



AIPVET STARTING RESEARCH GRANT

The AIPVet Starting Research Grant is aimed to provide financial support to early-career veterinary pathologists undertaking research at an

Italian institution. The grant aims to foster the development of young researchers by supporting innovative projects during the initial stages of their scientific careers.

Eligibility criteria:

Applicants must:

- Be AIPVet members at the application deadline.
- Be postdoctoral fellows or researchers under 35 years of age at the application deadline (RTDA, “assegni di ricerca” and other post-doc research fellowships included; RTT/RTDB not included)
- Have obtained their PhD by the project start date.
- Hold a valid employment or research contract with the host institution for the entire duration of the project.
- Conduct the proposed project at an Italian university or any other Italian research institution.

For applicants with children, the age limit will be extended by 12 months for each child born either before or after the successful defence of the applicant’s PhD thesis.

Successful applicants may not apply in the following year’s call but may participate as members of another application.

Project duration: 12 months (starting April 2027).

Funding: 7500 euros. The successful applicant will be requested to present the preliminary results of the study at the 2028 AIPVet Congress, with complimentary congress registration.

GUIDELINES

Grant proposal structure

The grant proposal must follow the structure outlined below. Proposals that exceed the specified limits or do not adhere to this structure will not be considered. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the dedicated proposal template present at <https://www.aipvet.it/index.php/consultazione/documenti>.

Proposals addressing any research topic related to veterinary pathology will be considered.

Proposal structure

Applications must include the following documents:

1. **Project Overview – “[Project Title]”**
Maximum 2 pages, excluding references
 - 1.1. Problem Description, Significance and Impact
 - 1.2. Hypothesis and Objectives
 - 1.3. Study Design and Methods
2.
 - 1.4. References
3. **Budget Plan**
Maximum 1 page.
4. **Applicant's Curriculum Vitae**
Maximum 2 pages, including up to 10 publications.
5. **Applicant's Cover Letter**
Maximum 1 page.
6. **Letter of Support from the Host Institution**

1. Project Overview (maximum 2 pages, excluding references)

Project title

1.1 Problem Description, Significance and Impact

Provide a concise review of the relevant literature describing the current state of knowledge, the scientific or clinical problem to be addressed, and the significance of the proposed study. Clearly explain the unmet need and how the project may contribute to advancing veterinary pathology.

1.2 Hypothesis and Objectives

Clearly state the central hypothesis and list the specific objectives of the project. Hypotheses should be testable, and the objectives should be realistic and achievable within the proposed 12-month timeframe and available budget.

1.3 Study Design and Methods

Describe the experimental design and methodology, including:

- the study population, samples or experimental models;
- the methods and analytical approaches;
- preliminary results, if available;
- expected results and their potential significance;
- a project timeline;
- potential risks, limitations and mitigation strategies;
- figures or diagrams, if useful.

The organization of the project into clearly defined work packages is encouraged. Any additional personnel involved in the project may be indicated.

1.4 References

A maximum of 10 references may be included. References are not included in the 2-page limit for the Project Overview.

2. Budget Plan

Provide an itemized budget specifying the requested costs and their justification. Funding may be used exclusively to purchase consumables directly related to the proposed project.

Applications requesting funds for salaries, travel expenses or equipment will not be considered eligible.

Any additional funding available may be included but will not be considered as part of the evaluation criteria.

3. Applicant's Curriculum Vitae

Provide a curriculum vitae of no more than 2 pages, focusing on the applicant's education, technical skills, scientific expertise and previous or ongoing research experience relevant to the proposed project. The CV should demonstrate the applicant's ability to complete the project successfully.

The 2-page limit must include a selected list of up to 10 publications authored or co-authored by the applicant. Specify the applicant is the corresponding author.

4. Applicant's Cover Letter

Provide a cover letter of no more than 1 page describing:

- the applicant's motivation for undertaking the proposed research;
- how the project aligns with the applicant's scientific interests and career goals;
- the applicant's specific role and level of responsibility in the project;

The applicant should also confirm their commitment to completing the project within the proposed 12-month period and to presenting the results at the 2028 AIPVet Congress, if invited.

5. Letter of Support from the Host Institution

The application must include a letter signed by the Head of the Department, research unit/group or equivalent authorized representative of the host institution. The letter should:

- confirm the institution's willingness to host and support the project;
- confirm that the applicant will hold a valid employment or research contract for the entire duration of the project;
- confirm that the facilities, equipment and technical support required to complete the proposed research will be available;
- confirm that the institution will administer the awarded funds in accordance with the grant conditions;
- identify the applicant's supervisor or institutional contact person, where applicable;
- state that all necessary ethical and regulatory approvals will be obtained before the relevant research activities begin.

Please use a SINGLE pdf file with all the 5 sections merged together and respecting the page-limit.
Applications exceeding the limits will NOT be considered. Documents should be submitted at segreteria@aipvet.it

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

The Applicant receiving the grant must submit a final report within 6 months of the end of the 12-month funding period. The report must not exceed 2 pages and should include:

- an itemized statement of expenditure for consumables purchased with the grant funds.
- a summary of the results obtained;
- details of congresses or scientific meetings at which the results were presented;
- any abstracts submitted to scientific conferences;
- any publications arising from the project, if available;

Application Deadline: **21/12/2026**

Notification of results: **March 2027**

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECTS

Applications will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee appointed by the AIPVet Board.

Applications will undergo an initial administrative eligibility check. Committee members must declare any potential conflicts of interest and refrain from evaluating applications for which such conflicts exist.

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Evaluation criterion	Maximum score
1.Scientific significance: clarity of the research question, relevance of the problem, in terms of originality and innovation	30
Originality	15
Innovation	15

2. Study design and feasibility: appropriateness of the methods, adequacy of the experimental design, expected results, risk-mitigation strategies and feasibility within the 12-month period and according to budget and resources **40**

Study Design 20

Feasibility 20

3.Impact - alignment with the scope and objectives of AIPVet and potential impact **30**

Originality	Is the project conceptually novel? Does it propose new ideas or approaches?
Innovation	Does the project involve a significant advancement compared to the current state-of-the-art?
Feasibility	Are the objectives realistically achievable within the proposed timeline and resources?
Impact	What is the potential of the project to generate academic and non-academic outreaches?

Each criterion will be scored using the following scale:

- **Excellent:** 90–100% of the maximum score for the criterion;
- **Very good:** 80–89%;
- **Good:** 70–79%;
- **Fair:** 60–69%;
- **Poor:** below 60%.

Applications must achieve an overall score of at least **71/100** to be considered for funding.

The grant will be awarded to the highest-ranking eligible proposal, subject to final approval by the AIPVet Board. In the event of a tie, priority will be given to the applicant with the highest number of first-cofirst-corresponding-last authorships in publications.

The Evaluation Committee will provide concise written feedback to applicants. The Committee's decision, following approval by the AIPVet Board, is final and will be transferred by mail to the candidates.

