Masonic Cancer Center
Translational Working Group Pilot Project Program
Spring 2017

Objective

The objective of the Translational Working Group (TWG) awards is to make an impact on the translational goals of the TWGs in research leading to novel approaches in cancer diagnosis, prevention or treatment. The Masonic Cancer Center is especially interested in applications that have potential to translate findings to a clinical trial or clinical application, or in research that takes a clinical observation to the laboratory to study novel cancer mechanisms. In 2017, we are particularly encouraging projects that utilize human biospecimens and involve faculty from the Department of Pathology. Such projects will be given priority for funding.

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

- These pilot grants are available to Masonic Cancer Center members with faculty appointments at the University of Minnesota who are also members of one of the Translational Working Groups (TWGs), i.e. Brain Tumor, Breast Cancer, Cutaneous Oncology, Prostate and Urologic Cancer, Gynecologic Cancers, Heme Malignancy, Sarcoma, Thoracic.

- Applications must have a translational cancer-related theme relevant to one of the TWGs and have the endorsement of the leader(s) of the relevant TWG. Each TWG may only submit one application.

- The primary criteria for funding will be 1) likelihood that the project will make an impact on the translational goals of the TWG, 2) the quality of the research approach, 3) the potential for future outside funding to sustain or further develop the translational objective 4) projects that include an anatomical pathologist and utilize patient biospecimens. Proposed research must be hypothesis-driven or hypothesis-generating and have the goal of making progress for a specific translational objective.

- Examples of projects that will be considered:
  - Funds to supplement biomarker analysis for an ongoing preclinical or clinical study
  - Funds to support pilot research for a translational grant application
  - Funds to support development of a clinical trial
  - Funds to develop or utilize a human biospecimen collection for a specific research objective

- The funds must be designated for the direct support of research. In general, funds should be used for supplies and support of research personnel (graduate students or technicians). Funds cannot be used to support faculty salaries. Only equipment purchases that are directly required for the research are appropriate. No indirect costs should be included in the budget.

- All applicants are required to have proper approvals (IRB/IACUC/IBC) before research may begin. Applicants are highly encouraged to apply for proper approvals at or prior to the time of submission. This will ensure that the study is approved by the start date of the award.

Mechanism Funding Information

Applications with budgets of $25,000 - $50,000 for a one year term will be considered.

2 - 4 awards will be made depending upon scientific review and budget requests.
Application Process

- Application format should follow NIH PHS 398 format whenever possible.
  - Font size - at least 11 pt. Arial preferred.
- The proposal should contain the following information:
  - Cover Sheet (one page maximum)
    - Title, abstract, investigators, TWG affiliation
  - Research Plan, single-spaced (three page maximum)
    - Specific Aims
    - Research Strategy (Translational Significance, Innovation, Approach)
      - Explanation of how proposed study will impact the TWG’s translational program
      - Should not include preprints, reprints, or other forms of freestanding preliminary data as appendices
  - References (no page limit)
  - Bio sketches for all key personnel - follow current NIH format (5 pages per bio sketch)
  - Current & pending support for all key personnel - follow NIH format, include federal and non-federal support
  - Detailed budget and justification, NIH format, project period: 7/1/17 - 6/30/18
    - Research personnel (e.g. grad students, lab staff, technicians). No faculty salary allowed.
    - Research supplies
    - Core service expenses (e.g. flow cytometry, tissue procurement)
    - Small equipment (less than $2,500)
    - Animal costs
    - No indirect costs (internal award)

Review Process

Each mechanism has an internally-selected committee that will review applications. The committee will make recommendations for funding to the Mechanism Lead. De-identified, written reviews/critiques will be sent upon request.

Applicants will be notified of the review outcome by mid-June, 2017. Awards will be made for one year, with an anticipated activation date of July 1, 2017.

Reporting Requirements

Principal investigators of funded projects will be required to provide mid-year and final reports that include accounting of all funds expended to date and progress towards milestones. Reports are to be submitted to the Mechanism Lead and the Funding Initiatives Manager. It is expected that all funds will be expended by June 30, 2018, with extensions being considered only in exceptional circumstances.
cases and requiring the approval of the Mechanism Lead.

Academic Health Center (AHC), MCC and CSH communications staff may reach out to awardees in the process of crafting communications (publications, website, flyers, etc.) for external audiences.

During a period of up to 7 years following the end of the pilot award, if any grants or publications are obtained as a result of this pilot funding, awardees are required to submit this information to the Funding Initiatives Manager.

Grant Program Contacts

All questions related to the application process, requirements, or eligibility should be directed to:

Susan Fautsch, CETI/Funding Initiatives Manager
612-625-6238
mccgrant@umn.edu

Any questions regarding the applicability of research should be directed to:

Jill M. Siegfried, Ph.D.
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jsiegfri@umn.edu