



Frequently Asked Questions for the Cooperative Research Matching Grant Program

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What is the Cooperative Research Matching Grant Program?

On September 26, 2012, the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center approved the launch of the third round of the Cooperative Research Matching Grant Program, seeking to increase industry partnerships with research institutions in Massachusetts that will lead to the commercialization of translational research.

The MLSC will provide awards of up to \$500,000 over two years (\$250,000 per year) to Massachusetts-based research institutions for the purpose of funding cooperative R&D projects with companies that have a presence in Massachusetts in areas related to the life sciences. Applicants will need to secure matching funds, cash and/or in-kind, from their industry sponsor.

What are the eligibility requirements for applicants?

Eligible organizations include Massachusetts universities, colleges, and non-profit research institutions. There is no limit to the number of proposals that may be submitted by any one research institution.

What types of projects and activities are eligible for funding?

For this solicitation, the MLSC is particularly interested in supporting applicants whose research will lead to commercial applications. While the MLSC recognizes that different areas of translational research have different time horizons, successful proposals will explain a clear path, with milestones, for the research to lead to medical applications in partnership with the industry sponsor.

How do institutions submit their application?

Applications will only be accepted electronically via the MLSC website.

When is the application deadline?

Applications must be submitted by Noon on Thursday, February 28, 2013.

What criteria will be used to evaluate applications and who will conduct the reviews?

Applications that meet eligibility requirements will be reviewed by an external review panel comprised of scientific peers from academia and industry based on the following criteria:

Opportunity/Value Proposition:

- Identification and significance of the problem
- Importance of the benefit(s) of solving the problem
- Feasibility of achieving market differentiation

Science/Technology/ Product/Service Plan and Regulatory Approvals:

- Clarity and reasonableness of research endeavor and methodology
- Potential to succeed in addressing commercialization challenges
- Effectiveness of research institution/industry collaboration in developing and implementing a work plan that is likely to achieve the specific tasks and activities within the identified timeframes
- Efforts to secure intellectual property
- Reasonableness of plan and timeframe to acquire regulatory approvals

Team and Qualifications:

- Identification of individuals or staff at the research institution and the industry sponsor who will be involved in pursuing the project's objectives and working toward the final product or outcome
- Qualifications, experience and expertise of such individuals (principal investigator(s), post-docs, research personnel, etc.)

Work Plan and Budget (including match from Industry Sponsor):

- Clarity and identification of specific tasks, milestones, and timeframes associated with activities for which funding is sought
- Reasonableness of funding as it relates to such activities
- Funding requested relative to other applicants

A second review will be conducted by the MLSC's Scientific Advisory Board, comprised of renowned scientists from academia and industry, which will review the work of the initial review panel.

How many awards will be made and when will they be announced?

The MLSC has allocated \$2,000,000 toward this round of the Cooperative Research Program. Awards are made on the basis of the quality of the proposals. Provided that there are four successful applicants that request the maximum amount, the MLSC has funds to make four awards. The announcement of these awards will be made at the June 2013 meeting of the Board of Directors.

How will funds be provided to awardees?

Institutions will be reimbursed, preferably on a quarterly basis, within 30 business days after submitting an invoice, provided that all supporting documentation is included (see Question 12).

Will funding be contingent upon reaching the milestones set forth in the work plan?

No, but reviewers will be evaluating proposals based on the applicant's attention to setting realistic, but aggressive, timelines for moving the project forward and the reasonableness of the funding as it relates to the activities included in the work plan.

What are the cost-sharing requirements?

The industry sponsor(s) must match the MLSC's grant in the ratio of at least 1:1. The MLSC will only pay an amount that has been matched.

At least 30% of the match must be cash. In-kind match may be in materials, reagents, supplies, equipment, software and personnel that are provided to the research institution (valued at cost) and are essential for the conduct of the proposed research.

What are the cost limitations?

- Allowable costs include:
 1. Direct costs:
 - a. Salaries and benefits of the principal investigator(s)

- b. Salaries and benefits of research support personnel, including post-doctoral fellows and graduate students
- c. Research materials, reagents, supplies, software, and personnel time provided to the research institution (valued at cost) by the industry sponsor
- d. Purchase and care of laboratory animals
- e. Research equipment (limited to 10 percent of grant)
- f. Travel essential for research and interactions with industry sponsor

2. Indirect costs will be the NIH approved rate of the grantee or research institution; the same indirect cost rate should be used for MLSC Grant and for the industry sponsor cash match.

- 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 costs of project activities at eligible research institutions in Massachusetts. The industry funding used to match the MLSC's grant must also be used to support project activities at eligible research institutions based in Massachusetts. Industry funding that exceeds the match requirement may, of course, be used to support project activities outside of the Commonwealth.

What supporting documentation will the MLSC require in order to process invoices?

- Institutions must provide proof of the industry sponsor's cash match (e.g. copy of the check(s); documentation of a wire transfer).
- If an in-kind match is in the form of donated supplies or equipment, the value of such donation must be demonstrated.
- If an in-kind match is in the form of industry personnel, documentation of payroll expenses will be required.
- All project expenses, including cost share charges, must be documented in a general ledger report.

What are the reporting requirements?

All funding recipients must submit semi-annual progress reports. The reports should summarize the activities undertaken, the number of researchers working on the project, any barriers encountered, the progress made in achieving the project's objectives, and the reasons for any variances from a steady spending rate. The reports should identify any invention disclosures during the period and identify any technology transfer and commercialization activities.