



USU Office of Research Request for Proposals (RFP)

Solicitation for USU Program Project Grants

Solicitation Release Date: June 17, 2011

Letter of Intent Receipt Date (Required): October 14, 2011 by 5PM EST

Selection made for full proposals: mid-November 2011

Full Application Receipt Date: March 30, 2012 by 5PM EST

Earliest Anticipated Start Date: July 1, 2012

Purpose: This is a new program at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences that is designed to encourage interdisciplinary research. The goal is to provide the USU faculty the opportunity to build a starter "Program Project" which should place them into a position to apply for a National Institutes of Health Program Project (P01). This should not be seen as a substitute for extramural funding but rather as a stepping stone to a large multi-investigator grant.

Eligible Individuals: At least two (2) of the projects must be directed by USU billeted faculty and one of these individuals must take on the leadership role as the lead principal investigator who is responsible administratively for the application. One of the three projects may be at one of the national capital medical treatment facilities under the direction of an investigator with a USU faculty appointment. At least one of the subprojects must be out of one of the clinical departments. Non-DOD affiliated researchers are not permitted to apply.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Letter of Intent: All prospective applicants are required to submit a letter of intent (LOI).

Letters of Intent should include the following:

- LOI length should be at least three (3) and no longer than five (5) pages.
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- Identify the Overall Program Project PI and the PI of each subproject along with their associated departmental affiliations.
 - Provide a brief summary overview of the program project & the role of each PI.
 - Outline the 3 projects, their research strategy, translational potential, innovation & military relevance.
 - Required additional information includes current NIH Biosketches for each of the 3 subproject PIs (not to exceed 4 pages each).
 - The bibliography does not count towards the overall LOI page limit.

LOIs are to be submitted electronically, no later than Friday October 14, 2011 at 5PM to srasmussen@usuhs.mil. **Late letters of intent will not be considered.**

Review of the letters of intent will be conducted by the senior leadership of USU. Those asked to submit a full proposal will be contacted by the Office of Research in mid-November 2011. **Only one LOI per year will be selected to submit a full proposal.**

Full Proposal Submission Process: Those asked to submit a full proposal will be contacted by the Office of Research in mid-November 2011. Full proposals should be submitted electronically to srasmussen@usuhs.mil.

Please ensure that you coordinate with both the Office of Research and HJF prior to final submission. One signed original of the application must also be submitted to the Office of Research in paper form by the deadline date (March 30, 2012 by 5PM EST).

Full Application:

Program Project Research Proposals must include the following:

- USU Form 3208

PHS398 components

- Face page
- Abstract Page (2 project summaries - one technical and one non-technical)
- Table of Contents
- Detailed Overall Budget for Initial Period [\$700,000 maximum total costs (direct & indirect costs)]
- Budget for Entire Proposed Period of Support (3 years of funding are allowed)
- Detailed Budgets Pertaining to each Subproject
- Biographical Sketches of Principal Investigator and all Key Personnel (Biosketches must be current & not to exceed 4 pages each)
- Resources and Environment
- Research Plan (**A maximum of 13 pages of text will be allowed for Sections 1 and 2 listed below for each subproject.**)

1. Specific Aims
2. Research Strategy (Significance, Innovation and Approach)
3. Bibliography and References Cited

As appropriate, include:

4. Protection of Human Subjects
 5. Inclusion of Women and Minorities
 6. Targeted/Planned Enrollment Table
 7. Inclusion of Children
 8. Vertebrate Animals
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9. Select Agent Research
 10. Multiple PD/PI Leadership Plan
 11. Consortium/Contractual Arrangements
 12. Letters of Support (e.g., Military Site PIs, Consultants)
 13. Resource Sharing Plan(s)

Checklist

Full Applications are to be prepared using PHS398 forms and following the PHS398 instructions for formatting (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>).

Proposal length limit: A full application may not exceed fifty (50) pages. Each proposal should have at least three (3) subprojects under the direction of different USU faculty members. Each subproject description should not exceed 13 pages (including the Specific Aims page). The overall goals and integration of the subprojects should not exceed 5 pages. It is required that at least one of the projects be conducted in the traditional clinical departments. All applications must include an explanation of the translation potential of the proposed research (not to exceed 5 pages). Translation potential means the relevance and potential utility of the research (including basic research) for clinical applications. Font size is limited to Times New Roman size 12 point with margins no smaller than 0.5 inches all around.

The application should be on form PHS398. Each application should have the USU form 3208 accompanying it with signatures of the Chairman of each of the participating departments. Each proposal will be submitted first to the Office of Program Development with coordination by Henry M. Jackson Foundation.

Project Abstracts: Applications must include 2 project summaries (one technical and one non-technical), summarizing the proposed research and explaining how the research will contribute to accomplishment of the goals of this RFA. These abstracts are not counted in the page length limit for the application, but are subject to a separate length limit of 1 page each.

Scientific Merit: The Office of Research will set up the external review and evaluation of the applications received under this RFA. The review and evaluation will include use of the following criteria to judge the likelihood that the proposed basic/translational/clinical research will make a substantial contribution toward accomplishment of the goals of USU. An application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific impact and thus deserves a high priority score. For example, an investigator may propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to move the field forward.

REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

Significance: Each proposed study should address an important military medical problem. The applicants should outline the relationship between the proposed research and the mission of USU. Applicants should articulate how, if the aims of the proposal are achieved, scientific knowledge, clinical practice, or in general the field of science will be advanced. In addition, the application should outline what the effects of these studies will be on concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions are on this particular field of science.

Translation potential and/or plan: The proposed research should contribute to the feasibility of new medical treatment strategies and should have the potential to translate any research results into new medical therapies. The translational aspect of the research could help explain the course of human diseases or conditions. Another translational aspect could be that the research will identify new biomarkers or new strategies, products or tools to diagnose a disease or condition.

Research Approach: Make sure that the conceptual or clinical framework, design, methods, and analyses are adequately developed, well integrated, well reasoned, and appropriate to the aims of the project. Be sure that the application acknowledges potential problem areas and considers alternative strategies.

Innovation: Outline the innovation of the proposed study. Make sure that it is clear to the reviewers why this multi-investigator project is stronger than three independent individual investigator awards. Outline how this project challenges existing paradigms or clinical practice, addresses an innovative hypothesis or critical barrier to progress in the field. Demonstrate how the project goes beyond the prevailing thinking and how the project develops or employs novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools, or technologies for this area. Emphasize how this proposal includes strong collaborative interactions between basic, preclinical and clinical components to address gaps in the field and articulate a clear plan for the transfer of potential findings from basic to preclinical studies to clinical studies.

Investigators: Be sure to use the bio-sketch to demonstrate that the investigators are capable of carrying out this work. The proposed work should be appropriate to the general experience level of the Principal Investigator and other researchers. Make sure that the investigative team brings complementary and integrated expertise to the project.

Budget Period, Budget Level and Budget Justification: The duration of the funded program will be 3 years. The total award for each year will not exceed \$700,000 (this includes direct costs and indirect costs). The total award across the entire budget period should not exceed \$2,100,000. The rationale of the proposed budget and the requested period of support in relation to the proposed research will be assessed by the reviewers. Make sure that the effort listed for the PI/co-PI is appropriate for the work proposed. Review each budget category to ensure that they are realistic and justified in terms of the aims and methods.
