

# UAB HEERSINK SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

### 2022/2023 Multi-Investigator Program

#### **Purpose:**

The UAB Heersink School of Medicine invites exploratory/developmental grant applications for the establishment of an infrastructure for eventual applications for multi-investigator research programs, such as Program Project grants (P01), SP0RE grants, Center grants (P30, P50 or P60), U-series grants or Multi-PI R01 grants from NIH or other funding agencies. The Multi-PI R01 grants should have inter-related projects, at least 3 PIs, and should be requesting more than the standard modular budget allows. **Please note: standard R01 type applications will not be considered responsive to this RFA.** The purpose of these grants is to enable HSOM faculty members to organize and integrate multi-disciplinary teams of accomplished investigators that will compete successfully for long-term support from funding agencies. Support will provide them with the opportunity to prove the feasibility of their working as a cohesive team and aid in the acquisition of resources, preliminary data, and/or administrative support needed to operate as an interdisciplinary research program.

#### **Duration:**

Up to two (2) years.

#### **Range of Requested Funds:**

Up to **\$150,000**/year per application.

#### **Eligibility:**

The overall PI of the application must have a primary appointment in a Department within the HSOM, and a record of accomplishment in the subject area. All participating PIs must have a primary or secondary appointment in a HSOM Department. **The overall theme of the research should be relevant to the mission of the Heersink School of Medicine Strategic Research Plan, specifically the four focus areas of** 1) Disruptive Technology Empowering Precision Health (D-TECH); 2) Health Equity; 3) I-4ward (Infection, Inflammation, Immunity, and Immuno-Therapy); and 4) Brain Health and Disease Across the Lifespan. Interdepartmental collaborations are encouraged if scientifically appropriate, and each program should involve a minimum of three faculty. The program can include projects that are basic science, translational science, clinical science, or any combination.

**Please note:** Effective 2021, the Dean's Office and the O'Neal CCC will collaborate on funding cancer-related pilot grants. This will be done through the O'Neal Invests program which has RFAs coming out in the spring and fall each year. The Pre-P01/Pre-SP0RE mechanism will support collaborative, team science that will lead to an application for a multi-project, multi-PI extramural grant such as a P01 or SP0RE within two years. This award is for \$250,000 per year for up to two years. Three, preferably four, investigators with distinct projects must apply together. Approval from the O'Neal Director is required for Pre-P01/Pre-SP0RE prior to submission of letters of intent. All cancer-relevant proposals should be submitted to O'Neal Invests on one of these cycles. For questions regarding O'Neal Invests, please contact Susan Ruppert - [sruppert@uab.edu](mailto:sruppert@uab.edu)

#### **Funds Available:**

It is anticipated that **2-3** grants, based on scientific merit, will be awarded during this cycle. Funding for the award will be limited to a maximum of **\$150,000/yr.**, and a project period of up to two years, pending appropriate progress and achieving benchmarks. One critical benchmark for a second year of support will be submission of grant application in the first year of the award. Because the scope and nature of the proposed research will vary from application to application, the size of the award may vary. Funds provided under this award can be utilized for support of critical pilot projects, development of core facilities, support for non-faculty personnel, and other expenses that are crucial to developing a competitive proposal.

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#### **Intent to Submit:**

Intents to submit must be submitted online via <https://apps.medicine.uab.edu/funding/multiinfo.asp>. Complete the requested form fields and upload the letter of intent as one .pdf, naming the file with the last name of the PI and "LOI". Upload your NIH-formatted biosketch, naming the file with the last name of the PI and "Biosketch". Letter of Intent should include the title and brief description of the proposed research project. If this project has been recently submitted to the NIH for review, please include information about when it was submitted along with the summary statement.

Link to announcement: <http://www.uab.edu/medicine/home/research/funding-opportunities>.

#### **Review Procedures:**

- Letters of Intent will be reviewed by leadership in the Heersink SOM. Evaluation will be based on the track record of the PI, the potential for funding, and how well the proposal fits the identified research focus area(s).
- The first round of review will identify a subset to invite to submit a full application.
- Full applications will require a biosketch, budget and budget justification, and a four-page research proposal. Evaluation will be based on the track record of the investigator(s), the potential impact, the innovation of the proposed project, the lack of duplication with existing programs, and how well the proposal fits the identified research focus area(s).
- Successful applicants will be expected to provide semi-annual progress reports.

#### **Submission Guidelines:**

- **Letter of Intent:**
  - One page limit (*Summary Statements are excluded from page requirement and can be uploaded with the Letter of Intent; references not required*)
  - NIH Biosketch for key personnel
- **Full Application:** *Proposals invited to submit a full application will receive notification and a link to submit via email.*
  - **Cover Page**
    - Title of project
    - Investigators names
    - Budget amount requested
    - Duration of award
    - Abstract of proposed work
    - Signatures of investigators
  - **Key Personnel**
    - Budget
    - Budget Justification
    - NIH Biosketches
  - **Research Proposal**
    - Four (4) pages
    - 1 inch margins
    - Single spaced
    - Arial 11 font (except tables)

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#### **Critical Elements of the Proposal Should Include:**

- Clear and concise description of the central theme and goals of the program. This needs to include how your proposal relates to the five focus areas listed above (it may relate to one or more). **Provide a 3-sentence description of relationship to particular focus area.**
- Overview of the proposed team and the interactions among individual team members.
- Explanation of how the proposal will lead to successful external funding from the NIH or other funding agency (provide specifics if known RFA's are available).
- Description of existing/proposed core facilities that would support research activities.
- Plan for the distribution and management of funds.
- **IMPORTANT:** An overall timeline, which shows progress (include planning meetings, collaborative manuscripts, discussion of preparation of the external application, and anticipated date for submission).

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

1. Can faculty salary support be requested?  
*No, only support for non-faculty personnel can be requested.*
2. If a co-investigator or a component of the project is from another institution, can support be provided?  
*No, support for this RFA must stay at UAB and be used internally. There are complex issues with indirects at other institutions that make it untenable to provide support outside of UAB.*
3. If the investigators are proposing a project or experiments that require IRB, IACUC, FDA approval (IND approval) before the project can begin, can they use the JIT "option" and not start the regulatory paperwork unless the project is chosen for funding?  
*Yes.*
4. Can the investigator request pilot funding for projects that will be submitted to non-NIH entities for funding?  
*Yes. The investigator can send applications to other federal agencies (i.e. DOD, DARPA, NSF etc.) or foundations, however highly competitive applications that are targeted to NIH are preferred.*
5. Can NIH budget forms and NIH biosketch be used for this application?  
*Yes.*
6. Are the proposals required to go through OSP?  
*No.*

#### **Questions regarding scientific issues should be addressed to:**

Etty (Tika) Benveniste, PhD  
Senior Vice Dean for Research, HSOM  
Phone: 205.934.7667  
Email: tika@uab.edu

#### **Questions regarding application issues should be addressed to:**

Jenna Pate, MSHA, MSHQS  
Data Analyst, Office of Research, HSOM  
Phone: 205.934.6654  
Email: somresearch@uab.edu

Shaila Handattu, PhD, MBA  
Executive Director, Office of Research, HSOM  
Phone: 205.934.9417  
Email: somresearch@uab.edu

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**DEADLINES:**

<b>November 21, 2022</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b>	<b>LETTER OF INTENT</b>
<b>January 30, 2023</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b>	<b>FULL APPLICATION</b>

**Schedule:**

October 21, 2022	Announcement
November 21, 2022	Deadline for Letter of Intent Submissions
December 12, 2022	Administrative Review Completed
December 19, 2022	Requests for Full Applications
January 30, 2023	Deadline for Full Application Submission
February 27, 2023	Scientific Review Completed
March 6, 2023	Notification of Awards
March 15, 2023	Funding Start Date