Seed Grant Funding for Research Projects

Application Submission Deadline: March 18, 2022, 5pm Mountain Time

Program Information

The Office of Research is pleased to announce a request for proposals to support research. The overall goal of the program is to encourage the development of research projects that have a high promise of leading to extramural research funding, as well as high-quality peer-reviewed publications and presentations. Four (4) seed grants will be awarded, $20,000 each, plus one (1) for $1,250 for the Postdoctoral Fellow seed grant.

The funding will catalyze the development of research teams or stimulate new ideas from existing teams. The eligible scope of work includes biomedical, translational and/or clinical research projects from TTUHSC El Paso faculty members. Funding cannot be used to support or supplement research with current or previous external funding. The applicants must clearly and convincingly show that the proposed project does not overlap with currently or previously funded research.

If human or animal subjects are included in the project, then Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) protocols must be submitted to the appropriate committee(s) for review prior to submitting the grant application. The submissions must be complete and approvals must be obtained by the project start date; otherwise, the award will be forfeited. Applicants should review posted submission deadline dates to ensure enough time is allowed for review and approval.

Eligibility

The Principal Investigators (PI):
- must have a faculty appointment and be a full-time compensated employee of TTUHSC-EP.
- must meet the requirements for PI status in accordance to OP 73.08 or have a completed and approved Request for Exception to Requirement for PI status per OP 73.08a or OP 73.08b.
- additional collaborators/co-investigators are permitted, but only one PI per application; no more than one application per PI.

Funding Information

**Maximum grant request:** up to $20,000 per project for up to 1 year ($1,250 for the Postdoctoral Fellow seed grant); the amount awarded may be less than the amount requested based on the reviewers’ recommendations.

**Allowable costs:** research reagents, supplies and research core services, including animal per diem charges; research equipment (<$5,000), salary and applicable fringe benefits for direct research staff or students that are currently employed by TTUHSC El Paso.

**Examples of unallowable costs:** faculty salary and fringe benefits, travel expenses, publication costs, computers, iPads, cell phones, clinical services, sub-awards to other institutions/agencies, external contractual services that are available within each institution (e.g., core facilities, Laboratory Animal Resource Center, etc.).

**Application Form Instructions**

**General Information**

- Download the [Application Form](#).
- All required sections and fields must be completed.
- Incomplete or incorrectly completed applications will be administratively rejected.

**Project Information and Abstract**

- The project start and end dates are pre-populated and cannot be changed.
- If the project requires IRB or IACUC approval, select ‘Yes.’ You will be required to enter the date of IRB/IACUC submission (notification of agenda assignment), as applicable.
- For the Project Abstract, please follow NIH Guidelines and Limits. Please elaborate on how the proposed project represents a new direction and does not overlap with currently or previously funded research.
- The “Total Funds Requested” field at the bottom of this section will auto-populate from the totals in the Budget section.

**Proposed Budget and Justification**

- Requested amount must not exceed $20,000 for the year, $1,250 for the Postdoctoral Fellow seed grant.
- The Category subtotals and “Total Cost for Grant Project” fields will automatically sum the line item amounts.
- You may combine similar items in one budget line item, e.g., tissue culture supplies and reagents, western blotting reagents, and provide a more detailed description in the Budget Justification section.
- The Budget Justification must include a concise but well-justified description, which clearly describes the relevance and rationale for each of the items being requested and how the items are essential to the project.
- PI will sign and date the Application Form.

**Project Description Instructions**

- Download the [Project Description Template](#).
- The Project Description document should be 6 pages maximum; Arial 11-point font; 0.75” or greater
margins.

- The Project Description document should consist of the following sections:

**Specific Aims** – up to 1 page
  - brief background and definition of the research question.
  - hypotheses and specific aims of the proposed research.

**Significance & Innovation** – up to 1 page
  - importance of the problem and critical barrier to progress.
  - how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, human health, and/or clinical practice.
  - relevance to the El Paso region or other pertinent populations.
  - discuss how these preliminary data are critical for a subsequent grant proposals.

**Research Strategy and Methods** – up to 4 pages
  - conceptual background, including relevant prior work and the rationale for the project (e.g., what will be learned, why it is important, etc.).
  - key experiments or procedures to be performed; include methods/mechanisms of data collection and methods for analysis and interpretation of results timeline of work to be completed during the project period.

**References Cited** - no limit

**Biosketch Instructions**

- Download the [NIH Biosketch Template](#).
- Follow current NIH Biosketch format; 5 pages maximum.
- Complete a Biosketch for the PI and for each faculty Co-Investigator and collaborators.

**Submission Method**

- Submit the completed application package (documents below) as email attachments to [ELP-ORseedgrants@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:ELP-ORseedgrants@ttuhsc.edu) by the due date and time listed above.
  - Completed and signed Application Form
  - Project Description document
  - Biosketches

**Application Tips and Review Criteria**

- Is there a clear description of how this project is a new avenue of research and that the project does not overlap with existing or previously funded projects?

- Are the goals, objectives and expected results stated clearly, and are they reasonable for the project amount and period?

- Is the research plan clearly described and does it reflect the goals and objectives of the project?

- If the proposed research is completed, does the project have a high probability of obtaining extramural support? Have those funding opportunities been identified?
• Do the PI’s clearly describe the significance and merit of the research?

• Are possible barriers or technical difficulties addressed adequately and are alternative plans or solutions provided?

• Does the PI (and collaborators) have the experience and expertise needed to successfully complete the project?

• Does the project further the mission of TTUHSC El Paso?

**Grant Administration**

• The PI is responsible for:
  
  o Administering grant funds in accordance with [TTUHSC El Paso institutional policies](#).
  
  o Submitting required reports by the due dates.
  
  o Successfully completing the project and expending all grant funds by the project end date.
    
    ▪ All expenditures must be completed and fully invoiced by the grant end date.
    
    ▪ No more than one (1) Budget Revision per grant year may be submitted for review and approval.
  
  o Applying to an external funding source within one year of the completion date of the project.
  
  o Submitting 1 or more peer-reviewed publications with PI as first or corresponding author on the work supported by this seed grant.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I have current external funding or if I have a current start-up package?
A: Yes.

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I'm a previous recipient of a TTUHSC El Paso seed grant or mini-seedgrant?
A: Yes.

Q: May I include study participant stipends?
A: Yes.

Q: Are salary and fringe benefits for the PI or other faculty allowed?
A: No.

Q: May the PI or other faculty/staff receive monetary compensation (of any kind)?
A: No.

Q: May I include a sub-award in the budget category?
A: No.

Q: Are publication costs an allowable expense?
A: No.

Q: Will review critiques be provided?
A: Yes, and the Vice President for Research is available to meet with applicants whose projects were not selected for funding to provide guidance and advice toward a future application.
Q: When I submit my application, will someone pre-review it and let me know if I'm missing anything?
A: No, the PI is responsible for completing the application according to the instructions.

Q: Will I receive a confirmation email when I submit my application?
A: Yes, you will receive a confirmation email within one business day of your submission.

Q: Is there any reason you would accept late applications?
A: No.

Additional Questions?

Please email additional questions to ELP-ORseedgrants@ttuhsc.edu.