Immunology, Inflammation, and Infectious Disease Initiative in partnership with the Office of the Vice President For Research

Request for Proposals –
Special Emphasis: Emerging COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 Research

Purpose:
The Immunology, Inflammation, and Infectious Disease (3i) Initiative in partnership with the Office of the Vice President For Research at the University of Utah is pleased to announce a request for proposals for research projects specifically focused on the COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 virus and the related pandemic. The goal of this program is to support and enhance preliminary/project data for emerging research projects that will create competitive applications that are able to quickly respond to national funding opportunities.

Research Scope:
Only projects specifically focused on the COVID-19/SARS-CoV2 virus and related pandemic will be reviewed.

Proposal Preferences:
Preference will be given to applications that:
- Have significant scientific merit
- Have a high potential for extramural funding
- Are not currently supported by extramural funding
- Build or strengthen interdisciplinary partnerships within the University of Utah and 3i community

Application Instructions:
Applications and all supporting documents should be submitted electronically through the University of Utah’s Competition Space interface at http://utah.infoready4.com/ by March 31st. (funding decisions will be made by April 7th)

Applications must include:
1. A lay abstract for the general public (up to 100 words). Please make sure to address the significance of the proposed project and how these funds will help future research efforts. For help with a lay abstract, see: Dubé, C.E. & Lapane, K.L. J Canc Educ (2014) 29: 577, https://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-013-0570-1
2. A brief proposal (2 page, plus references on additional pages as needed). Please address the following:
   1. Intellectual Merit
   2. Goals, methodology, and deliverables.
   3. Explanation of new research directions, partnerships, or campus collaborations
   4. Role of each project investigator.
   5. Plan for extramural support, included specific funding opportunity to be targeted and timeline for submitting an extramural proposal.

Senior Vice President for Health Sciences, Research Unit
3. A biographical sketch for each co-investigator (5 pages max).
4. If human subjects or animal research is involved, provide one copy of the IRB or IACUC confirmation. IRB and any required IACUC approvals must be in place before funds are released. All projects working with COVID-19 or patient samples who have tested positive for COVID-19 must provide documentation of IBC registration.
5. Proposed project budget (not to exceed $25,000), following the guidelines below. All items must be submitted as a single pdf file.

Budget Guidelines:
Funding is available for salaries and fringe benefits of post-doctoral fellows, students, technicians, and other non-faculty project personnel, supplies, miscellaneous expenses, and services. Grant funds cannot be used for faculty salaries (summer or academic year); travel (e.g., conferences cannot be supported by this grant); consultants; or office equipment, including computers (unless specifically justified). Please prepare a one-page budget with maximum direct costs of $25,000 for one year of support. The budget template on Competition Space (https://utah.infoready4.com/) is not required but may be used for this purpose.

Review and Funding of Proposals:
Proposals will be reviewed by the 3i Initiative – Vice President of Research Office COVID Seed Grant Study Section to assess innovation, intellectual merit, collaboration (if applicable). Applicants will be informed of the status of their proposal by April 7th. With funding to begin as soon as possible after appropriate IRB/IACUC/IBC approvals are in place. Maximum funding per project is $25,000, with a project term of one year. Budgets may be reduced as 3i leadership sees fit. Unused funds must be returned to the 3i Initiative and Vice President of Research Office after one year. However, recipients can submit, no later than two months before the one-year deadline, an explanation of why the funds have not been spent and a plan to spend out the grant after the one-year deadline. In such cases, the 3i Leadership will decide if additional time will be allowed. Grant administration is the responsibility of the Principal Investigators.

Final Report:
At the end of the project period, funded proposals must provide a progress report. A template will be sent to the Principle Investigator to be used for submission.

Additional Information:
The proposal must not overlap with any existing grants (i.e. PIs cannot receive funding from the VPR Funding Incentive Seed Grant or existing mechanisms for the same, or a similar project). Seed funding under this program is to be used to successfully compete for extramural funds to support the project in the long term and proposals must include a detailed plan for soliciting extramural support, including specific funding opportunity to be targeted and timeline for submission.

Questions? Please contact: Nicole Frank (Nicole.Frank@hsc.utah.edu)