AHC SEED GRANTS PROGRAM

The Academic Health Center (AHC) is soliciting applications for AHC Seed Grants to fund faculty research. These funds will be distributed through a competitive peer review process. The maximum award per project is $30,000.

**Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria**

- The goal of the AHC Seed Grants program is to fund creative, innovative proposals across the continuum of programmatic research areas in the six AHC colleges and schools. Grants are available to Assistant, Associate or Full Professors in the AHC with paid tenured, probationary, or annually renewable faculty appointments at the University, or an affiliate (not adjunct) appointment at the Minneapolis VAMC. Individuals who hold P&A appointments are not eligible to apply.

- AHC Seed Grants are intended to support faculty who wish to initiate a *substantially new* direction in their research or to help develop innovative projects that will allow them to expand into new areas. Generic examples of what do and don’t meet the definition of a Seed Grant are described at the end of these guidelines. The primary award criteria are creativity, quality of the proposal, the degree to which the proposal represents a new direction, and the potential for future funding.

- AHC Seed Grants *will not be awarded* to support identical research currently funded by another UMN internal funding mechanism (e.g., Graduate School, UMF, American Cancer Society, Cancer Center, ITN, LHI, etc.). **Faculty who received AHC Seed Grants funded in 2015, 2016, or 2017 are not eligible.** For questions regarding your eligibility, please contact Jessica Van Gilder, vangi007@umn.edu

- Each application must have a single PI, and a faculty member may submit only one application as a PI. There is no limit to the number of applications on which a faculty member could participate as a co-investigator.

- Awards are made for a single year. No-cost extensions will not be considered. The funds must be designated for the direct support of the research.
Application Process

The 2017 AHC Seed Grant program is adopting a two-step application process that will begin with a letter of intent (LOI). The LOIs will undergo an initial review by the AHC Associate Deans for Research. A subset of the LOIs will be invited to submit a full application.

1) FIRST DEADLINE: 4:30pm, January 19, 2018. A LOI must be submitted by the PI. There are three requirements:
   a) in a 1-page cover letter include the title, a brief description of the unresolved question being addressed (1 paragraph) and justification that the proposal represents a substantial new direction (1 paragraph);
   b) On a second page (and more if needed), please include a list of all funded and pending internal and external applications that support the PI's research. For each application include: funding agency, title, inclusive dates of support, and current year direct costs. Also indicate if the proposed Seed Grant application has been submitted to any other internal or external granting agency, and if so what the outcome of the review was;
   c) include the PI's NIH biosketch.
   d) The LOI must be electronically submitted using the online form available at the following link: LOI Submission Form.

2) SECOND DEADLINE: 4:30pm, March 30, 2018. Those invited to submit a full application should make sure the application is 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:

   • The first page (cover page) must include the application title, name of PI, highest degree, academic rank, college of PI and co-investigator(s), and total amount of support requested. **Do not include a lengthy list of co-investigators, many of whom may play only a peripheral role on the project. Only include the names of major collaborators as co-investigators.** In order to facilitate the review of applications, we are requesting that the PI self-identify the category that best describes his/her research. Please choose from one of the following categories and indicate your choice on the cover page:
     - Basic research
     - Translational/Clinical research
     - Population/Outcomes research

   • The body of the proposal is limited to three pages and should include: background to
the problem, the unresolved question being addressed, hypothesis/specific aims, and research plan. The three-page limit includes any preliminary data. References can be included on a separate page.

- Include a NIH biographical sketch for the PI and each co-investigator. The format including the section on “contributions to science” must be used. List all current and pending internal and external funding.

- A budget page with justification must be included. In general, funds should be primarily used for supplies and reagents, animal costs, use of shared resources (e.g., genomics, imaging, biostat/bioinformatics, CTSI, etc.), data and data collection costs, small equipment items (<$5,000) and support for research personnel (postdocs, graduate students or technicians). Funds cannot be used to support faculty salaries, administrative assistant salaries, service contracts, travel to scientific meetings, payments or reimbursements for patient care, or international expenditures.

- Application may be single-spaced, must be Arial or Helvetica typeface of font size 11 or larger, and must have adequate margins (use NIH standards).

- A Proposal Routing Form (PRF) should be completed and signed by the department head and dean. Include the PRF in your submission file at the very end. (DO NOT SEND THE PROPOSAL TO SPONSORED PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION.)

- Submit the application (single .pdf file) electronically using the online form available at the following link: Seed Grant Submission Form. The deadline for receipt of full applications is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, March 30, 2018.

**Review Process**

The AHC Council of Research Deans will identify reviewers and make final decisions on funding.

**Reporting Requirements**

Principal investigators of funded projects will be required to provide a final report and an accounting of all funds expended at the completion of the project. Forms for the final report will be sent to the PI, and reports will be submitted to Jessica Van Gilder (vangi007@umn.edu).

**What is a new initiative?**

This can encompass both a substantial change in the research tools a PI is using to study
a specific problem, or addressing an entirely new problem using similar tools. Some generic examples include:

• PI makes heavy use of genomics and informatics to evaluate genes in tumor cells from cancer patients, but now proposes to use similar genomics and informatics tools to evaluate the microbiome in patients with chronic GI diseases.
• PI has been using mouse models to study thymocyte development, but now proposes to employ a new imaging technique to study thymic function in neonates.
• PI has been studying the risk factors in a large cohort of Minnesotans that predispose them to complications from type II diabetes, but now proposes to use the same cohort to study the role of diet in development of skin infections.

**What isn’t a new initiative?**

• PI is studying the role of a particular enzyme in lung cancer metastasis in a mouse model, and now proposes to study the same enzyme in pancreatic cancer metastasis in a mouse model, but using the same methodologies and techniques.

• PI has been studying the role of smoking in breast cancer risk in a large cohort of Minnesota women, but now proposes to study the role of diet in breast cancer risk in the same cohort.

• PI has been studying the therapeutic effects of an inhibitor of acetylcholinesterase in Alzheimer’s patients and now proposes to study the effects of another drug from the same pharmacological family in the same disease.