



Dr. Heeyeon Suh
2026 Orthodontic Faculty Development Fellowship Award
University of the Pacific

Short Biography

I am currently a full-time faculty member at the Department of Orthodontics at the University of the Pacific. I have had the privilege of working with esteemed faculty members and mentors, including Dr. Oh, the department chair, who has been instrumental in my professional growth. My educational journey is marked by numerous achievements, including receiving the AAO full-time faculty fellowship award and AAOF Orthodontic Faculty Development Fellowships (OFDFA). My research focuses on craniofacial growth and clinical treatment outcome evaluations, leveraging advanced statistical methods to improve their predictability.

Brief Description of the Project

A key goal of my research career is to improve the predictability of orthodontic outcomes through rigorous, evidence-based approaches. This project titled "Hyrax vs Invisalign Palatal Expander: A Pilot Randomized Clinical Trial (RCT) of patient experience & effectiveness," aims to assess patient experience and clinical effectiveness across facial, skeletal, dental, airway changes, while establishing feasibility to plan subsequent large-scale RCT.

Statement of How Orthodontic Education Will Benefit from the Award

This pilot RCT provides independent, randomized comparison of Invisalign Palatal Expander vs Hyrax Expander in growing patients, directly testing claims of improved comfort/hygiene and skeletal effects. Embedding the study within graduate orthodontic clinic enhances education in clinical research methods while providing information to support evidence-based appliance selection.

Why the Foundation is Important to the Project

The foundation's support is essential to the success of this project. Funding will allow us to collect all required records with the help of research personnel. In addition, the support will help fund my tuition for a two-year master's program in Data Science, which is critical for deepening my understanding of data analysis, vital components of this project. The Foundation's support will also provide opportunities for professional development, such as attending national conferences and seminars.

How Foundation Funding is Expected to or has Benefitted Your Career

The Foundation's funding will have a transformative impact on my career. It will enable me to pursue research with higher level of evidence and to participate in conferences, where I can learn from and connect with experts. The support will also fund my Data Science master's program, further strengthening my skills in data evaluation, analysis, and interdisciplinary collaboration.