

**Funding Opportunity Announcement
Request for Applications (RFA)**



THE SABAN RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

**The Saban Research Institute
Team Science Grant**
RFA: TSRI Team Science December 2019

Overview

The Saban Research Institute's goal is to improve the health and wellness of children through a combination of basic, clinical and translational research. In support of this goal, The Saban Research Institute (TSRI) has established a **Team Science Grant**, open to all USC faculty with CHLA appointment from a variety of disciplines, whose appointments allow them to submit extramural proposals.

Funding Goals

This funding program provides opportunities for expanding the portfolio of innovative, multidisciplinary research projects. Specifically, the program is designed to support new collaborations directed toward establishing innovative, team science approaches to important problems in pediatric medicine through expansion of extramurally funded research. The expectation is that results from the Team Science will lead to extramural grant applications within 1-2 years following award completion.

Funds aim to facilitate new collaborations and support outstanding research and cutting-edge discoveries by teams of experts who have not worked together previously on similar projects. Non-traditional collaborations and collaborations between basic scientists and clinician investigators are especially encouraged.

Eligibility

This application is open to USC faculty with a CHLA appointment that allows them to submit extramural grant applications. The Principle Investigator (PI) of the Team Science application must be an independent investigator. The PI should have served as a PI on an NIH R01 or R21 grant, or PI on a large program project as part of a NIH, NSF or other consortium Program Project, Center or U grants. This requirement applies to the PI submitting the application; co-investigator or co-PI related experience is not sufficient for eligibility.

A minimum of two faculty members from different campuses, schools, or disciplines must collaborate and projects must represent new areas of research for the investigators, within their areas of expertise, but not a continuation of current extramurally or intramurally funded activities. Collaborations between researchers in different disciplines, and between basic scientists and clinician investigators are especially encouraged.

Proposals should include plans for securing external funding to continue the project. Recipients are required to submit a proposal for external funding 12-24 months from the end of the project.

Applicants should make explicit the federal funding agencies, PAs or RFAs that will be targeted for funding the larger project.

Budget and Project Period

Proposals will be funded up to **\$100,000 each year for one (1) year**, with the possibility of a second year of support awarded upon demonstration of sufficient progress and justification. The award period will have an approximate start date of July 1, 2020.

Applications must include the budget for Year 1 and should include requests for research funds only (trainees and support personnel, supplies, and appropriate miscellaneous expenses). **Awards will support direct costs only; overhead charges (indirect costs) and tuition reimbursement costs are not allowed.** Faculty salary, for co-investigators at CHLA only, is allowed up to 10% of the NIH Cap per investigator. Faculty salary for the CHLA principal investigator or for other site principal investigators is not allowed. Only small equipment purchases that are directly required for the research are appropriate (i.e., < \$5,000 per unit).

TSRI will fund applications based on budget availability and quality of applications. Funding in response to this RFA is dependent upon the receipt of a sufficient number of applications of high scientific merit.

Key Dates

Fund Announcement Date: December 2019

Letter of Intent Due Date: February 18, 2020, by 5:00 PM, PST

Mandatory Pre-Review Deadline: March 16, 2020 by 5:00 PM, PST

Application Due Date: March 20, 2020, by 5:00 PM, PST

Application Review Period: April – May, 2020

Award Announcement Date: May 31, 2020

Funding Start Date: July 1, 2020

Scientific Merit Review: May 2021. Scientific Merit Review refers to review of the year one progress report to determine year two funding.

Funding Expiration Date: Year 1 expiration date is June 30, 2021. If Year 2 funds are approved, expiration date is June 30, 2022. Carry over and no-cost extensions will not be granted under any circumstances.

Applications that do not fully comply with application requirements will not be considered. Applications not submitted by the due date and time will not be considered. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply early to allow adequate time to make any corrections to errors found in the application during the submission process by the due date.

Priority for funding will be given to proposals that:

1. Open new research approaches or directions, including translational research
2. Have the potential to garner extramural funding for the PI and Co-Investigators
3. Involve co-PIs from different components of USC or other institutions
4. Include cost-share support from non-CHLA institutions
5. Involve a multidisciplinary team of investigators that have not worked together in the last five years in the project's subject matter, with a preference for collaborations between a basic scientist and a clinician investigator

Required Application Instructions

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SECTIONS

Conformance to all requirements is required and strictly enforced. Applicants and Mentors must read and follow all application instructions in the **“Required Application Instructions” section**. Applications that do not comply with these instructions may be delayed or not accepted for review.

Applications should be generated using word processing software and then converted to PDF using PDF generating software for submission. Avoid scanning text attachments to convert to PDF since that causes problems for the administrators handling the application.

Font

Prepare the application using Arial typeface in black font color. After text is converted to PDF, font size in each final PDF document must be at least 11 points (or larger). (A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters; the font size requirement still applies.)

Paper Size and Page Margins

Final PDF documents should be formatted to be no larger than *standard paper size (8 1/2 x 11”)*. The final PDF document should have at least one-half inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages. Aside from page numbers, no information should appear in the margins.

Figures, Graphs, Diagrams, Charts, Tables, Figure Legends, and Footnotes

You may use a smaller type size but it must be in a black font color, readily legible, and follow the font typeface requirement. Color can be used in figures; however, all text must be in a black font color, clear and legible.

Grantsmanship

Use English and avoid jargon.

If terms are not universally known, spell out the term the first time it is used and note the appropriate abbreviation in parentheses. The abbreviation may be used thereafter.

Page Limits

Page limits referenced in these instructions must be followed. Administrative validations will include checks for page limits. Applications found not to comply with the requirements will lead to rejection of the application during administrative validation.

Unless otherwise specified, Internet Web site addresses (URLs) may not be used to provide information necessary to the review because reviewers are under no obligation to view the Internet sites. Moreover, reviewers are cautioned that they should not directly access an Internet site as it could compromise their anonymity.

Applicants are prohibited from using other application sections to circumvent page limitations in any section of the application for which a page limit applies.

Required Application Instructions

Letter of Intent: Applicants should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) by February 18, 2020 to both the Research Operations Grants Team at tsripreward@chla.usc.edu and tsrifunding@chla.usc.edu. Refer to the announcement for the LOI form with details and instructions. LOIs are used for review planning and applicant communications; LOIs are not competitive.

Format of Proposals

Applications should include a 1) cover page, grants intake form, and checklist, 2) abstract (no more than 30 lines of text), 3) Specific Aims page (maximum 1 page), 4) research plan (maximum 5 pages) that includes background, preliminary data, experimental plan and 5) statement regarding plans for extramural grant submission, 6) Year 1 budget (use NIH detailed budget form), 7) budget justification, and 8) biosketches for all study investigators on the current NIH form.

Should the application be a resubmission to this same program, within the last two years, you must include in your resubmission a one-page Introduction addressing previous reviewer concerns, point by point, as for an NIH resubmission. Modification of Specific Aims of a previous submission still constitute a resubmission. Completely new Specific Aims would constitute a new application. This determination is at the discretion of the TSRI CSO.

The research plan should be no more than five pages in length, and address each of the following areas: 1) Significance, 2) Innovation, 3) Approach, 4) Plan to submit extramural applications. Preliminary Results (if available) should also be included, keeping within the page limit. Within the research plan, describe which of CHLA's strategic plan themes the work most closely aligns with and how the results will contribute to advancing that theme:

- **Best starts to life:** Identify early risk factors and interventions, from fetal development to early childhood, to improve the lives of all children.
- **Personalized prevention and care:** Develop an understanding of each patient down to the cellular level to intervene early and effectively for a lifetime.
- **From discovery to pediatric care innovation:** Transform knowledge gleaned from clinical care provided today into the new and innovative approaches of tomorrow.
- **Pediatric disease models and mechanisms:** Discover the underlying causes of pediatric disease to drive development of new interventions and cures.

References, as well as information for human subjects or vertebrate animals should be included as necessary, following NIH format and instructions. These are not subject to the five-page limit.

Submission:

Starting this year, submissions will be processed by the Research Operations Grants Team. The applicant must submit his/her application as one (1) electronic PDF to TSRIPreAward@chla.usc.edu for pre-review no later than March 16, 2020 at 5:00 PM PST. The Grants team will review and reach out to each applicant with required and/or recommended corrections per *these application instructions*. The final application will be submitted to the Intramural Funding team by the Grants team on or before final application due date of March 20, 2020 by 5:00 PM PST.

Applications must include a signed Grants Intake Form, Cover Sheet, and Submission Checklist. Refer to the announcement for these forms.

Applications that do not fully comply with application requirements will not be accepted. Applications not submitted by the due date and time will not be accepted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply early to allow adequate time to make any corrections to errors found in the application during the submission process by the due date.

Review:

This award is granted following a highly competitive review process. Applications will be reviewed by the TSRI Intramural Funding Study Section following NIH review criteria. Funding recommendations are made by the TSRI Intramural Funding Study Section. Final decisions will be made by the Chief Scientific Officer based on reviewers' comments and programmatic alignment.

Awards will be based on 1) the intrinsic intellectual merit, scope and potential impact on the field; 2) feasibility of the project and reasonability of the budget; and 3) collaborative nature of the project; and 4) probability that the larger project will secure external funding.

Requirements if funded:

- Award recipients must provide up to a 400-word lay abstract at the time of funding. Recipients will be expected to prepare a progress report at the end of the first year, including up to a 400-word lay abstract of results and findings.
- Funding for the second year will be contingent upon satisfactory progress made during the first year, as reported in the year one progress report. (Scientific Merit Review).
- Recipients will be expected to prepare a final report within 45 days after completion of funding, including up to a 400-word lay abstract of results and findings.
- Recipients will make a public presentation on the results at the end of the project period at the TSRI Annual Poster Session and may be invited to present at the TSRI Research Seminar Series.
- The PI must be willing to serve as a mentor of a junior scientist through TSRI programs at least once during the 2-year award period, including the summer following completion of the award. Mentorship includes, but not limited to: the Samuels Family Latino and African American High School Internship Program (LA-HIP), Short-Term Education Program for Underrepresented Persons (STEP UP), and Saban Scholars (mentorship for USC Keck medical students). This may occur at the discretion of the Chief Scientific Officer.
- Failure to meet award requirements may prohibit the awardee's division or research program from participating in future intramural applications.

Award recipients maintain a current certificate of completion of Requirement for Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research, per the National Institutes of Health (NIH), see NOT-OD-10-019 (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-10-019.html>).