



# ACCI Small Grants Program 2021 Announcement and Call for Proposals

The American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI) is soliciting proposals for the ACCI Small Grants program. The program's purpose is to promote rigorous research-based investigations that address pressing consumer issues. An ideal research proposal should advance one or more of the following objectives:

- Present new data and/or analyses that focus on key issues of consumer interest, perhaps in an innovative and creative way.
- Identify new consumer problems or articulate practical solutions.
- Provide information or ideas which have immediate usefulness for policymakers, researchers, and consumers.
- Promote consumer well-being.

Both qualitative and quantitative research designs are encouraged. Proposals may utilize primary or secondary data, and must adhere to the ACCI's mission, vision and goals (<https://www.consumerinterests.org/vision-mission-goals>). Consumer advocacy or education initiatives that do not include a significant research component will not be funded.

## The Award

- Awards of up to \$2,500 will be made.
- Grants will be transferred in one payment. Depending on the situation, grant funds may be financially managed through ACCI directly, on a case-by-case basis.

## Communication should be addressed and copied to:

- Submit applications to Dr. Melissa Wilmarth, Grants Chair, [mwilmarth@ches.ua.edu](mailto:mwilmarth@ches.ua.edu)
- Copy to [admin@consumerinterests.org](mailto:admin@consumerinterests.org)

## The Process and Timeline

- Submit a one-page letter of intent to apply by **August 1**.
- Submit Full Proposal Application by **September 1**.
- Notification of Award in **late Fall**.
- Dependent upon contract execution timing, grant project year is **for 1 calendar year** (e.g., 2022).
- Progress Report is due to the ACCI Grants Committee on or about **June 30 of the funded year** (dependent on project actual start date)
- Final Report is due to the ACCI Grants Committee within **two months of the closing date**.
- Grant recipients will present at ACCI Conference following the conclusion of the research (e.g., ACCI 2023)<sup>1</sup>.
- Submit to the *Consumer Interest Annual* (proceedings) following guidelines and deadlines for the conference presenters.

## Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria:

### Eligibility:

- ACCI Members in good standing are eligible to apply. Professional and Student Members are eligible. Complementary and Retiree Members are not eligible as Primary Investigators but may be included on the application team.

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<sup>1</sup> A presentation is required at the next ACCI conference following the closing date of the project. No additional proposal is due to present. While the project may be subsequently presented at other conferences, it can only be presented first at the ACCI Conference.

- At the conclusion of the project, at least one Primary Investigator must attend and present at the next ACCI annual conference as specified in the award letter. If a recipient is unable to guarantee the above criteria, the grant award will be rescinded. Associated travel costs and registration fees may be included in the budget request but is otherwise the responsibility of the Primary Investigator.
- ACCI does not allow payment of indirect expenses.
- Salary for professionals is not allowed in the budget, but salary for student members and research support is allowed within the budget.
- Prior grant recipients are not eligible to receive funding for three years after their funding cycle ends.
- Although announced, the Committee may decline to make any awards for the application year.

#### Review Criteria:

- Relevance to ACCI's mission and vision.
- Uniqueness and innovativeness of research questions/objectives.
- Appropriateness and strength of methodology.
- Writing excellence.
- Qualifications of the applicant and research setting:
  - Applicants in academic and non-academic research settings will be considered.
  - Preference will be given to junior scholars (e.g., research scientists, tenure-seeking faculty, advanced graduate students).
- Feasibility and cost effectiveness of research plan.

#### **Application Materials: One PDF file submitted as outlined in above Communications section**

- A proposal should include (3-5 pages single-spaced):
  - Project title, researcher(s) name and institution(s) (not included in page limit)
  - Abstract describing the project purpose, data, and methods (1 page maximum).
  - Description of research question(s)/purpose, methodology, data, and expected outcomes.
  - Time frame including expected start and end dates (Note: grant term is expected to be one year or less).
  - Proposed budget.
  - Reference list (not included in page limit).
- Curriculum vita (3-page limit) of PI and Co-PIs.
- For student member proposal: Letter of recommendation and support from faculty advisor.

#### **Terms and Conditions**

- The grant term is expected to be one year or less, but the applicant should request specific start and end dates.
- If accepted, the Grants Committee will issue a projected timeline for reports and expectations of the researcher to include:
  - A progress report, no longer than two pages, due to the ACCI Grants Committee at a date mid-way through the grant term. If this report is not satisfactory, the Grants Committee may request a revision or initiate a phone conference with the grantee to help make the project a success.
  - A final report is due two months after the closing date.
  - Reports are to be submitted to the emails listed for all submission and correspondence.
- An Oral or Featured Research (poster) presentation at the ACCI Conference following the end date is expected but will follow the same proposal guidelines as all conference submissions, time permitting.
- A submission to the *Consumer Interests Annual* is a requirement of this project.

- Responsible and ethical conduct of research requires that the project meet institutional IRB requirements. If this is outside of university oversight, the grantee must provide a statement that the project will provide informed consent and will abide by the ethical standards of research.
- Any presentations and/or publications that result from the work within this grant must acknowledge the support of the ACCI Small Grants Program.

**Due Dates:**

- **August 1, 2021** – one-page letter of intent to apply
- **September 1, 2021** – Full Proposal Application