

PROGRAM PROJECT SUPPORT INITIATIVE

Guidelines for Application

A. Purpose:

To support efforts to develop research *teams* that will be competitive in applying for large (over \$700,000 direct cost per year), multi-investigator-based, research grants such as program project, SPORE and other center grants.

B. Support:

Up to \$100,000 for one year. Additional support may be provided when the grant application needs to be revised for resubmission.

C. Application Procedure:

1. Deadlines:

Applications will be accepted three times a year (March 1, July 1 and November 1).

2. Application requirements:

2a. Guidelines: Since various funding agencies including individual institutes of the NIH may have different guidelines for their multi-investigator-based grants, a copy of the current guideline from the target funding source should be submitted.

2b. Letter: A letter from a potential funding agency indicating that it has a current funding mechanism for, and has an interest in, the proposed research area.

2c. Application:

i. Summary: A summary of the central research focus that is to be addressed by the team.

ii. Significance: Explain the significance, relevance and clinical implications, if appropriate, of the proposed research vs. the mission of the funding agency. (Page limit of i plus ii: one page).

iii. Investigators and projects: Provide a list of the Principal Investigator (PI), participating investigators, their departmental affiliations and their roles and percent efforts in the planned grant application. The individual project leaders are expected to be independent investigators who bring valued scientific strengths to the program, and have independent R01 support or its equivalence. Provide a description of the individual projects

including specific aims, significance, the proposed studies, and a list of relevant previous publications from the PI. (One-and-half pages for the overall program, and one page per project; none of the page limits include references and publications).

iv. Synergy and coherence: Explain how the individual projects will interact in a synergistic way, and how the interrelationships among individual component projects are expected to result in a greater contribution to the program goals - than if each project were pursued separately. Provide concrete examples, if possible, of the existing or planned interactions among the PI's such as joint lab meetings and/or journal clubs, joint supervision of students/postdocs, and joint publications. Provide examples of how work in one project can/has catalyze(d) research in the other groups, and how expertise, research resources and patients, if appropriate, are shared between the groups. In some cases, an individual project may be highly meritorious in the context of the entire program project but not make sense as a stand-alone research grant. If this is the case, explain clearly. (One-and-half pages not including lists of publications or tables)

v. Cores: A description of the proposed core services, if applicable, and how each group will benefit from the core(s). (One page)

vi. Environment (space, equipment, patients and other shared research and/or clinical resources).

vii. Administrative structure (internal quality control, allocation of funds, day-to-day management). (vi plus vii: one page).

viii. Biosketches: CVs of all the project leaders, including the funding history for the past five years. (NIH format).

ix. Resubmission or competitive renewal: For the preparation of a revised application, provide a three-page response to the reviewers' critiques (which should be provided as an appendix). For strengthening a competitive renewal, provide a summary of major accomplishments so far (two pages) and a list of publications that have derived from the previous or current funding period. (No page limit).

x. Strengths and weaknesses: An analysis of the strengths and weakness of the program, and how the proposed budget (next item) can remedy the weakness, thus strengthening the planned application. (One page)

xi. Budget: The support can be used for personnel, equipment and supplies; however, it cannot be used to support the Principal Investigators' salaries. Detailed explanations should be provided in item x to justify how

the proposed budget will strengthen the team's competitiveness as a grant application. (One page).

xii. Plan for submission or resubmission: Provide a timeline for the preparation and submission of the planned application.

D. Review criteria:

- Well-defined and coherent central *research theme and its relevance to funding agency's mission/priorities*.
- *Scientific merit* of each project and the entire program as a whole.
- *Synergy* and coherence of the program and cores.
- *Qualifications* and productivity of the PI and project PIs.
- *Leadership*. Strong scientific leadership by the PI is a crucial component of a successful multidisciplinary application. In general, the PI is expected to devote a significant effort to leadership of the entire program.
- Oral presentation (possible): The review committee may invite an applicant group to make an oral presentation (<3 hrs).

E. Payments:

The support will be given in two six-month installments. A brief, 2 page progress report should be submitted five-months into the funding period for the approval of the second installment.

F. Submission and Queries

Please direct all queries and submit the application to Farooq Niazi, SPA, who will provide administrative support for this committee.

Farooq Niazi
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