



ACR-APLAR Exchange Program

Application Closing Date: 15 May 2026

Introduction

The purpose of the ACR-APLAR Exchange Program is to promote the international exchange of clinical and research skills, expertise and knowledge within rheumatology. The program recognises outstanding rheumatology professional faculty in both laboratory and clinic-based research and provides exposure to the exciting work being done by colleagues overseas. This exchange program allows candidates to share knowledge and experience and creates opportunities for collaboration.

The program supports young academic rheumatologists to travel from Asia Pacific to America to experience the ACR Convergence, engage in a half-day exchange program with American colleagues at the Annual Congress and participate in a subsequent site visit at a local institution.

Travel grant of USD 2,000 will be awarded upon completion of the program.

In addition, there is an opportunity for an optional one-week attachment to a ACR Center of Excellence (CoE). The visit can be done either before or after the congress. However, applicant is to identify and apply directly to the Centre of Excellence. ACR and APLAR secretariat will only assist to link the applicant to the CoE, if needed.

Successful applicants will be given an additional travel grant of USD 1,000.

Invitation

APLAR is inviting AYR members who are Rheumatologists or Senior Residents in Rheumatology to apply for the program. Five (5) candidates will be selected for the program, who will receive the following benefits:

- complimentary registration to the ACR Convergence
- travel grant of USD 2,000
- additional USD 1,000 will be given to successful candidates who apply for the 1-week visit to America CoE.

Eligibilities

Applicants need to fulfil the following requirements:

- To hold a non-tenured faculty appointment or Senior Rheumatology Resident, or equivalent position (below the level of professor), at an academic centre in an ACR or APLAR member country or as determined by the APLAR Education Committee.
- Applicants should have a doctoral degree (MD, PhD, DSc, or equivalent) in a field/area relevant to rheumatology.
- Demonstrate a firm commitment to academic medicine.
- Must be 45 years of age or under at time of application.

(Note: Applicants who do not meet all eligibility criteria listed above will not be considered.)

Program Outline

ACR Convergence starts on a Friday. So, the exchange programme will start a day or two before, on Wednesday or Thursday. Candidates are required to arrive on Tuesday in order to have enough time to settle in and get ready for the exchange programme.

Day 1 will be a full day programme (8am – 6pm), with opportunities to learn about:

- Congress country's healthcare system
- Candidates research presentation opportunities
- Feedback from ACR fellow buddy
- Networking lunch
- Center of Excellence of Congress country site visit

Day 2 is a half day programme (8am – 12.30pm), where

- Continuity of candidates' research presentation
- Feedback from ACR fellow buddy
- ACR's introduction

After the programme, the candidates will be sent off to the Congress. At the Congress, candidates will have all the flexibility to choose the sessions and talks to attend.

Reimbursement Process

APLAR will provide the selected candidates the exchange travel grant of USD 2,000 after the completion of the exchange program. APLAR holds the rights not to reimburse candidates if they do not attend the exchange program as agreed.

Upon completion of the program, candidates are expected to submit a summary report of what they have learnt and experienced during the exchange program period. Reports will be reviewed before funds disbursement to the candidates.

Documentation for submissions are as follows:

- Complimentary congress registration confirmation
- Proof of Abstract Submission from the congress
- Letter of certification for the half day exchange programme workshop and the one-day site visit
- Copies of Travel and lodging receipts to be submitted for disbursement of USD 2,000
- Letter of certification from the Center of Excellence for the 1-week visit (if selected)
- Training report summary at Center of Excellence for additional grant of USD 1,000

Important Dates

Closing Date: 15 May 2026
Notification Date: 15 June 2026
Acceptance Date: 30 June 2026

Enquiries

Contact Person: Ms Nur Atikah
Email Address: secretariat@aplar.org
Contact Number: +60 17233 5732 (WhatsApp)



APPLICATION FORM

Candidate Particulars

Name : _____

Email Address : _____

Place of Work : _____
(Name of Institution/Organization)

Personal Statement

A personal statement outlining how participation in the 2026 ACR-APLAR exchange program will benefit your research career and how you can contribute to the program.

1-Week Visit to Centre of Excellence

Are you interested in the 1 week visit to ACR Centre of Excellence (CoE)

- No (Please proceed to Applicant Compliance agreement)
- Yes

I Agree:

to identify the CoE that I am interested to visit

to submit a proposal on the visit directly to the CoE

that APLAR and ACR Secretariat will only assist in linking me up to the Head of the CoE

Applicant Compliance Agreement

I agree to

- comply with the ACR-APLAR reporting requirements, including an experience report to be sent to APLAR after completion of the exchange.
- participate in the 2026 ACR-APLAR Exchange Programme that will take place in Orlando, Florida from 6-11 November 2026 , which including a mandatory institution visit and half day workshop.

I understand that:

- I should have in possession, a passport valid for these dates and extending beyond the return date as required by the USA government and my own country.
- I am responsible for all costs over and above the travel stipend provided as well as any costs related to spouse travel, accommodations, and incidentals.

Documents for submission

I have submitted the following documents together with my application:

- Current curriculum vitae (PDF Format), to include:
 - Summary of teaching activities undertaken as a rheumatologist and mentoring/supervision activities (e.g., medical student projects, other PhD students, educational supervision (incl. date of activity), if applicable
 - Your publications
- Letter of recommendation from a senior academician within rheumatology (PDF format)
- Letter of support from Chief of Rheumatology (PDF format)
- An abstract for submission to ACR Convergence 2026
- AYR membership certification

Name:

Date: