The Academic Health Center (AHC) is soliciting applications for Faculty Research Development (FRD) grants. These grants will be awarded through a competitive peer review process. It is anticipated that up to six projects will be funded in the current competition. FRD grants are intended to support new or expanding interdisciplinary research, which is innovative and has a high potential for return on investment.

Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria

1) All full-time paid UMN faculty at the Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor level, in the AHC colleges/schools and centers/institutes (e.g., CDD, IHI, etc.), are eligible. Faculty on phased retirement are not eligible. Individuals who hold P&A appointments (e.g., Research Associates), but hold a courtesy appointment as an Assistant Professor from their department chair are not eligible. Questions regarding faculty eligibility should be discussed with and are determined by the Associate Dean for Research in the applicant’s college.

2) Proposals are encouraged from all areas of research within the AHC.

3) Faculty who were recipients of a FRD grant funded in 2017 during this cycle are not eligible to apply.

4) The project must be interdisciplinary, involving two co-PIs who are each from a different AHC college or school (dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health, veterinary medicine). The research team may also include faculty from outside of the AHC as long as the two co-PI criterion is met.

5) A faculty member may apply for only one FRD grant per cycle on which he/she is a co-PI. There is no limit to the number of applications on which a faculty member would participate as a collaborator.

6) The maximum award will be $200,000 that can be applied to a one or two-year project. The funds should be designated for the direct support of research. In general, funds should be used for: supplies and reagents, support of research personnel (research associates, postdocs, graduate students or technicians), small equipment (less than $10,000), and fee for service use of shared resources (e.g., RAR, flow cytometry, genomics etc.). Funds cannot be used to support faculty salaries, administrative assistant salaries, service contracts, travel to scientific meetings, and payments or reimbursements for patient care.
7) The primary criteria for funding will be innovation, quality of the research approach, synergy of the research team, justification for the request (particularly for applications from PIs with substantial funding) and the potential for future external funding to sustain or further develop the program.

Application Process

1) LOI: A competitive letter of intent (LOI), prepared by both co-PIs, and including a 1-paragraph summary describing the project, must be received by 4:30pm on Friday, September 21, 2018. The LOI will be screened for innovation, team synergy, and potential for future external funding. Depending upon the number of LOIs submitted, as few as half may be invited to submit a full application. The letter must be electronically submitted using the online form available at the following link: LOI Submission Form.

Applicants will be notified about LOI decisions by late October 2018.

2) FULL SUBMISSION: The full application should be evaluable by a general scientific audience and avoid the use of discipline specific jargon and acronyms. Sufficient space should be devoted to describing the unresolved questions and broad goals of the application, not just the details of specific experiments. The following must be included:

   a) A summary of no more than 1/2 page that can be understood by a lay audience.
   b) Research plan. This section should include background, hypothesis/specific aims, any preliminary data (not required), experimental plan, and references.
   c) Explain how the inter-collegiate nature of the project will facilitate successful completion of the specific aims, and the strategy that will be employed to pursue external funding to sustain the project on a longer-term basis.
   d) A detailed description of the roles of the two co-PIs on the project and the potential for synergy in the collaboration. Each of the two co-PIs will be expected to make a robust contribution to the design and conduct of the study, similar to the expectations for multi-PIs in an NIH award. In the event that the two co-PIs have a past history of collaboration (e.g., as evidenced by co-authored papers and/or jointly held grants), please explain if the current application is an extension of prior work or a new direction.

   Page limit for items a-d is 5 pages, single-spaced, Arial or Helvetica typeface, font size 11 or larger, margins at least 0.5 inches on sides, 0.8 inches on top and bottom. Page limitation includes figures, tables and references.

   e) Provide an NIH biosketch for the two co-PIs. Identify current and pending sources of research support for the two co-PIs, and clarify how the proposed project relates to other funded projects. For other support that appears to overlap with this FRD application please clarify how the proposals differ.
   f) Include a detailed budget and justification for how the funds will be used.
   g) If a similar or related proposal has been reviewed but not funded by an outside agency, please attach the reviews (e.g., summary statements).
   h) Recipients of AHC-FRD awards received since 2013 must provide a brief summary of the outcomes (i.e., peer reviewed publications, federal grant support, and invention disclosures) of the prior work and explain how the current proposal relates to the prior work.
3) A Proposal Routing Form (PRF) should be completed and signed by the department head and dean for the PI and co-PI and any other key investigators. (DO NOT ROUTE THE PROPOSAL TO SPONSORED PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION).

5) The deadline for receipt of full applications is 4:30pm Friday, December 7, 2018. Awards will be announced and funding will commence in Winter 2019.

6) Applications must be submitted electronically as a single .PDF file using the following submission form: FRD Full Proposal Form

Submission Links
1) LOI: FRD LOI Submission Form
2) Full Proposal: FRD Full Proposal Form

*You may save and return to complete your submissions at any time using the code provided when the “Save and Return Later” option is selected. To return to either of the forms re-click the links identified above. If you have any questions about this process, contact Jessica Van Gilder, vangi007@umn.edu.

Review Process

The review panel will include faculty members from the six AHC colleges and schools. The AHC Council of Research Deans will identify the reviewers. Recommendations of the review panel will be submitted to the Vice President for Health Sciences and the AHC Dean’s Council for final approval. Unedited written critiques will be sent to applicants.

Reporting Requirements

The funding period is 2 years beginning in Winter 2019, with the 2nd year of support contingent upon documented progress toward fulfillment of your specific aims during the initial year of funding. The Associate Deans for Research in the AHC colleges and schools will review your initial year’s progress in a face-to-face meeting that will be held in Fall 2019; to include a review of the financial status as well as scientific progress. Funds for year 2 will only be released following approval from the Associate Deans for Research. At the completion of your project, you will need to provide a final report and an accounting of all of the funds expended.