

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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Program Project for a Broad Multidisciplinary Research Program between Weill Cornell Medical College and The Methodist Hospital Research Institute

Weill Cornell Medical College (WMC) in New York City and The Methodist Hospital Research Institute (TMHRI) in Houston announce a competition for a program project grant of up to \$500,000 per year for a three-year period. The purpose of the grant is to establish a broadly based multidisciplinary research program between TMHRI and WMC, a component of which may reside at other institutions. For consideration, each proposal must name a PI from either WMC or TMHRI and a Co-PI at the other institution. Proposals should indicate the ways in which each of them will be involved in the collaboration. The bulk of the work must be carried out at the two institutions.

Programs are especially encouraged in five, broadly interpreted areas: cancer, cardiovascular disease, neurosciences, metabolic disease, and infectious diseases. Other programs critical to the mission of both institutions will also be considered. The program project grant supports research in which the funding of several interdependent projects as a group offers significant scientific advantages over support of these same projects as individual regular research grants. Successful program projects will establish effective collaborations that extend beyond the life of the program project grant.

The scientist designated as the principal investigator bears responsibility for the overall scientific leadership and fiscal management of the program project grant. It is expected that each of the collaborating scientists responsible for the individual projects will be independent investigators. In addition, the program project and each individual project must represent a significant effort on the part of the participating scientists and be distinct from their other funded efforts. If individuals have substantial support in areas closely related to the program project, they may participate as associate members. Associate members have full use of, for example, core facilities, and contribute to the overall collegiality of the project, but derive no financial support from it.

Full program applications will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by an external scientific review group convened in accordance with the standard NIH peer review procedures. As part of the initial merit review, all applications will undergo a process in which only those applications deemed to have the highest scientific merit, generally the top half of applications under review, will be discussed, assigned a priority score, and receive a second level review by the WMC-TMHRI Advisory Council. Final review and recommendations by WMC-TMHRI Advisory Council will take into account the scientific merit of both the individual projects and the program project as a whole, the relevance of the project to the interests and mission of WMC and TMHRI, and the likelihood of competing successfully for future support by NIH and other extramural funding agencies.

All future extramural applications derived from these proposals must be submitted by WMC or TMHRI as the sponsoring institution.

Letter of intent:

Those who want to submit a proposal are required to submit a Letter of Intent with information on the planned research topic(s) and major investigators. Groups who submit a Letter of Intent proposing meritorious programs (as assessed by the TMHRI-WMC Advisory Council) are eligible to receive a travel grant of \$5,000 to \$10,000 to conduct a mini-retreat to plan the joint application. Depending on the number of Letters of Intent received, an evaluation process may be used to select the most meritorious for further consideration.

Submission guidelines:

1. The data gathered through this research proposal should be used for future NIH grant applications; the proposal should indicate how this would be accomplished.
2. The application should show the exact roles of the PI, Co-PI, other collaborating PIs, and key personnel in the project.
3. General instructions relevant for the preparation of the program project grant are contained in the Grant Application Form PHS 398 application (PO1 mechanism) (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>). Include a table with a description of the work that will be performed on each campus.
4. Include a detailed budget for the initial budget period as well as a budget for the entire proposed period of support (Fillable Individual PHS 398 Forms: Form Page 4 and Form Page 5, respectively). Include a budget justification. Include a table detailing on which campus the funds will be spent each year.
5. The total project period for an application submitted in response to this RFA may not exceed three years.
6. The PI must be a WMC faculty member or a member of TMHRI.

Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate:

- Meritorious science, including innovative ideas that may lead to pace-setting results in biomedical research.
- Interrelationships between component projects that result in a greater contribution to the program goals than if each project were pursued separately.
- Synergistic interactions between TMHRI and WMC, leveraging resources at both institutions, including those in translational/clinical research.
- A high likelihood that work will lead to funded extramural support, preferably from the NIH.
- The impact of the proposed project as a function of cost.

Dates:

- RFA release date: August 15, 2006
- Letter of Intent due date: October 2, 2006
- Application due date: April 2, 2007
- Award date: July 2, 2007
- Start date: July 31, 2007

Submit a signed, typewritten original of the application, including the Checklist, to both these addresses:

Ed Jones
The Methodist Hospital Research Institute
6565 Fannin Street
Room STB1-14
Houston, TX 77030

Eelco Slagter
Weill Cornell Medical College
1300 York Avenue
Room F-108
New York, NY 10021

In addition, send a pdf file of the entire application to Ed Jones (ejones@tmh.tmc.edu) and Eelco Slagter (eas2008@med.cornell.edu).