results or outcomes sooner, rather than later.

The RLSF Board shall give relative weight to each of the above prioritization factors as it deems appropriate for given circumstances at any time.