Bridge Funding Program

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Objective
The primary purpose of this bridge funding program is to support University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center (UNMCCC) members through a period of low external funding, thereby enabling them to continue their research program and regain external peer-reviewed funding.

Eligibility
All UNMCCC members in good standing are eligible to apply. For awarded applicants who do not have an active Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between their home department and the Cancer Center, there may be negotiations between the Cancer Center and the department regarding the distribution of returned indirect costs from any extramural grants awarded as result of the bridge funding.

Term of Funding
Bridge funding awards will be for a one-year period with a maximum budget of $100,000 (direct costs only). Requests for a second year of funding will be considered based upon progress (publications and submitted grant applications) during the initial funding period and availability of funds. Expenditures may begin at any time after the official start date but generally all funds should be expended within one year of receipt. Successful applicants must produce a 1-2 page 6-month progress report as well as a 2-3 page final report within 30-days of completing the project.

The number of awards will depend on quality of applications and the availability of funds.

Key Dates
Applications are accepted on a rolling basis for this funding program.

Allowable Costs
All funds requested must be justified based on involvement in a specific research project and linked to a planned grant application (with a specific date of submission indicated). The maximum one-year budget will be $100,000 (direct costs only). Funding is available for salaries and fringe benefits of post-doctoral fellows, students, technicians, and other non-faculty project personnel costs. Laboratory supplies and other related research non-personnel expenses are appropriate. Funds cannot be used for faculty salary support, the purchase of large equipment, travel to scientific meetings (local research travel is allowed), office furniture and equipment, and/or computers.

Format
Proposals should be submitted in one PDF file and include the following items:
**Application Components**

1. **Cover letter** that addresses the following aspects of the request:
   a. Title and focus of bridge funding associated research project.
   b. The planned extramural grant mechanism and proposed submission. *Note that preference for funding will be giving to applicants whose planned future submissions are to the NCI and/or other NIH institutes.*

2. **Face Page** (2 pages). Complete the application’s face page (see template *Application Face Page*) and be sure to include a 100 to 150 word research abstract typed in 11-point Arial font.

3. **Funding Proposal** (3-page limit). Provide an outline of the proposed research project that will be supported by the bridge funding and describe how this will contribute to the overall research program of the UNMCCC member. All current laboratory personnel should be described in terms of their research role and sources of their current and planned salary support. Finally, include a section on the planned external peer-reviewed grant submission(s), outlining the mechanism and submission date. This section should also include an explicit description of why the bridge funds are needed.

4. **Justification of Need** (2-page limit). Provide a justification of need for bridging funds, that includes details on past productivity and what is being done/will be done over the bridge funding period to set up the applicant to successfully compete for external peer-review funding (i.e. manuscripts being submitted, additional preliminary data being collected).

5. **Literature Cited** (No page limit).

6. **Biographical Sketches** (new NIH format) Provide complete bio-sketches in NIH specific format for the PI and other key members of the laboratory for whom funding is being requested.

7. **Other Support** Provide an NIH formatted “Other Support” document outlining current, past and pending grant support. Additionally, include a section of the document that lists all grant applications submitted and not funded over the previous three years. For each of these grants, include details on the “outcome”, i.e. Score and Percentile / “Not Discussed”. Provide copies of all relevant unsuccessful and/or pending grant applications (abstract, specific aims, and research strategy), as well as any received critiques for the unsuccessful applications.

8. **Budget and Budget Justification**. The application must include a detailed budget and budget justification.

* Proposals involving human subjects must have approval from the School of Medicine HRRC prior to funding.

* Proposals utilizing laboratory animals must submit a completed Laboratory Animal Utilization form prior to funding.

**Application Process**

1. Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis and should be submitted electronically in one PDF to [UNMCC-PilotProgram@salud.unm.edu](mailto:UNMCC-PilotProgram@salud.unm.edu).

2. Funding Proposals should not exceed 3 single-spaced, typewritten pages. Note that the face page, references, biographical sketches, budgets and budget justifications are not included in this page limit. Additional supportive attachments are allowed, but they must be pertinent (i.e. protocols, IRB/IACUC approvals, letters of support, etc…).
   - Complete the face page in the template provided (*Application Face Page*).
   - The required font for the proposal is 11-point Arial.
   - Margins must be at least 0.50 inches wide on all four sides of each page.
   - Attach biographical sketches (new NIH format) for the PI and other key members of the laboratory.
If pertinent, please attach copies of the IRB approval and approved protocols for the project. All applicants are encouraged to submit IRB applications at the same time as the funding application due to the potentially long time-line for IRB approval. Funds will not be released without IRB approval.

3. Incomplete proposals or those that exceed the page limits (not including attachments) will not be considered.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Recent publication record (evaluated for the previous 5 years), submitted manuscripts and manuscripts in preparation;
- Current and previous extramural funding (evaluated for the previous 5 years);
- Recent grant submission activity with information about the fate of submitted applications, including study section critiques;
- Commitment to submit applications with defined deadlines (priority will be given to applicants whose future grant applications will be submitted to the NCI and/or other NIH institutes; and
- Contributions to the Cancer Center.

**Application Review Process**

The applications will be reviewed by an ad hoc committee composed of UNMCCC Senior Leaders, Program Leaders, UNM Faculty and an ad hoc external reviewer with appropriate expertise to evaluate past accomplishments and the potential for success in securing future funding. This review committee will make recommendations for funding to the Cancer Center Director.

**Award Management**

If awardees apply for and receive an additional year of funding, second year payments are contingent upon receipt of progress reports and any applicable publications and approval by Cancer Center Senior Leadership. *All funds must be spent within the 12 month period;* unused funds will be returned to the central Cancer Center budget for redistribution during the next budget cycle. If the Cancer Center Senior Leadership terminate an award for non-compliance or non-performance, remaining balances will be returned to the Cancer Center for redistribution within the next award cycle.

**Change In Status Of Awardee**

Awards must remain solely with the designated awardee and cannot be transferred to any other personnel. If a recipient decides to discontinue his or her work in the UNMCCC, the award will be terminated as described above, and unused funds will be returned to the UNMCCC. Likewise, if an investigator awardee changes institutions during the funding period, the award cannot be transferred and the remaining balance will be returned to the central UNMCCC budget.

**Expectations of Award Recipients**

Recipients of these awards are expected to actively participate in UNMCCC activities such as seminars, research program and clinical working group meetings, and retreats. All correspondence should be sent to **UNMCC-PilotProgram@salud.unm.edu** including:

- All required progress reports, and all additional requests for updates from the Cancer Center Senior Leadership and/or Administration.
Additionally, recipients are expected to appropriately acknowledge the bridge funding. *All material derived from the research supported by UNMCCC funding that is published or presented must carry a statement that credits the Cancer Center Support Grant P30CA118100 and Shared Resources, where appropriate.* Publications that cite the Cancer Center Support Grant funding will be included in progress reports to NCI.

Any questions about this pilot grant program should be directed to Alan Tomkinson, Associate Director, Basic Research *(atomkinson@salud.unm.edu).*