

2021 Downstate Health Sciences University Seed Grant Program

Overview

The DHSU Office of the SVPR aims to advance the research enterprise of SUNY Downstate via targeted investments in projects that are deemed to be competitive for federal extramural research support. For the 2021 Seed Grant Program, applications are solicited from faculty in all of DHSU's colleges and schools in two tracks:

- *Track 1:* Projects focused on health equity or health disparities (as described by NIH [NIMHD](#)) from individuals or teams of DHSU faculty investigators.
- *Track 2:* Projects in any area from teams (two or more) of DHSU faculty investigators who have not received federal (or other substantial) funding together in the last 4 years.

Research in either track can be of any modality (laboratory, clinical, computational [including secondary data analyses], or epidemiological [quantitative and qualitative]), as long as it is appropriate for a federal funding mechanism. Collaborative projects (encouraged for Track 1; required for Track 2) may help to create synergies among DHSU investigators and spur researchers to transform individual projects into larger programs with increased impact and visibility.

Funding Available

Budgets will be for a single 12-month period:

- Single-investigator projects (Track 1 only): up to \$30,000.
- Multi-investigator projects (Track 1 or 2): up to \$50,000.

Up to 5 projects in each track (for a total expenditure of up to \$400,000) will be funded. It is anticipated that there will be additional seed-grant programs in the coming years, although the requirements and tracks may change.

Eligibility Requirements

- All full-time, salaried faculty with primary appointments at DHSU are eligible, unless otherwise excluded via the criteria below.
- Faculty with unrestricted accounts (e.g., start-up, etc.) on either the State or RF side with balances in excess of \$10,000 cannot be contact PI. Such investigators can be a non-contact MPI, in which case it is envisioned that they bring specific expertise to a project that might otherwise not “fly” without them.
- For multi-PI (MPI) projects, one individual must be named as the contact PI for the proposal.
- For MPI projects, each PI should bring a unique set of skills and experience to the overall project with the combined efforts of the PIs resulting in a cohesive joint project.
- For Track 2 only: At least one of the mPIs must have been PI or MPI on at least one major (federal or similar) research award that has been active (including no-cost extensions) within the past three years.

Application Process – due April 12

The following must be submitted to svp-research-office@downstate.edu. With the exception of the budget spreadsheet (which should be attached separately in its excel format), all of the following should be combined in order into a single bundled PDF using Helvetica or similar sans-serif font, 11-point minimum (smaller for figures and legends allowed), and 0.5-inch margins minimum:

Cover Page: Using the template on the last page of this document.

Research Strategy (3-page limit, excluding references):

- Specific Aims
- Significance and Innovation
- Preliminary Data
- Study Design, Expected Results, and Alternative Approaches
- Future Extramural Funding: include an explanation of how the seed money is expected to favorably position the research for securing extramural federal grant funding. Please list intended funding mechanism and agency/institute, with as much specificity as is known.

Leadership Plan (if multi PI) (up to ½ page): Describe the contributions of the participating PIs and how the seed funding will enable the building of a synergistic team going forward.

Biosketches and Other Support: NIH biographical sketch (which should clearly highlight relevant publication and research expertise) and NIH Other Support document for each investigator. Adhere to NIH rules for style and length.

Brief Description of Facilities (up to ½ page): Describe the facilities available to complete the project.

Budget: Complete the budget spreadsheet and attach to the email as a separate excel attachment.

Budget Justification (up to 1 page): Provide detailed justification for each Budget line item. Resources cannot be used for travel or PI salaries and fringe. Indirect costs are not to be included.

Optional: Append study-section (or similar) summary statement(s) relevant to the proposed project. Such summary statements are valuable as they demonstrate commitment to pursuing funding for the project idea.

Selection Criteria

A peer-review committee, comprised of DHSU faculty, will evaluate each proposal and make recommendations to the Senior Vice President of Research about funding priority. Faculty who submit applications for this program will not participate on the peer review committee. Reviewers will be excluded from the evaluation and discussion of any applications for which they have a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Reviewers will evaluate applications according to the following criteria:

- Quality of the research proposal.
- Potential of a project to lead to competitive extramural federal grant application.

- Track record of research productivity and funding by the applicants, including assessment of past and current funding. Early-stage investigators will not be held to the same level of expectation as their senior colleagues.
- For multi-PI projects:
 - Potential to create clear synergies and long-term collaborations.
 - Evidence that the individual PIs bring unique strengths and skills to the overall project.
- Optional, but will be viewed favorably:
 - Increases research training opportunities for trainees.
 - For multi-PI projects: team is comprised of PIs from different colleges and schools.

Note: to minimize reviewer burden, formal written reviews will not be collected or distributed. However, a brief review summary will be provided for each application.

Funding Terms

- Funding will be contingent on obtaining any required IACUC/IRB/IBC approvals for the project, if applicable.
- The Office of the SVPR will consider requests for award initiation delays of up to 3 months to allow for project ramp-up, such as obtaining necessary IACUC/IRB/IBC approvals.
- Funding will also be contingent on completion, by all project PIs, of all compliance requirements (e.g., CITI, COI) as required by the Office of Compliance and Audit Services.
- Post-award management and funding will be handled by the Research Foundation according to institutional research expenditure rules and regulations.
- Funds must be spent during the 12-month budget period. Request for unspent funds carry-forward, for up to 6 months, must be made at least 3 months before the end of the 12-month budget period and will be considered by the SVPR office only if substantially justified.

Post-award requirements

- All awardees are expected to submit an extramural federal grant application related to the funded project within 6-9 months after the end of the seed-funding period. Alternatively, applications for substantial funding to non-federal entities might be acceptable, but must be discussed with the SVPR office in advance.
- Awardees must inform the Office of the SVPR when an application for extramural grant funding is submitted and the outcome of the review.
- Awardees must inform the Office of the SVPR of any papers or awards attributable to research discoveries advanced through the seed grant.
- Awardees must file a progress report one year after funds are dispersed. The format of the progress report will be released by the Office of the SVPR.
- Awardees must present their findings at an awardee symposium that will be scheduled approximately one year after funding starts.

Questions

Please address any questions to Ayesha Joshi, PhD, Director of Research Programs Development <ayesha.joshi@downstate.edu>.

2021 Downstate Health Sciences University Seed Grant Program application

Track 1 Track 2 (see descriptions in *Overview*)

Principle Investigator 1 (contact PI if multi-PI application)

Name _____ Title _____

College/School _____ Dept/Div _____

Principle Investigator 2 (if multi-PI application)

Name _____ Title _____

College/School _____ Dept/Div _____

*If more than two PIs, please create new entries in this location.

Proposal Title: _____

Approvals:. (If not yet approved, indicate date of submission and “pending approval”).:

IACUC protocol # and approval or submission date (if applicable) _____

IRB protocol # and approval or submission date (if applicable) _____

IBC protocol # and approval or submission date (if applicable) _____

Facilities:

Please indicate the room location(s) in which the research will be performed: _____

Is the space suitable for the proposed research? Yes No

If no, please explain the plan to make it suitable: _____

CTSC space required?

If yes, please confirm that CTSC has agreed *in writing* to host the study. _____