



## **Request for Applications (RFA) for Proof of Concept Grants supporting Translational Research 2018**

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

The Center for Molecular and Translational Medicine ([molmed.ucr.edu](http://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 (from \$25,000 up to \$50,000 total) by a *trans-fund*, intended to support the validation of defined early stage translational projects. Funds for these studies have been allocated to UCR by the State of California through Assembly Bill 2664, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative and by the UCR Office for Research and Economic Development (RED). The 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-fund* awardees are expected to present their research at the center's annual symposium.

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.

**Review Process** Applications (format and content described below) are due as a single PDF on **January 5, 2018**. After an initial screening review selected applicants will be assigned a mentor and provided with a PowerPoint template to be completed based upon the application. The applicant will present this presentation to the review committee on January 29, 2018. After the presentations awardees will be selected and notified of their awards, which will commence funding on March 1, 2018.

**Eligibility:** A PI must be a tenure-track faculty member at UC Riverside and may submit no more than one application. Membership in 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](http://molmed.ucr.edu)). Given the ultimate intent of this RFA 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 be prepared using no less than single spacing and 11-point Arial font with 0.5 inch margins and 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. **A 1 page table presenting** chronologically all deliverables and milestones that the project intends to accomplish with target completion dates and a description of the translational value inflection achieved with each deliverable/milestone.
4. **A 1 page budget request and short budget justification.** The budget must be structured to support the milestones and deliverables from item #3. Funds can be used to support faculty salaries, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, reagents and supplies, PI visits to customers/conferences. **The total budget must not exceed \$50,000.**
5. References cited; the references are not limited, but should be cited in the 1 page proposal and must support the proposal.
6. Funds need to be spent within one year from funding. The budget should be adequate to accomplish all of the proposed milestone(s).
7. An **NIH or NSF style biographical sketch** limited to 2 pages for each PI including current support.
8. **Intellectual property statement.** The applicant(s) are asked to briefly indicate whether an invention disclosure or a patent application (provisional, pending, or issued) has been filed with UCR office of Technology Commercialization by indicating the title of the application and its current status.
9. **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).
10. 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.

Please email the application following the criteria listed above as a single pdf attachment to Mark Leibowitz ([mark.leibowitz@ucr.edu](mailto:mark.leibowitz@ucr.edu)) Director EPIC.