

Bridge Funding Policies for the University of Utah Health

This HSC Bridge Fund Mechanism is managed by John Phillips, to whom enquiries should be addressed.

The intent of the bridge funding program is to provide resources for existing research projects/programs that have temporarily lost funding but have a proven track record of procuring extramural funds and are likely to reestablish extramural funding in the near future. This mechanism is only applicable for those who will be maintaining an active research program. Application, selection, and follow-up procedures are outlined below.

I. Criteria for application

- The investigator should be a U of U investigator.
- The investigator should be PI on a competitive R01 (or its equivalent) renewal application (or PI on a new application that replaces a previous R01) that has been reviewed but was not funded. Summary statements should be provided. This is the award that will be bridged, although total funding available to the investigator will be an important criterion in review of the bridge funding application. Smaller awards such as NIH R21's and non-federal funding agency grants will not normally be considered, and will be given a lower priority for bridge funding by this mechanism.
- The investigator should be making significant process towards reestablishing grant support. Under this circumstance bridge funding for a second consecutive year will be considered as it may require 18-24 months to secure grant awards. Under any other circumstance, bridge funding in consecutive years will be given lower priority*.
- The investigator will not take on a new graduate student until extramural funding is secured.
- Bridge funds will not be allocated to support clinical trials where insufficient budgeting or misuse of funds has led to a deficit.
- Bridge funding will usually only be considered for investigators that have not received bridge funding in the previous 5 years.
- Bridge funding will not usually be provided from the AVPR office to investigators with primary appointments in departments that have access to adequate resources to support the investigator directly.

II. Application procedure

- The relevant Department Chair must initially discuss and review the bridge funding request with their faculty member. A brief letter of support from the Chair must accompany the application. This letter must include information about how the Department will support the investigator, if at all, during this period.
 - In the event of multiple applications from the same Department, the Chair will provide a separate letter that ranks and briefly explains the applications from their unit.
- The investigator must submit a letter (no more than one page) outlining why bridge support is needed. The letter should include how interruption of funding for the project will disrupt research efforts in his/her group, the end date of the current funding, and plans for submitting the revised or new proposal (timeline, etc). A complete listing of the investigator's research funding support should be

provided, including external awards, collaborative support, industry support, endowed chair, start-up funds, and any discretionary accounts.

- The investigator must submit an up-to-date biosketch, preferably the one submitted with their pending extramural application, and the specific aims page of the grant application. The investigator should also include the study section summary statement and priority/percentile score, and should outline how the major concerns will be addressed in the revised application (such as by including the Introduction section for an imminent resubmission).
- A budget page indicating the anticipated uses of the bridging funds must be submitted. Requests for funding can include salary, supplies, animal costs and other expenses related to the project. Bridge funding cannot be used in support of PI salary/benefits. The total of the bridge request cannot exceed \$80,000/year.

III. Selection and funding procedures

- Bridge requests will be considered 3 times per year. Bridge requests must be submitted by the end of the following months: February, June, and October. The bridge requests will be reviewed approximately 1-2 months after they are submitted. If awarded, support will be provided shortly thereafter.
- Bridge requests will be reviewed by an advisory panel, which will include the Vice Dean for Research from the relevant College.
- The Associate Vice President for Research will provide final authorization.
- Priority will be given to investigators who have submitted proposals in a timely fashion and extramural proposals that received favorable reviews.
- Priority will be given to investigators with limited means for maintaining an active research program.

IV. Follow-up procedures

- It is critical for the U of U to gauge the success of the Bridge Funding Program so that adjustments can be made as appropriate. PI's are required to notify the Associate Vice President for Research as to whether extramural funding was procured or not. The amount awarded and the duration of support should be included in reports for funded research awards.
- In cases where extramural funding is secured before bridge funding is exhausted, PI's are expected to return any remaining bridge funds.

*Research activities funded by this mechanism must meet all regulatory requirements of the University of Utah, including IRB and IACUC review and approval.

**UofU Bridge Funding Policies were initially written on March 1st, 2013, by Dr. Andrew S. Weyrich, PhD, Associate Dean of Basic and Translational Science and then vetted by Basic Science Chairs (i.e., Chris Hill, Wes Sundquist, Monica Vetter, and Lynn Jorde). Based on Chair recommendations, an official UofU Bridge Funding Policy for Basic Science Departments was installed on April 29th. Bridge funding policies from other institutions and The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) recent analysis of bridge funding in U.S. medical schools served as guides for composition of these policies (*An Assessment of Bridge Funding in US Medical Schools*, AAMC, Volume 13, Number 1, February 2013). These policies were updated in November 2018 by leadership within The Office of the Associate Vice President for Research (Willard Dere, Rachel Hess,

Michael Dean, and John Phillips). This policy was updated in November 2020 by leadership within the Office of the AVPR (Willard Dere, Christopher Hill, John Phillips, Rachel Hess, Michael Dean).