

2020 APPLICATION GUIDE
COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS
CREATING OPPORTUNITY & INDEPENDENCE

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation



This guide provides information on the Creating Opportunity & Independence (CO&I) grants. It is the Principal Investigator (PI)/Fellow/Applicant's (hereafter referred to as "Applicant") responsibility to carefully review the current application guide. Submissions that do not adhere to the most current guidelines, deadlines and/or required documentation will be disqualified without review.

CURRENT DEADLINES	
January 10, 2020 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)	Letter of Intent (LOI) Due via proposalCENTRAL
March 2020	Notification of LOI Results
April 27, 2020 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)	Full Grant Application (FGA) Due via proposalCENTRAL
September 2020	Notification of FGA Results
October 2020	Awarded Grants to be Funded

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PART 1: OVERVIEW OF FUNDING

A. About the Neilsen Foundation

Established in 2002 as a private foundation, the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation is dedicated to spinal cord injury (SCI) research and quality of life programs for people living with SCI. Mr. Neilsen lived with a high level spinal cord injury for 21 years until his passing in 2006. He was a visionary with an entrepreneurial spirit who led his companies with inexhaustible passion. Craig Neilsen wanted his foundation to contribute in a significant way to SCI research and to offer those with SCI the quality of life they deserve.

Mission

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation's funding is dedicated to supporting both programs and scientific research to improve the quality of life for those affected by and living with spinal cord injury.

Vision

Individuals with spinal cord injuries, and those who care for them, live full and productive lives as active participants in their communities.

Values

Our values are inspired by our Founder, Craig Neilsen, who overcame barriers during his lifetime, empowered others to do the same, and created this organization to impact the field today and expand solutions for tomorrow. We value excellence, leadership, accountability, innovation, and collaboration.

NEILSEN FOUNDATION SCI FUNDING PORTFOLIOS

Research Grants:

- Spinal Cord Injury Research on the Translational Spectrum (SCIRTS): The goal of the portfolio is to address gaps in the field and advance novel approaches to improving function and developing curative therapies after SCI. This research is designed to improve understanding and advance the treatment of acute and chronic SCI and includes mechanistic, preclinical, translational and/or clinical studies.
- Psychosocial Research (PSR): The goal of the portfolio is to develop sound data to inform and disseminate best practices that produce better outcomes, improving quality of life for people living with SCI. This research explores the interrelation of behavioral, social and psychological factors that influence participation, health practice, lifestyle, and support systems in community and clinical settings.

Programmatic Grants:

- Creating Opportunity & Independence (CO&I): The goal of the portfolio is to support organizations that provide programs and services that enhance quality of life for individuals and families living with SCI. These grants cover diverse efforts that include discrete projects, program support and capacity building.

Education Grants:

- Spinal Cord Injury Medicine Fellowships (SCIMF): The goal of the portfolio is to support clinical training and to ensure that a sufficient number of physicians are attracted to the field to meet the needs of patients with SCI. SCIMF grants are awarded to ACGME-accredited programs to train physicians specifically in the field of SCI care.

- Neilsen Scholarship Program (NSP): The goal of the portfolio is to support students with SCI in their pursuit of higher education. Funding to selected academic institutions provides scholarships to qualified students in the curriculum of their choice. The Neilsen Foundation supports tuition and fees, as well as providing supplemental support funds to remove barriers to academic progress related to the students' SCI-associated needs.

Please visit the Neilsen Foundation website at www.chnfoundation.org for application guides, deadlines and information on previously funded grants.

B. CO&I Portfolio Funding

PORTFOLIO SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Promote community integration, participation and independence for individuals living with SCI
- Remove barriers and promote access
- Promote health and wellness in rehabilitation, through transitional stages, and in the community
- Promote self-efficacy
- Address diverse regional needs and available resources

The Neilsen Foundation is interested in projects and ongoing programs that have broad impact, affect people across the lifespan, demonstrate partnerships and empower individuals with SCI.

This Application Guide is intended specifically for CO&I Community Support Grants.

C. Eligibility and Other Requirements

ELIGIBILITY

- The grantee must be a **nonprofit organization or rehabilitation facility located in the United States or Canada** with a demonstrated capability to conduct grant-funded programs or activities.
- Neilsen Foundation grants are not awarded to individuals, private foundations or non-functionally integrated Type III supporting organizations.
- The Applicant named in a grant application must be deemed eligible by his/her organization to apply for a grant, and is expected to be responsible for conduct of the grant activities.
- An organization may only submit one application in a given program cycle and may hold only one Neilsen Foundation award within a given CO&I grant category at one time. (See below PART 2, SECTION F. Concurrent Grants Across Neilsen Foundation Portfolios).

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- All application materials and communications (including IRB approvals, where applicable) must be written in English and budgets must be in U.S. dollars.
- Applicants should carefully review additional requirements specific to each funding category (see instructions below) to ensure they meet the relevant, specific requirements before submitting either a Letter of Intent (LOI) or Full Grant Application (FGA).
- Approval of a final project and final expenditure report will be required at the end of the grant.

- Perceived or real conflicts of interest (e.g., shareholder in a company providing a device for a study or program) must be disclosed in all stages of the application process.
- The grantee organization will retain title to Intellectual Property developed through the study or program/project.

CO&I COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS

Types of Funding:

Community Support Grants cover diverse efforts that include one or more of the following:

- **“Projects”** are discrete initiatives designed to achieve a specific, identified goal during the funding period. Funding can be requested to develop, launch or augment solutions that respond to a need or eliminate barriers to participation.
- **“Program support”** funds the activities and services provided by organizations that serve the community. Funding may be requested to support or improve participation by persons with SCI. Priority is given to programs that have broad impact, affect people across the lifespan, demonstrate community partnerships and/or empower people with SCI by providing options and opportunities to achieve greater independence.
- **“Capacity building”** supports an organization’s sustainability and effectiveness. Funding may be requested for specified needs such as equipment, alterations that promote access, strategic and/or collaborative planning efforts, staff training and professional development. These funds are for established organizations and not intended to subsidize start-up costs.

Applicants are encouraged to describe in their application how the request aligns with one or more of the types of funding outlined above.

Cost Considerations:

- Funding is for one year, from \$25,000 - \$100,000.
- Requests for general administrative and overhead costs (i.e., indirect costs) are allowed up to 10% of the total cost.
- Support for large, capital construction or renovation is not allowed.

Topic Areas:

- Arts, Sports and Recreation: e.g., community partnership initiatives, visual and performing arts programs, equipment, travel funds, event support or wellness programs.
- Assistive Technology: i.e., access to a piece of equipment, device or product system (e.g., an app) to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities.
- Education: i.e., programs to promote return to school/university, education readiness, literacy interventions, General Education Development courses, tutoring programs.
 - *Note: For educational activities used as a tool to advance employment, independent living, or rehabilitation, select the respective programmatic goal, as opposed to Education.*

- Employment: e.g., vocational training, local employment placement, return-to-work programs, employment initiatives.
- Independent Living: e.g., accessible housing to move people with SCI out of nursing homes, adaptive driving programs, consumer education focused on independent living, transition/reintegration projects, companion animal services, and independent living centers.
- Rehabilitation: e.g., health/wellness literacy, patient/family education, patient assistance funds and equipment, including clinical and/or assistive technology associated with rehabilitation services.

Do not include:

- Academic Scholarships: The Neilsen Foundation supports educational scholarships at select colleges and universities throughout the U.S., by invitation only, through the Neilsen Scholarship Program.
- Conferences: If the sole purpose of a proposal is to support a consumer-based conference, contact the CO&I Program Officer before submitting an LOI.

Additional Considerations

- **Focus on SCI:** Applicants must clearly address how the needs of people living with SCI will be served. While it is understood that spinal cord disease/conditions may be closely linked, the Neilsen Foundation's primary area of focus is on traumatic and chronic SCI.
- **Impact:** The Neilsen Foundation prioritizes applications that clearly describe the potential to enhance the quality of life of people living with SCI. Applications will be evaluated for their ability to address barriers in the field or to expand services or opportunities.
- **Feasibility:** The application should document the experience and expertise needed for success.
- **Collaboration:** Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate community partnerships and should avoid duplication of services. Demonstration of shared community resources is also encouraged.
- **Evaluation:** Clear evaluation measures including but not limited to citing the number of persons served, should be defined.
- **Medical supervision, if equipment is requested:** Any organization requesting funding for medical/clinical equipment must provide clear documentation demonstrating medical supervision by clinically trained staff.
- **Other funding:** It is strongly recommended that organizations have additional sources of funding. *Under no circumstances will the Neilsen Foundation be obligated to continue funding following the grant term.*

PART 2: APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Submission Requirements

For each cycle, the application process begins with an LOI. FGAs will only be accepted from Applicants invited through the most recent LOI competition.

The Nielsen Foundation uses the web-based grants system, proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalCENTRAL.altum.com>), to review and manage its grants.

TIMELY SUBMISSION

All application deadlines, dates and times are strictly enforced. The online system, proposalCENTRAL, will automatically close at the cycle's stated deadline date and time.

We strongly recommend that you begin the application process in proposalCENTRAL well in advance of all deadlines. *Late submissions will not be considered.*

NOTE: Do not wait until the last day to submit your grant application and any required documentation. Technical difficulties will not be accepted as an explanation for late submissions.

NEILSEN FOUNDATION TEMPLATES

The Nielsen Foundation requires that all Applicants use the most recent templates provided in proposalCENTRAL for the LOI and FGA processes. *It is important to note that Applicants **may not modify** any Nielsen Foundation template.* Examples of disallowed modifications include changing margins, deleting template text (including instructions), changing form font sizes, etc. **If an Applicant modifies or fails to use a current Nielsen Foundation template or exceeds page limits, the LOI or FGA will be automatically disqualified for the current cycle.**

NOTE FOR MAC USERS: All Nielsen Foundation documents are created in Microsoft Word or Excel. Mac users may experience difficulties; it is strongly recommended that Applicants allow ample time to create and submit proposal materials. If you experience difficulty with the templates, contact your local IT support.

PDF ATTACHMENTS

If a document is required to be submitted as a portable document format (PDF) attachment and assistance is needed in converting documents to PDF, select "Download Templates & Instructions" (located in the navigation bar), click on the link at the bottom of the page "Click here for a list of PDF generators" to view "Converting Your Documents to PDFs." If assistance is needed, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Service at (800) 875-2562 or via email at pcsupport@altum.com.

APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact information entered in proposalCENTRAL must include a current email address for the Applicant.

The Nielsen Foundation relies on contact information located in proposalCENTRAL to contact its Applicants and grantees. In order to receive important updates, it is the Applicant and grantee

organization's responsibility to keep his/her proposalCENTRAL contact information current. This includes current information for the organization's grants administrator, signing official and financial officer.

The Neilsen Foundation recommends that Applicants check the "Auto Notify" box in the "Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal" section in proposalCENTRAL, for at least one other contact at the organization. The "Permissions" access level for other contacts can be set as view, edit or administrator.

NOTE: If the contact information in proposalCENTRAL is outdated, and we are unable to contact the Applicant, we will assume that he/she is no longer interested in funding from the Neilsen Foundation. This includes all significant information, from notification of a grant award to reporting deadlines.

INFORMATION CONSISTENCY AND ACCURACY

- Respond to all sections of the templates. If a section or question does not apply to the application, enter "N/A."
- It is suggested that the Applicant carefully proofread all sections of the LOI or FGA materials for consistency and accuracy before submitting in proposalCENTRAL.
- The Applicant must verify that all documents are legible.
- Inaccurate or incomplete submissions will be disqualified without review.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For technical questions regarding the online submission process, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Service at (800) 875-2562 or via email at pcsupport@altum.com, during business hours, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). *There is no technical support available on weekends or holidays.*

ProposalCENTRAL also has a tutorial section on its website that may be helpful in completing the application. See <https://proposalCENTRAL.altum.com/help.asp> or click on the "Contact Us" link at the bottom of the page.

B. Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission and Review

DEADLINE

Refer to page one of this Application Guide for the LOI deadline. The proposalCENTRAL online submission system will automatically close at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on the due date. *Late submissions will not be considered.*

FORMAT

All LOI applications must be submitted online, via proposalCENTRAL. The current LOI template in proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalCENTRAL.altum.com>) must be used. Further instructions and page limitations will be provided on the LOI template. The Neilsen Foundation LOI template may not be modified by the Applicant. **All original text and formatting must remain on the submitted LOI.**

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR LOI

LOIs will be reviewed based on relevance of the proposed goals to the Neilsen Foundation mission, potential impact to individuals with SCI and specific requirements of the funding category.

NOTIFICATION OF LOI RESULTS

Applicants will be notified via email whether they are invited to submit an FGA, or if the LOI has been declined. An LOI must be approved by the Neilsen Foundation in order for the Applicant to move to the next step of the grants process, submitting an FGA.

C. Full Grant Application (FGA) Submission and Review

Only Applicants invited to apply through the current cycle's LOI process may submit a FGA. Refer to page one of this Application Guide for the FGA deadline. All FGAs must be submitted online, via proposalCENTRAL. *The proposalCENTRAL system will not allow an application to be submitted until all required documents are uploaded. To check for any missing required information or files before submitting an application, click on the "Validate" button under the "Validate" section (located in the navigation bar).* The proposalCENTRAL online submission system will automatically close at 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on the due date. *Late submissions will not be considered.*

FORMAT

The FGA template in proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalCENTRAL.altum.com>) must be used. Further instructions and page limitations will be provided on the application templates. The Neilsen Foundation application templates may not be modified by the Applicant. **All original text and formatting must remain on the submitted FGA.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR FGAS

In the proposalCENTRAL online application under Proposal Sections, select "Signature Page(s)," (located in the navigation bar), press the "Print Signature Pages" button and ***print only page one (Grant Application) of the PDF file.*** Once this page is signed by the Applicant AND the Signing Official, upload the PDF in the "Attachments" section.

It is important that the Applicant view the uploaded documents to insure all PDFs are legible. In the online Proposal Section, return to "Signature Page(s)" and click on the "Print Signature Pages with Attachments" button to view the uploads.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

It is strongly advised that Applicants review additional instructions under Proposal Sections (located in the navigation bar) and templates provided in proposalCENTRAL.

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR FGA

FGAs are peer-reviewed by members of the Neilsen Foundation's Review Board. The critique and evaluation of an FGA will be based on merit and relevance to the Neilsen Foundation. Feedback will be available to the Applicant after the grant results are announced.

See the Appendix for a list of FGA review criteria.

D. Notification of FGA Results and Award Process

The Neilsen Foundation will notify Applicants whether the application has been approved or declined for funding, via email, approximately five months after the FGA deadline. Only approved FGAs will proceed to the award process.

Applicants whose FGA is approved for funding will be required to submit additional documentation before grant funds are issued to the grantee. The additional documentation will include but is not limited to: 1) signed Grant Agreement; 2) Grantee Verification of Tax-Exempt Status including a copy of the organization's IRS Determination letter; 3) Project Summary; and 4) IRB Approval (see below). Instructions for executing the additional documentation will be included in the award notification.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

If the project includes work that requires IRB oversight for use of human subjects by the organization, prior to receiving funding for an award, the Applicant must provide documentation of IRB approval. For multicenter clinical studies, use of a single IRB of record or a central IRB is strongly encouraged.

Important: The IRB approval notification must be in English or with an English translation provided. The approval notification must be sent from the IRB committee and list the expiration date of the approval, the Applicant's or other key personnel name(s), and include the Neilsen Foundation project title. If the IRB approval is for a broader protocol and the title on the approval notification differs from the Neilsen Foundation title, the notification must mention that the approval also covers the project funded by the Neilsen Foundation. If IRB approvals are required from multiple institutions, Applicants must provide each approval notification as a separate PDF file.

Biosketch(es)

If the proposal includes work that requires IRB oversight, the Applicant must submit a Biosketch using an NIH Biosketch format; no other Biosketch templates are allowed. Use of the personal statement to circumvent page limits by adding specific information on the proposed plan is not allowed. Biosketches for all collaborators and other key personnel must be submitted with the FGA. Key personnel are defined as the Applicant, collaborators and other individuals who contribute to the scientific development or execution of a project in a substantive, measurable way, whether or not salary or compensation is requested. Each Biosketch must be provided as a separate PDF.

NEILSEN FOUNDATION DUE DILIGENCE

Per the United States Pension Protection Act of 2006, private non-operating foundations are required to verify the nonprofit status of all prospective grantees. When submitting an application, the Applicant will also need to provide the following:

United States-based organizations:

- A copy of the organization's U.S. IRS Determination letter, which proves the entity's 501(c)(3) designation or tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 170(c)(1).

- *An organization classified as a public charity under Section 509(a)(3) should refer to IRS Notice 2006-109 (dated 12/18/2006) titled “Interim Guidance Regarding Supporting Organizations and Donor Advised Funds,” and its subsequent modification in IRS Notice 2014-4. The organization will be required to provide the additional information and documentation specified in Section 3.01 of IRS Notice 2006-109. The Neilsen Foundation does not issue grants to non-functionally integrated Type III supporting organizations.*

Canadian-based organizations:

- The Neilsen Foundation prefers to make grants to (i) a Canadian organization that holds a U.S. IRS Determination letter, or (ii) a Canadian organization’s U.S.-based “friends of” charity, which holds a U.S. IRS Determination letter. If a Canadian organization can satisfy either of these requirements, it must provide a copy of the U.S. IRS Determination letter for such entity (include all pages).
- If a Canadian organization cannot satisfy either of the requirements above, it must be a “registered charity” with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and provide a copy of the CRA website page that lists the entity’s registration. *If a grant is approved for funding, the Neilsen Foundation will require additional information in order to make a determination that the Canadian organization is the equivalent of a U.S. public charity.*

In conjunction with the documents listed above, the Neilsen Foundation requires that all organizations complete a “Grantee Verification of Tax-Exempt Status.” The template is available in proposalCENTRAL, under Proposal Sections (located in the navigation bar), “Download Templates & Instructions.” **Note:** The entity listed on the “Grantee Verification of Tax-Exempt Status” must be the same as the entity listed on the U.S. IRS Determination letter or CRA website.

Do not upload copies of tax returns, EIN letters, W-9s, internal documents noting the organization’s nonprofit status, etc., in lieu of, OR in addition to, the IRS Determination letter. Only copies of the official IRS Determination letter will be accepted.

DISBURSEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

Once the required documentation is received and accepted by the Neilsen Foundation, and our due diligence process is complete, funds will be disbursed to the grantee organization by the start date of the grant.

FINAL REPORT

At the end of the grant period, Applicants will be required to report on final progress and expenditures. Applicable templates are available in the Deliverables section in proposalCENTRAL. Applicants that do not comply with this requirement, or submit unsatisfactory reports, will not be eligible for future Neilsen Foundation funding until receipt of acceptable required report(s).

E. Resubmission

Applicants are allowed to submit an LOI for a project that was not funded in a prior FGA cycle. A new LOI is required for the resubmission, but does not guarantee that the organization will be invited to submit a revised FGA.

F. Concurrent Grants Across Neilsen Foundation Portfolios

- Applicants may hold only one Neilsen Foundation grant within any portfolio at one time. To be eligible for the current cycle, a grantee must fulfill the obligations of a current grant (submission of the Final Report and Final Expenditure Report) before the FGA deadline noted on page 1.
- **All Neilsen Foundation portfolios:** Non-trainee Applicants may apply for one grant per cycle per Neilsen Foundation portfolio (i.e., SCIRTS, PSR and CO&I), and may hold up to one grant in each of the three portfolios at a time. Such applications will be evaluated independently, according to each program's timelines, guidelines and review criteria.
- **Fellowship/Training grants:** Postdoctoral Fellows may not apply for a non-training Neilsen Foundation grant. Foundation Fellowship budgets are intended to cover 100% of the salary and fringe support for the Fellow so they may focus on a defined training program specific to the needs of their research interests. Postdoctoral Fellows may not hold multiple concurrent grants in different Neilsen Foundation portfolios; however, funded Fellows may be listed as participants on other grants, within or outside the Neilsen Foundation, without salary or fringe support on those grants.

G. Additional Information

APPLICATION SUBMISSION CONTACTS

- For technical questions regarding the online submission process, contact proposalCENTRAL Customer Service at (800) 875-2562 or via email at pcsupport@altum.com, during business hours, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). *There is no technical support available on weekends or holidays.*
- ProposalCENTRAL also has a tutorial section on its website that may be helpful in completing an application: <https://proposalCENTRAL.altum.com/help.asp> or click on the “Contact Us” link at the bottom of the page.
- For questions regarding an application's submission status, contact Ehrica Hernandez, Grants Management Associate, at ehrica@chnfoundation.org.
- For questions regarding the CO&I portfolio, contact Jane Otto, Program Officer, at jane@chnfoundation.org.
- For information about all Neilsen Foundation portfolios, visit our website, www.chnfoundation.org.

Note: Applicants are strongly discouraged from contacting any member of any Neilsen Foundation Review Board once an application has been submitted. Such contact will result in disqualification of the LOI or FGA.

APPENDIX: 2020 FULL GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS CREATING OPPORTUNITY & INDEPENDENCE

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation



OVERALL IMPACT

Please summarize strengths and weaknesses of the application, and any recommendations you would like provided to the applicant, based on the following criteria:

SIGNIFICANCE

The extent to which the proposed work, if successfully carried out, will make an important contribution.

1. Are the objectives relevant to the Neilsen Foundation's mission to support programs that improve the quality of life for those living with a spinal cord injury (SCI)?
2. Does the proposed funding help fulfill a significant need in the local and/or broader SCI community?
3. Is the requested support leveraged by other funding, collaborative efforts and/or planning for future activities?

FEASIBILITY

1. Provide an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed plan.
2. Is the scope of the effort suitable for a one-year grant period?
3. Does the work seem reasonable based on the organization's capabilities?

GOALS

1. Will the funding maintain and/or strengthen the organization and its ability to provide services to people with SCI?
2. Does the proposal define the clear goals, appropriate for the type of funding being requested?
3. Do the proposed activities provide needed services for the population that will be served?
4. Are the expected outcomes defined and will they be measurable?

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

1. Is the requested budget appropriate and well-justified based on the nature and scope of the proposed efforts?
2. How will the Neilsen Foundation funding be used in conjunction with other funding that has been secured or is being sought?

TECHNICAL ELEMENTS

1. Is the application complete?
2. Did the Applicant follow the template instructions (i.e., retain the table at the top of page one, retain the instructions and questions, not exceed the page limits, etc.)?
3. Is the application well written and easy to follow?