



Society of Veterinary Soft Tissue Surgery Grant Proposal Guidelines

The Society of Veterinary Soft Tissue Surgery (SVSTS) was formed in 2002 with the objective of advancing the art and science of soft tissue surgery through: 1. encouraging members to pursue original investigations, report unusual cases, and discuss the diagnosis, management and advances of soft tissue surgical conditions, and 2. encouraging its members to contribute to continuing education in soft tissue surgery and to report in high quality veterinary journals. The SVSTS is delighted to offer a grant to fund projects that advance the field of soft tissue surgery.

To be eligible for the award, the primary investigator must be an active member of the SVSTS. One award of \$10,000 will be awarded, if two proposals meet the scientific standards and sum to \leq \$10,000, two grants may be awarded. If no proposals are submitted that meet the scientific standards, funding may not be awarded for that year. Indirect costs will not be supported.

Full Proposal Guidelines

Proposed projects must be directly related to soft tissue surgical diseases. Blinded proposals will be reviewed and scored by the SVSTS Executive Committee. An ad hoc SVSTS Grant Review committee may be formed as needed depending on the number of proposals submitted.

Principal investigators (PIs) must be active members of the SVSTS. No more than one proposal may be submitted per PI. Upon completion of the research, all projects must be submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. Manuscript titles must include “A Society of Veterinary Soft Tissue Surgery Study.” Information detailing SVSTS funding must be included in the acknowledgement section (“This study was funded by a research grant through the Society of Veterinary Soft Tissue Surgery.”).

Budget justifications must show likelihood that the proposed investment will generate research data for publications. Funding cannot be used for faculty or staff salary support, large equipment, or travel costs. Funding may be used for statistical analysis or publication fees.

Proposal Scoring

Emphasis will be placed on proposals with strong scientific merit, study design, and feasibility for completion within a one-year timeline. Should two proposals receive equivalent scores from the scoring committee, a discussion amongst the SVSTS Executive Committee will occur and a vote taken to select the winning proposal (with five members on the executive committee, this vote will break any tie).

Annual Progress Report

An annual progress report summarizing progress toward the research goals is due one year after receipt of funding. Award recipients will be required to present their project in abstract form at the annual SVSTS meeting within three years of receipt of funding. Failure to complete the annual progress report or abstract presentation requirements will result in the PI being ineligible for future SVSTS funding. When published, the PI will send a copy of the article pdf to the SVSTS Executive Committee to confirm conclusion of the process.

Style and Formatting Guidelines

Proposals should be written in English in 12 point Times New Roman font, single spaced, and with 1” margins. The order of the written proposal should follow the outline below, including numberings and headings. Figures, tables, and graphics must be included in the page limits.

Applicants will submit two copies of the grant proposal: one that includes information on the investigators and one that has been de-identified for blinded review. If any identifying information is present within the text of the proposal, it should be replaced with ‘Masked For Review.’ Proposals should be uploaded to the SVSTS website on the grant proposals page.

- I. **Title page** (limit one page):
 1. **Title of Project**
 2. **Names of principal investigator (PI) and all co-investigators:** include name, degree(s), title, department (if applicable), institution or practice, mailing address, phone number, and email address
- II. **Abstract page** (limit one page):
 1. **Abstract** (limit 250 words): This should be a scientific abstract describing the project. The abstract should address (include headings):
 - a. **Objective/hypothesis:** clearly state the objectives, hypothesis, or both
 - b. **Significance:** why is the project being done, what is the relevance?
 - c. **Subject/population:** what is being studied, what is the target population?
 - d. **Study design:** describe the study design and planned methods
 - e. **Expected results:** what results do you expect to produce?
 - f. **Anticipated outcomes:** how and to whom will the results be useful?
 2. **Significance to soft tissue surgery** (limit 150 words): explain how this study is relevant to the SVSTS, whose main mission is the advancement of soft tissue surgery.
- III. **Study proposal** (limit four pages):
 1. **Justification, significance, literature review:** include relevance to veterinarians, owners, specific breeds, etc. This should be a review of the current status of research in this subject; include any contributions by the investigators.
 2. **Specific, testable hypothesis, specific aims, and objectives:** please be specific
 3. **Preliminary data:** inclusion of preliminary data, particularly that shows the investigator’s expertise in the area of study, will be beneficial
 4. **Experimental methods and design:**
 - a. For each objective, provide a rationale for the methods as designed, expected outcomes, potential pitfalls, and alternative approaches
 - b. Be precise about experimental design: including number of animals needed, treatments, sampling schedules, expected outcomes, etc.
 - c. Justify animal numbers (including *a priori* power analysis and justify that needed number of animals can be feasibly enrolled in the study period with the institution/practice caseload)
 - d. Describe the plan for statistical analysis of data
 5. **Timeline:** indicate the sequence and schedule of events for the project

- IV. **Cited references** (limit one page): References should be formatted according to the 11th edition of the American Medical Association Manual of Style.
1. Example if 6 authors or less: Stanley BJ, Hauptman JG, Fritz MC, Rosenstein DS, Kinns J. Esophageal dysfunction in dogs with idiopathic laryngeal paralysis: a controlled cohort study. *Vet Surg.* 2010;39(2):139-49. doi: 10.1111/j.1532-950X.2009.00626.x.
 2. If > 6 authors, list the first 3 authors followed by et al.
 3. For space reasons, the doi information does not need to be included.
- V. **Budget** (limit one page): provide a summary budget followed by an itemized justification of expenditures. The maximum award amount is \$10,000. If the budget exceeds \$10,000, evidence must be provided that additional funds are available to support the project.
- VI. **Animal involvement justification** (limit ½ a page): provide status of approval for animal use in the project from the appropriate committee (IACUC, clinical research committee, or IRB depending on your institution/practice and the project). If client-owned animals are to be used, please provide a copy of the client consent form. Funds will not be released until full approval from the IACUC or clinical research committee has been granted.
- VII. **Investigator biosketches** (limit 2 pages per investigator): see biosketch document

Proposals not meeting these guidelines will not be reviewed.

Submission

The following documents must be submitted as Microsoft Word files on the SVSTS website grant proposal page.

1. Blinded Proposal: Proposals should be saved as Microsoft Word files with the names SVSTSGrant_BriefTopic_Blinded (where BriefTopic is a brief description of the topic such as PSS, GIsurgery, Urinarybladder, etc.).
2. Complete Proposal: see 1. above, this document should be named SVSTSGrant_BriefTopic_Complete
3. Investigator Biosketches as a single document, Microsoft Word file, names SVSTSGrant_BriefTopic_Biosketches

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SVSTS Grant Scoring Guidelines

	10 points	8 points	6 points	4 points	2 points	0 points	Score
Originality/innovation	Study provides a novel method of treating the condition		Study is similar to previous studies with some novel components		Study is a repeat of previous studies with minimal new techniques proposed		
Significance/potential impact to soft tissue surgery	Clear and detailed justification of the need for the study		Need for the study is described but lacks detail		Need for the study not well described or justified		
Attainability of objectives	Hypothesis, objectives, and specific aims clear and detailed and highly likely to answer the research question		Hypothesis, objectives, and specific aims lacking some detail but seem likely to answer the research question		Hypothesis, objectives, and specific aims lack detail and seem unable to answer the research question		
Materials and methods	Well designed, highly likely to address the objectives and specific aims		Adequately designed, likely to address the objectives and specific aims		Insufficiently explained, may be likely to answer the research question		
	5 points	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points	
Budget	Appropriate for study design, well justified		Appropriate for study design, not well justified		Not well justified, items missing that are needed for study completion		
Grantsmanship	Clear and concise writing, excellent grammar		Clear and concise writing, good grammar, few typos		Writing difficult to follow, poor grammar, multiple typos	Does not follow formatting guidelines	
Environment/ Investigators (to be completed after blinded review)	Experienced in the study subject and techniques including prior publications on the subject, equipment needed available		Specific experience in the subject lacking but has other research experience, equipment needed available		No experience in the subject or other research projects, equipment needed available		