



MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER
NEW INVESTIGATOR MATCHING GRANT SOLICITATION

Solicitation No. 2009-MLSC-01

Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
<http://www.masslifesciences.com/>

Solicitation Issued: March 9, 2009
Responses Due: April 17, 2009

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New Investigator Matching Grant Solicitation

Solicitation No. MLSC-2009-01

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) is requesting applications for matching grants to spur innovative research and advance the careers of new investigators in areas related to the life sciences at research institutions in the Commonwealth.

The MLSC is authorizing up to \$2 million to be awarded through its New Investigator Matching Grant Program. Under the New Investigator Matching Grant Solicitation, the MLSC will provide an award up to \$100,000 per year for each selected grant, for up to 2 years. Each grant must be matched in cash on at least a 1:1 basis by the research institution.

Applications (electronic and hard copy) must be received at:

Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108
Attn: Beth Nicklas
newinvestigator@masslifesciences.com

no later than 3:00PM on Friday, April 17, 2009.

Introduction

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 Commonwealth is interested in furthering advances in life sciences that may lead to new medical applications such as medical devices, drugs and drug delivery systems, and new therapies and diagnostics.

The principal objective of the New Investigator Research Matching Grant Solicitation is to spur innovative research and advance the careers of new investigators at research institutions in the Commonwealth.

This solicitation addresses the difficulties that new investigators face 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 independent research from NIH, other federal agencies, and industry.

Solicitation Requirements

Who can apply for funding?

Eligible organizations include any Massachusetts research institution. The project must be led by an eligible principal investigator.

To be eligible, the principal investigator must:

- Have completed their Ph.D., M.D., D.V.M., D.D.S., or equivalent advanced degree, 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.
- Not have been a principal investigator (PI) on a major independent research grant (R01 or equivalent) provided by NIH or other federal agency.
- Not have current awards exceeding \$150,000 per year from external sources.
- Intend to compete within two years for a major independent research grant from NSF, NIH, or other federally funded grant programs.

What types of projects and activities are eligible for funding?

Research & development projects ranging from basic research to pre-clinical studies are eligible for funding. Clinical trials are ineligible for funding under this solicitation.

How much funding is available?

The MLSC is authorizing up to \$2 million to be awarded through its Matching Grants Program. The maximum award for a New Investigator award is \$100,000 per year for each selected grant, for up to 2 years. Disbursement of funds is contingent upon demonstrated progress towards project objectives. Grant funds will be disbursed on a cost-reimbursement basis.

What are the cost sharing requirements?

The research institution must match the MLSC grant in cash in the ratio of at least 1:1.

What are the limitations?

The limitations that apply to this grant are the following:

Institutional Limitations

- No more than five proposals for grant awards may be submitted by a research institution during any submission cycle.
- 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 academic institution.

Cost Limitations

- Allowable costs include:
 1. Direct costs:
 - a. Salary and benefits of the new investigator
 - b. Salaries and benefits (including tuition remission) of research support personnel, including post-doctoral fellows and graduate students
 - c. Research supplies
 - d. Purchase and care of laboratory animals
 - e. Research equipment (limited to 25 percent of total project costs)
 - f. Travel essential for research and/or workshops sponsored by funding agencies
 2. Indirect costs will be allowable at no more than 20% of total project costs.
- Costs incurred prior to the grant award are not eligible for funding
- Legal costs associated with the protection or licensing of intellectual property are not eligible for funding
- Grant funds may be used only for the project costs of activities incurred at eligible research institutions in Massachusetts.

What are the reporting requirements?

All funding recipients must submit a report every six months and a final report. The reports should summarize the activities undertaken, any barriers encountered, and the progress made in achieving the research objectives. The reports should identify any invention disclosures during the period and identify any technology transfer and commercialization activities. For multi-year projects, an updated project plan and yearly budget must accompany the annual report and be submitted not later than 30 days prior to grant anniversary or completion date.

Award recipients will also be required to participate in the development of case studies and supply non-confidential information that will be used by the MLSC as part of its ongoing evaluation efforts. In addition, all funding recipients will be required to be available to meet annually with other grant recipients, to meet periodically with MLSC staff or its agents, and to cooperate in any evaluation of this program.

Application, Review and Award Process

How do I apply for funding?

Applicants are required to complete and submit a formal application for funding (see attached Appendix A - Application Form and Instructions).

Applications (electronic and hard copy) must be received at:

**Massachusetts Life Sciences Center
One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108
Attn: Beth Nicklas
newinvestigator@masslifesciences.com**

no later than 3:00PM on Friday, April 17, 2009.

In order to be considered, all responses must be prepared in accordance with provisions outlined, including the submission of one original, containing required signatures, and one electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF format).

The electronic copy can be submitted via electronic mail to: bnicklas@masslifesciences.com

What criteria will be used to evaluate applications?

Applications that meet eligibility requirements will be reviewed by a Peer Review Panel comprised of scientific peers from academia and industry based on the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of proposed research, including novelty of ideas. The research can range from fundamental science to pre-clinical studies. Clinical trials are excluded from funding.
- Qualifications and experience of new investigator and proposed staff.
- Potential for improvement in health outcomes.
- Adequacy of the approach and methodology proposed to carry out the research.
- Reasonableness of the proposed budget in relation to the proposed research.
- Likelihood of new investigator securing major independent research grant in the future.

A second review will be conducted by the MLSC's Scientific Advisory Board, comprised of renowned scientists from academia and industry, that will review and validate the work of the Peer Review Panel and may take into consideration the following programmatic criteria:

- Equitable and geographic distribution of funds among institutions throughout the Commonwealth.
- Achieving a diverse scientific portfolio.

Who will review the applications?

Each application will first be reviewed by program staff to determine if the proposal meets all threshold eligibility criteria. For example, if 1:1 match by the research institution is not clearly described in the proposal and budget documents, the proposal will be judged not to have met the threshold eligibility criteria. Applicants that do not meet the threshold requirements of this solicitation will be notified accordingly. Those applications that have met the threshold requirements will advance for consideration by the Peer Review Panel.

The proposal review process is managed by a Scientific Review Officer (SRO) who will recruit, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Board, qualified members of the Peer Review Panel who will review eligible proposals based on the criteria outlined above. The Scientific Review Officer will then compile a summary report for each application and present these results to the MLSC Scientific Advisory Board that will review and validate the results of the Peer Review Panel and make final recommendations to the MLSC Board of Directors. All awards will be subject to final approval by the MLSC Board of Directors.

How will proprietary information be handled?

Referenced in Appendix D - General Terms & Conditions

What is the timetable?

A summary of the timetable for the submission and approval process is presented below:

March 9, 2009	Grant Application Available
April 17, 2009	Application Due

Applications will be reviewed on a competitive basis. Applicants will be notified whether their project has been approved or rejected by mail shortly following award decisions. The closing of this solicitation will be posted on the MLSC website.

Once the award is approved, a grant agreement must be executed between the successful applicant and the MLSC. Work on the project can begin as soon as all relevant parties have signed the grant agreement.

Who can I contact to answer questions?

Additional information regarding this solicitation will be posted at MLSC's website:

<http://www.masslifesciences.com>

Applicants are advised to check this site periodically. Answers to questions submitted to MLSC with general applicability will also be posted.

If you have questions, please contact the MLSC Matching Grants Program Coordinator at:

Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108
Attn: Beth Nicklas

Telephone: 617-686-4672

Email: bnicklas@masslifesciences.com

Disclaimer

This solicitation does not commit MLSC to award a grant, pay costs incurred in preparing an application, or procure or contract for services or supplies. MLSC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, negotiate with all qualified applicants, cancel or modify the solicitation in part or in its entirety or change the application guidelines, when it is in the best interests of the MLSC.