



Request for Applications (RFA) for Pilot Grants supporting Translational Research 2017

**Sponsored by
The Entrepreneurial Proof-of-concept and Innovation Center (EPIC) and
the Center for Molecular and Translational Medicine**

The Center for Molecular and Translational Medicine (molmed.ucr.edu), supported by the School of Medicine and by the Entrepreneurial Proof-of-concept and Innovation Center (EPIC) (<http://www.ucruotp.net/epic>) at the University of California, Riverside (UCR), is an initiative aimed at catalyzing translational life-science research on campus to improve the health of individuals by translating basic findings into future innovative diagnostic or therapeutics.

To incentivize and advance these activities, proof-of-concept studies are eligible for financial support by a *trans-fund*, intended to support defined early stage translational projects. Funds for these pilot studies have been allocated to UC Riverside by the State of California through Assembly Bill 2664, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative (AB2664) and by the Office for Research and Economic Development (RED) of UCR. These grants are from \$25,000 up to \$50,000 total and requested funds should be adequate to conduct the proposed studies; a duration of up to one year will be allowed.

It is expected that successful awardees will use the data generated by the grant to submit publications, translational grant proposals, and patent applications as appropriate. Selected *trans-funds* awardees are expected to present their research at the center's annual symposium (the inaugural symposium is being planned for May/June 2017).

Proposals will be evaluated for significance to human health, impact and innovation, and translational potential. Applicants that can demonstrate the potential of their proposal to secure additional funds for further translational studies will be given higher priority. For this reason, applicants are encouraged to include one or more letters of support from current or potential commercial partners, investors or private foundations, that indicate their potential interest, even if in a non-binding way, for the project.

Typical activities for projects supported by the *trans-fund* can include but are not limited to target validation studies, initial assay development, protein expression and purification studies followed by crystallization or biophysical studies, pilot screening studies, scale-up syntheses of interesting agents (small molecules or biologics), anti-body production and testing, early *in vivo* pharmacology or proof-of-concept efficacy studies *in vivo*, limited structure-activity relationship studies, etc.

The *trans-fund* is being administered by EPIC at UC Riverside as described below.

The deadline for submission is March 20th, 2017; funding will commence May 1st 2017.

Eligibility: A PI must be a tenure-track faculty member at UC Riverside and may submit no more than one application. Membership to the Center for Molecular and Translational Medicine is not mandatory for this RFA, but awardees who are not members are expected to actively support and participate in the activities and the

mission of the center (see molmed.ucr.edu). Given the ultimate intent of this RFA, that is to support translational research that has the potential to lead to commercialization, applications that have identified clear inventions in the form of filed provisional patent applications, pending or issued patents, or filed invention disclosures, will be given higher priority for funding.

Application requirements and limitations: In order to establish consistency and fairness, all proposals must contain (only) the following elements:

1. A **title page** with the title of the proposal, and name(s) of the PI(s) with their affiliation(s) (applicants must be tenure-track faculty at UCR), their contact information, and the requested grant amount. (see below)
2. A succinct, **non-confidential 1 page proposal** that describes the translational problem to be solved, the current status of the field and the innovative or competitive advantage that the proposed program offers over these existing efforts. The translational nature of the proposed work with particular emphasis on the long-term impact of the proposed project to mature into a product.
3. Please describe any interim deliverables and milestones that the pilot study intends to accomplish. This part of the proposal is limited to 1 page (using no less than single spacing and 11-point Arial font, 0.5 inch margins), including all figures, tables and other display items, but excluding any references (there is no page limit for references cited).
4. **Budget requested up to \$50,000 and short budget justification.** Funds can be used to support faculty salaries, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, reagents and supplies, PI visits to customers/conferences.
5. Funds need to be spent within one year from funding. The budget should be adequate to accomplish the proposed milestone(s).
6. An **NIH or NSF style biographical sketch** limited to 2 pages for each PI including current support.
7. **Intellectual property statement.** The applicant(s) are asked to briefly indicate whether an invention disclosure or a patent application (whether provisional, pending, or issued) has been filed with UCR office of Technology Commercialization by indicating the title of the application and its current status.
8. **Letter(s) of support.** Applications may contain one or more letters of support from current or possible commercial partners, investors, or foundations that indicate their potential interest, even if in a non-binding way, for the project. While these letters are not mandatory, all other scientific elements being equal, they may give applicants higher priority for funding (see review criteria).
9. Please **do not** include appendix material such as a detailed budget, additional tables, figures, movies, reprints, or preprints.

Review Criteria: In support of the goal of this initiative, external reviewers will focus on the strengths and weakness of each proposal in these areas:

1. Significance to human health.
2. Impact and innovation.
3. Feasibility.
4. Potential practical impact of the research for the future development of therapeutics or diagnostics.
5. Potential for the pilot project to launch applications for further funding from extramural sources such as biotech or pharma companies, private investors, foundations, or the National Institutes for Health.

A panel of experts from the Molmed advisory board will select the applications to receive the TransFunds. Selected applicants will be assigned a mentor to help them with the validation and commercialization process.

Please email the application following the criteria listed below as a single pdf attachment to Larry Morgan (larry.morgan@ucr.edu) Director EPIC.