



## Massachusetts Life Sciences Center Matching Grant Program

The overarching goal of matching grants provided by the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is three-fold: expand life science research, promote economic growth, and improve health outcomes in the Commonwealth. The Matching Grant Program undertaken by MLSC is directed toward investigators involved in life sciences research, including life sciences-related engineering, at research institutions in the Commonwealth.

Launched in February of 2008, the MLSC conducted a pilot round of three matching grant solicitations and made awards of \$10.6 million to:

- Enable 11 new Massachusetts scientists to continue their research, establish independent laboratories and possibly secure larger-scale NIH funding (New Investigator solicitation);
- Improve the ability of 5 universities and academic medical centers across Massachusetts to compete more effectively for top faculty (Faculty solicitation);
- Fund research collaborations between 6 industry and academic partners focused on new therapies and technologies with high commercialization potential (Cooperative Research solicitation);
- Accelerate the translation of treatments and therapies from the research bench to the bedside.

Based on its successful pilot round of matching grants, the Center is launching a second round of New Investigator grants in March of 2009. The timing of any future rounds of the Faculty and Cooperative Research solicitations is yet to be determined.

## New Investigator Research Grants

<b>Principal objectives</b>	Spur innovative research and advance the careers of new investigators working in the life sciences at research institutions in the Commonwealth.
<b>Problem Statement</b>	New investigators face difficulties in securing funding for independent research from extramural sponsors who tend to channel a high percentage of available funds to well-established researchers. Without extramural funding, career advancement is stymied, leading some individuals to abandon the research field. Additional resources are needed to enable new faculty to undertake research and pave the way for them to secure major grants for life sciences research from NIH, other federal agencies, and industry.
<b>Eligibility</b>	<p>To be eligible, the applicant(s) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have completed their Ph.D., M.D., D.V.M., D.D.S., internship, residency, or clinical training within seven years prior to the publication date of the solicitation, not counting approved family, health, or military-service leave.</li> <li>• Have a research position at a research institution in Massachusetts.</li> <li>• Not have been a principal investigator (PI) on a major independent research grant (R01 or equivalent) provided by NIH or other federal agency.</li> <li>• Not have current awards exceeding \$150,000 per year from external sources.</li> <li>• Intend to compete within two years for a major independent research grant in the life sciences from NSF, NIH, or other federally funded grant programs.</li> </ul> <p>No more than five proposals for grant awards may be submitted by a research institution during any submission cycle; and each proposal must contain a letter of support from the highest-level administrator responsible for research (e.g., Provost, Vice or Associate Provost for Research, Chief Academic Officer, etc.), confirming that the proposal aligns with the priorities of the research institution.</p>
<b>Review Process</b>	<p><u>Peer Review Panel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific Merit: What is the problem that the research intends to address? Why is this important? To what extent will the research advance scientific knowledge in the field?</li> <li>• Soundness of Approach: Is the research well designed in terms of its conceptual framework, proposed methods, and plans for analysis? Does the New Investigator have access to facilities and equipment needed to carry out the research? Has the Principal Investigator established collaborative relationships with other researchers?</li> <li>• Qualifications of New Investigator: Does the New Investigator have adequate training to carry out the research? Does the New Investigator demonstrate an ability to undertake original research? Does the New Investigator have the potential to become a major contributor in his or her chosen field?</li> </ul> <p><u>Scientific Advisory Board (comprised of eminent academic and industry researchers)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of all criteria considered in the Peer Review process</li> <li>• Consideration of programmatic goals including the diversity of proposed research in terms of host institutions and areas of research as well as the potential impact on economic and health outcomes in the Commonwealth.</li> </ul>

## New Investigator Research Grants *continued*

<b>Funding and award period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The MLSC has authorized up to \$2 million to be awarded through its New Investigator solicitation.</li><li>• For each selected New Investigator Grant, MLSC will provide up to \$100,000 per year for a maximum of two years (non-renewable)</li></ul>
<b>Allowable costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct costs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Salaries and benefits of the new investigator</li><li>• Salaries and benefits of research support personnel, including post-doctoral fellows and graduate students</li><li>• Research supplies</li><li>• Purchase and care of laboratory animals</li><li>• Equipment (limited to 25 percent of grant)</li><li>• Travel essential for research and/or workshops sponsored by funding agencies</li></ul></li><li>• Indirect costs may not exceed 20 percent of the grant.</li></ul>
<b>Match requirements</b>	The research institutions must match the MLSC grant in cash at the ratio of at least 1:1.