

# **UAB Heersink School of Medicine**

## **REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**

### **REFRESH Award**

## **Purpose**

HSOM REFRESH funds are intended to provide short-term support to faculty whose sponsored research programs have been unexpectedly disrupted. Such disruptions may include outright grant terminations or circumstances that effectively result in a loss of funding.

The goal of the REFRESH award is to provide investigators with critical resources to reassess, adapt, and strategically reposition their research programs. This support enables faculty to modify, refine, or redirect their scientific aims; generate essential preliminary data; and strengthen their competitiveness for future extramural funding. Ultimately, the REFRESH mechanism is designed to preserve research continuity and promote long-term success for faculty navigating unforeseen funding challenges.

## **Eligibility**

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Hold a primary appointment in the Heersink School of Medicine
2. Rank of Assistant Professor or higher
3. Meet one or more of the following:
  - Serve as Principal Investigator/MPI on a terminated or functionally discontinued grant or subaward
  - Demonstrate the need to pivot the scope of a current or recently ended research project due to NIH policies or other reasons
4. Faculty members who have not received a formal notice of termination may apply if they can demonstrate that the original award or proposal -competitive or noncompetitive -is highly unlikely to receive further funding (e.g., a highly scored proposal no longer eligible for resubmission due to structural changes at the funding agency)

# Terms and Conditions

1. Applicants must report total discretionary account balances under their control (e.g., development accounts, start-up packages, endowments, etc.)
2. Faculty with more than \$200,000 in discretionary balances must justify why those funds cannot be used for immediate research support
3. Faculty who received similar internal awards from other UAB sources are not eligible

## Award Details

- **Maximum Award Amount:** Up to \$100,000
- **Duration:** One year, with the possibility of a one-year renewal contingent on progress
- **Application Deadline:** Rolling submissions
- **Allowable Expenses:**
  - Research personnel including graduate and/or MSTP students and postdoctoral fellows
  - Research supplies
  - Core services or other project-related research costs

*Faculty salary, indirect costs, publication fees, and travel expenses are not allowable.*

## Two-Step Application Process

### Step 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

(Arial 11 font)

Interested faculty members must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to gauge interest and facilitate the selection process for full application invitations. The LOI (maximum 1 page) should briefly describe:

- The nature and impact of the funding disruption
- Actions taken to date in response to the disruption
- How REFRESH support will enable realignment or redirection of the research program

Intents to submit must be submitted online via

<https://apps.medicine.uab.edu/funding/HSOMREFRESHApplication.asp>

Complete the requested form fields and upload LOI and Biosketch as .pdf, naming the files with the last name of the PI and “LOI” (i.e., AgarwalLOI.pdf). Upload your biosketch, naming the file with the last name of the PI and “Biosketch” (i.e., AgarwalBiosketch.pdf).

## **Step 2: Full Application (By Invitation Only)**

(Arial 11 font, except tables)

Invited applicants will submit the following materials:

1. **Draft of New Specific Aims** (1-page maximum)
2. **Prior Specific Aims** from the disrupted proposal (1-page maximum), if applicable
3. **Change of Scope Statement** (maximum 2 pages, excluding references), including:
  - a. Reason for termination or discontinuation of the prior project
  - b. Description of how the proposed project represents a substantive change in research scope
  - c. Plan for obtaining external funding (e.g., target mechanism, funding agency, submission timeline)
4. **Budget** for the REFRESH award (NIH template)
5. **Budget Justification** detailing proposed use of funds (e.g., personnel, supplies, services; 2-page maximum)
6. **Letter of Support from the Department Chair or Division Director** (PDF), which must:
  - o Affirm department/division support, including any salary support to the PI during the course of the award
  - o Confirm the disruption of the original project
  - o Validate the potential of the new project for competitive external funding
7. **Applicant’s CV** (HSOM format -PDF)
8. **Current and Pending Support**, including planned submissions or resubmissions (PDF)
9. **Statement of Likely Discontinuation** (if no formal termination notice exists), explaining why further funding is highly unlikely

## **Review Criteria**

Applications will be evaluated by subject matter experts from the HSOM based on the following primary criteria:

- Clarity and strength of the proposed “pivot” in research direction and/or funding strategy
- Justification of need and appropriateness of the requested budget
- Applicant’s track record and demonstrated potential to secure future extramural funding

- Alignment with HSOM and broader University research priorities