

Announcement and Comments Research Seed Grant Applications 2005-2006

The School of Public Health, Center for Health Research (CHR) committee will be accepting proposals this period with two deadlines, October 14, 2005 and March 31, 2006. We hope to be able to award a total of \$30,000 or more and to continue the increase in proposal quality that we have observed each year. We would like to increase participation of clinical faculty in the seed grant program and encourage proposals that involve collaboration between clinical and faculty.

The deadline for all applications will be strictly enforced Submit 5 copies to Maria Jose Amor in the CHR office, Nichol Hall, room 1709, extension 88322.

First, here are some simple rules and advice on submitting proposals and carrying out the research that is funded. If you are already an expert at this you probably do not need a seed grant, but if you want one anyway you can skip to the Proposal Design outlined on the last page. Our experience has been that many proposals did not fare well with the review committee because the investigators apparently did not understand what was expected in a grant proposal. Please consider all of the following information carefully, and ask for help if something is unclear (see below). Note that there are some changes from last year.

Application Requirements

1. You must have a faculty appointment in LLU School of Public Health to be the principal investigator. This means that adjunct faculty and clinical faculty are also encouraged to submit proposals. Proposals involving significant collaboration between teaching and clinical faculty are especially encouraged.
2. Each faculty member is limited to one application as principal investigator. Proposals can be developed by students, residents and postdoctoral fellows, but these must be submitted by a faculty member as the principal investigator and will count as the one application.
3. The maximum award request is \$5,000. It cannot be used for salaries, local or airfare travel or publication costs. It can be used for justified research travel (i.e. in foreign studies) supplies, site license fees, etc.
4. Proposed work must be completed within 24 months of startup. In the past, many grants were still active after several years, which caused unnecessary paper work CHR, for Grants Management and for the Investigators and their departments.
5. If you have an active seed grant project or if you received an award in calendar year 2003 or 2004, you may submit a proposal this year but you must include a two page progress report (for each previous grant). The progress report must include the aims of the project and progress to accomplish the aims. If you changed the aims from the original proposal, explain the rationale for the changes. If your proposal was approved during year 2004 and was not activated or you have not expended any of the funds yet, you must include an explanation.
6. Proposals with animal or human studies components are welcomed, but note that protocol approvals through animal and human research committees take time, and committee approvals are required before you can begin animal or human studies. Approvals are not required at the time of review, but you should begin the approval process as soon as possible.

Review Process

The committee, in a process modeled after that used by the NIH, will review each grant and assign a priority score that will determine whether proposals are funded and how much of the requested funding will be awarded. The review committee will meet in October and April and we hope to announce scores by late October and mid April. The most important factor in determining the priority score is scientific

merit (see below), but other factors also contribute. In order to maximize the effectiveness of the seed grants, the committee will give higher priority to proposals that:

1. Develop novel or innovative ideas, concepts or methods.
2. Involve interdisciplinary collaboration between clinical and teaching faculty.
3. Have significant promise for leading to an application for external grant funding
4. Come from newer investigators who have not previously been awarded a seed grant.

Advice

Investigators that have had CHR Seed grants before should indicate how the funding helped produce publications and applications for external funding. Investigators with current external funding may submit proposals but these must clearly be for developing research in a new direction or for developing collaborative applications.

High priority scores are associated with the following characteristics:

1. Clear, testable hypotheses – this is a fundamental requirement for any scientific proposal.
2. Clear rationale for hypotheses and specific aims – the background literature discussion and preliminary data should support the significance of the proposed work.
3. Significance to basic understanding of biological principals and/or disease, or to diagnosis or treatment of disease or for protection of disease.
4. Clear study design – specific aims that are justified by the background and preliminary data, that are logical and explained with enough detail for reviewers to easily appreciate.

Lower priority scores are associated with the following characteristics:

1. Failure to follow the Proposal Design that is outlined below.
2. Absence of a compelling case for the significance and rationale for the proposed work.
3. A significant problem with a vague study design or experimental plan.
4. A highly detailed study design or experimental plan that does not obviously test a hypothesis.
5. Methods or study design that do not seem feasible with respect to the research team's expertise, the available resources and facilities, and limitations of time and budget.
6. Aims that are not clearly related to each other or to a principal hypothesis or goal.
7. An extramural grant application that has simply been squeezed into the 10 page limit and also submitted as a seed grant – or proposals that are clearly too ambitious to be feasible.
8. Absence of any budget detail or justification – you don't need to detail every expense, but give the reviewers a reasonable idea what you need the money for.
9. Really poor grammar, spelling, or photocopying. Included in this category would be references in the text to figures that are missing or are the wrong figures, etc. The major point is to submit a professional-quality product that is as easy for the reviewers to examine as possible.

Getting help

Some of us have more experience in writing grant proposals than others. If you would like some help, please contact Maria Jose Amor or Dr. Susanne Montgomery. We and others on the review committee can look at an outline of your specific aims or a draft of your proposal and give you some advice. Please do this at least a few weeks before the submission deadline.

Contact me by e-mail at smontgomery@llu.edu or call me directly 909-558-8745 (x88745 from LLU) if you have any questions.

Seed money Proposal Requirements and Format for SPH LLU Research Application Seed Grants

Please note that we require your application to be submitted using PHS 398 NIH application format

Organize your application as indicated below, and include all of the sections. Include PI last name and Page Number in header or footer of each page.

Page 1: Proposal Title

Principal Investigator name and department

Co-investigator names and departments

Total amount requested

Abstract. Limit to 250 words. Below the abstract, indicate if your proposal may be eligible for Cancer research funds. Also indicate if your project will involve Animal studies or Human studies.

Page 2: Budget. (maximum \$5,000). Briefly justify expenditures by category. Examples: supplies (subdivide if necessary); animal purchase, animal per diem; clinical lab tests. See **Advice** above.

Page 3: Curriculum vitae/Biosketch and **Other support** for Principal Investigator and each Co-investigator. Limit to 2-4 pages for each investigator and co-investigator. **Use the NIH Biosketch and Other Support form** (attached). Be sure to list other financial support for each investigator. Indicate any scientific or budgetary overlap of other grants with this proposal. If none, so state. Obtain an electronic form and an example at the NIH web site <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. Select the **Biographical Sketch Sample** Word file from the Individual Form Files table. Replace the example information with your own. Instructions are in Section 6 below the Forms table.

Progress reports for previous CHR/LLU SPH research seed grants. This is required or your proposal will not be reviewed. Two pages maximum for each previous grant funded for year 2002 or 2003. Include the aims of the funded project and progress to accomplish the aims. If your proposal was approved and was not activated or you have not expended any of the funds yet, include an explanation here for why you did not activate the grant or start the work. Include information about presentations and papers coming from the faculty. Also include information on any outside or potential outside funding.

Further details on each section can be recovered on the NIH R01 application instructions mentioned earlier. Finally, the reviewers are instructed to review the application with the criteria listed below. Also, we need to be able to judge future funding potential. Therefore, in your cover letter accompanying the application, please explain why you think this application has outside funding potential and how you see yourself applying for such funding (i.e. NIH, CDC, etc)

Limit the following scientific sections A - D to 8 pages, including figures. Progress reports for previous seed grants do not count in this page limit.

A. Specific Aims. Make a list of Aims to describe what you propose to accomplish. Include hypotheses to be tested if you can. Organize the experimental plan/study design the same way.

B. Background and significance. Give a brief background of previous work done by others that relates to your study and supports the rationale and significance of your hypotheses and aims. Put your proposed studies in perspective and indicate why your studies are of importance to medicine and science.

C. Previous work by the principal investigator. Briefly describe your pilot studies if this is a new application. If there are no preliminary results, describe what the investigators have done that relates to the proposal, for example experience with specific methods or with taking care of specific kinds of patients.

D. Experimental plan/study design. Describe your proposed work in sufficient detail to demonstrate your expertise in the field and to give the reviewers a clear understanding of what will be done and what methods will be used. Include information as to how your data will be analyzed statistically. If the experimental plan is vague, the proposal will not do well with the reviewers.

E. Literature cited. Include only references that are needed to support the rationale for your studies, or to explain or justify methods. Include reference titles.

Use this as a general guideline for your *Curriculum vitae/Biosketch* and *Other Support* information. You do not need to make boxes. Please limit Publications to 2 pages maximum. You can obtain an electronic form (Word or pdf file) and an example at the NIH web site <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. Select the **Biographical Sketch Sample** Word file from the Individual Form Files table on this web page. Replace the example information with your own. Instructions are in Section 6 below the Forms table.

Principal Investigator/Program Director (Last, first, middle):			
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH			
Provide the following information for the key personnel in the order listed for Form Page 2. Follow the sample format for each person. DO NOT EXCEED FOUR PAGES.			
NAME		POSITION TITLE	
eRA COMMONS USER NAME			
EDUCATION/TRAINING (Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, and include postdoctoral training.)			
INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	YEAR(s)	FIELD OF STUDY

NOTE: The Biographical Sketch may not exceed four pages. Items A and B (together) may not exceed two of the four-page limit. Follow the formats and instructions on the attached sample.

- A. Positions and Honors.** List in chronological order previous positions, concluding with your present position. List any honors. Include present membership on any Federal Government public advisory committee.

- B. Selected peer-reviewed publications (in chronological order).** Do not include publications submitted or in preparation.

- C. Research Support.** List selected ongoing or completed (during the last three years) research projects (federal and non-federal support). Begin with the projects that are most relevant to the research proposed in this application. Briefly indicate the overall goals of the projects and your role (e.g. PI, Co-Investigator, Consultant, etc) in the research project. Do not list award amounts or percent effort in projects.