

HDDDC Harvard Digestive Diseases Center

PILOT & FEASIBILITY AWARDS PROGRAM REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS and PROGRAM GUIDELINES Harvard Digestive Diseases Center

LETTER OF INTENT DUE: November 20, 2018 at 5:00 pm

APPLICATION DUE: January 14, 2019

The Harvard Digestive Diseases Center (HDDC) will be accepting applications for new and continuing pilot and feasibility projects for the upcoming funding period (7/1/19 - 6/30/20).

A Letter of Intent is required. This allows the HDDC to verify eligibility of the applicant for this program and the relevance of the project to the mission of the HDDC. Please use the **LOI form** and submit, *along with your updated NIH biosketch*, to Amanda Reilly at: amanda.reilly@childrens.harvard.edu. LOIs will be reviewed expediently and applicants whose projects are considered eligible will be invited to submit a full application, as described below.

SCIENTIFIC SCOPE of the Pilot and Feasibility (P/F) Awards Program

The Harvard Digestive Disease Center is focused on the study of epithelial cell function and mucosal biology including inflammation and host defense of the gastrointestinal tract. The Center's major emphasis on the inflammatory bowel diseases, gut microbiology, and stem cell and developmental biology of the intestine, liver, and pancreas. Pilot and Feasibility projects will be considered for support if they relate directly or indirectly to this mission. Clinical and translational research proposals are encouraged.

Eligible projects may be in areas such as:

- cell and molecular biology that relate to epithelial structure and function in the alimentary tract, liver, and pancreas
- epithelial-microbe interactions and pathogenesis of enteric infectious diseases
- host defense in the GI tract, mucosal immunity and vaccine development
- epithelial cell growth and differentiation, and stem cell biology
- carcinogenesis in the GI tract
- smooth muscle motility and biology of the enteric nervous system

UTILIZATION of the HDDC CORE FACILITIES is strongly encouraged. These cores include:

- Core B: Microscopy and Histopathology
- Core C: Epithelial Cell Biology and Mucosal Tissue Assessment
- Core D: Gnotobiotic, Microbiology, and Metagenomics

Visit the HDDC Website for further details, LOI form and grant application materials
<http://hddc.hms.harvard.edu/>

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PURPOSE of P/F PROGRAM

- Support young investigators who have not held independent awards (such as an R01 and/or P01) to perform independent promising research that tests a novel research direction or hypothesis.
- Enable young scientists and clinicians to pursue innovative and promising pilot projects, which ultimately might lead to independent support. This is the primary focus of the Pilot and Feasibility Program.
- Enable established investigators already working in digestive disease-related research to make a substantial change in the direction of their research.
- Entice investigators without current involvement in the field of digestive diseases research to engage in research related digestive diseases.

ELIGIBILITY

- New/Young Investigators are particularly encouraged to apply and to use P/F funding to gather preliminary data needed for subsequent NIH applications.
- Applicants **must** be at the level of “Instructor” or higher at the time the funding commences.
- P/F projects **cannot** overlap with any ongoing funded project.
- Established investigators must show how this project is a significant departure from ongoing work. Proposals that are logical extensions of ongoing projects are not eligible.
- Investigators must address aspects of Rigor and Transparency in their application (<http://grants.nih.gov/reproducibility/index.htm>). This will be distinct criterion for review.
- P/F grants are not intended to be used as bridging support.
- An investigator can be funded only once in every five-year cycle. A funded P/F project may be renewed for a second year, but competitive re-application is required.
- HDDC member laboratories and applicants with projects aiming for careers relevant to mission of HDDC will have priority.

EXPENSES FOR WHICH FUNDS MAY BE USED

Funds may be used for the following:

- Technical support
- Research supplies
- Equipment is funded only in *very rare* instances where it is vital to the particular project, unique and not available in any of the HDDC core facilities. Equipment requests require a budget justification and approval by the Executive Committee.

Non-allowable expenses:

- Salaries (Investigator, Post-Doctoral)
- Travel

MAXIMUM AWARD

The amount of awards varies with the availability of funds and quality of applications received. In recent years, project budgets have averaged about \$25,000, direct costs. Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs will be awarded at the rate of 25%.

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APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The deadline for receipt of the Letter of Intent and NIH biosketch is **November 20, 2018**. Applicants will be informed of their eligibility to apply by **December 10, 2018**.

The application deadline is **January 14, 2019**. All applications must be compiled and submitted as a single PDF to amanda.reilly@childrens.harvard.edu. Institutional signature is required at the time of submission. Signed originals of the face page, budget page, IACUC and/or IRB approvals will be requested if the project is approved.

Use the NIH format. The documents to be submitted should be assembled in the order listed below. The link to the NIH forms is <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>

FORMAT OF APPLICATION

- Form Page 1 (Face Page)
- Form Page 2 (Description, Performance Sites, Key Personnel)
- Form Page 4 (Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period)
- Budget Justification (Please use Continuation Format Page)
- Biographical Sketch
- Other Support – Please include a paragraph explaining how this research proposal is a departure from your ongoing work, and from the work of your previous or current mentors or collaborators.
- Resources: please also list here the HDDC Core Facilities that you plan to use.
- The “**Research Plan**” section of the grant should be limited to **3 pages** single-spaced. [references are not included in the 3 page limit but should be limited to essential citations]. In the Research Plan, indicate how the project will use HDDC Core facilities.
- Applicants must address aspects of Rigor and Transparency in their application, as mandated by the NIH, please see (<http://grants.nih.gov/reproducibility/index.htm>) for additional information. Rigor and Transparency will be a distinct criterion for review.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On a continuation format page, list four names that you consider appropriate to review your application. These names can be, but are not limited to, members of the HDDC and the Harvard/Boston community. Please include their full name, address, email, and telephone number, if possible.

For applications to continue current awards

Include in the Research Plan a description of the progress you have made in the first year, as well as your plans for the proposed second year. Also include a paragraph summarizing your past and planned use of HDDC cores and describe any collaboration with Center investigators.

EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

Each P/F application is reviewed by selected members of the HDDC Executive Committee and the HDDC External Advisory Board, and other expert reviewers as appropriate. The entire Executive Committee considers these reviews, assigns priority scores and ultimately decides upon the awarding of the grants. Funding decisions are based upon scientific merit and the appropriateness of the project to the goals of the P/F program.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF AWARDEES

- Awardees will be required to submit a written progress report in **March 2020** for our annual External Advisory Board meeting. You will be asked to submit an updated version of this progress report by **August 14, 2020** for inclusion in the HDDC non-competing renewal application to the NIH.
- Awardees are encouraged to use HDDC Core services.
- Awardees are expected to participate in HDDC activities by attending research conferences and generally becoming involved in scientific exchange within the program.
- Awardees will be required to present their work at our annual fall scientific retreat featuring all PF grant recipients. This occurs in November / December of the year following termination of the PF award (November 2020 for awards made July 2019)
- Selected PF recipients will be invited to present at our Annual External Advisory Board meeting in April of the current Award year.
- **Harvard Digestive Diseases Center support must be acknowledged on all publications resulting from the research. This may take the form of "Supported in part by the Harvard Digestive Disease Center, NIH Grant P30 DK34845."**

CONTACTS

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