



The University of Alabama at Birmingham

## Request for Applications (RFA)

### PURPOSE

The **Multiple Sclerosis Center at UAB (MSC)** invites letters of intent for pilot studies that address novel scientific questions related to the treatment of Multiple Sclerosis. Proposals may be basic, clinical, or translational in nature. The intent of this philanthropic support is ***to identify novel avenues of research pertinent to treatment for neurological disorders and to accelerate the most promising MS-related drug discovery projects. Priority will be given to projects that best align with this aim.*** This award will ultimately create preliminary data that will support more permanent funding through Federal agencies and/or non-profit entities.

### ELIGIBILITY (UAB investigators only)

1. New investigators (Post-doctoral scholars, Instructors, Assistant Professors) with interest in MS research
2. Established investigators who want to explore high impact/high risk projects to test innovative ideas directed at MS treatment

### TERMS OF SUPPORT

1. Up to \$50,000 in project-related direct costs and appropriate supplies can be requested.
2. Successful applicants will be required to provide semi-annual, written progress reports and meet with MSC Leadership every six months.
3. Up to 2 projects will be funded based on merit and availability of funds.

**REVIEW PROCEDURES:** This funding mechanism involves a two-phased application process (see Application Deadlines & Key Dates for details). LOIs will be reviewed by UAB MSC leadership. Evaluation will be based on the track record of the principal investigator, the potential for funding, and how well the proposal fits the identified research focus area(s). **Priority research projects include basic science and pre-clinical studies aimed at the development of novel therapeutic modalities, and clinical studies with disease-modifying treatment emphasis. The first round of the review will identify a subset to be invited to submit a full application.**

### SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Letters of Intent should not exceed two (2) single-spaced pages (1" margins, 11 size Arial font). Short application should include the following sections: title, overall objective, specific aims, significance, and a general approach. In addition to the 2-page LOI, the NIH Biographical Sketch of PI should be included (5 pages max). Please submit as a single PDF document to [michellebelue@uabmc.edu](mailto:michellebelue@uabmc.edu). Selected LOIs will submit a 6-page proposal, NIH Biographical Sketch of Co-Investigators, as well as a budget and budget justification.

### APPLICATION DEADLINES AND KEY DATES

LOI Deadline	January 11, 2019
Invitation to Submit Full Application	January 29, 2019
Full Application Deadline	February 25, 2019
Review Process Completed	March 22, 2019
Funding Start Date	April 1, 2019

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

### **Q. Can faculty salary support be requested?**

**A.** *No. Only support for direct costs & project-essential, non-faculty personnel can be requested.*

### **Q. Are consultation fees, image analysis, and tech fees covered?**

**A.** *Costs with a potential direct relationship between the consultation and the project and which are considered critical to the success of the project may be considered direct costs. Applicants should provide justification for the fee(s) in the submitted budget, and the review committee will assess eligibility for coverage.*

### **Q. If a co-investigator or a component of the project is from another institution, can support be provided?**

**A.** *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.*

### **Q. 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?**

**A.** *Yes.*

### **Q. Can the investigator request funding for projects that will be submitted to non-NIH entities for funding?**

**A.** *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.*

### **Q. Are the proposals required to go through OSP?**

**A.** *No.*

### **Q. Can NIH budget forms and NIH biosketch be used for this application?**

**A:** *Yes.*

*Information regarding MSC research and previously selected projects can be found at [www.uab.edu/mscenter/research/funding-opportunities](http://www.uab.edu/mscenter/research/funding-opportunities)*

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

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Professor and Vice Chair for Education, Department of  
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Director, Division of Neuroimmunology and Multiple  
Sclerosis  
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Etty (Tika) Benveniste, PhD  
Co-Director, UAB Multiple Sclerosis Center  
Senior Vice Dean for Basic Sciences, SOM  
Associate Vice President for Medicine and Basic Science  
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Professor, Department of Cell, Developmental and  
Integrative Biology  
Phone: 205.934.7667  
Email: [tika@uab.edu](mailto:tika@uab.edu)

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

Michelle Belue, MA  
UAB MSC Program Manager  
Phone: 205-975-2018  
Email: [michellebelue@uabmc.edu](mailto:michellebelue@uabmc.edu)

