

# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA – HEALTH

## COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

### BRIDGE FUNDING POLICY

REVISED: DECEMBER 11, 2007

#### Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is to define the circumstances under which bridge funding may be provided to USF College of Medicine investigators. The purpose of this intramural fiscal support is to provide partial funding to keep a productive research laboratory operational for a limited period of time until a gap in funding can be corrected. More specifically, these funds are intended to enable the research to continue as the concerns expressed through the peer review process are addressed.

#### Eligibility

College of Medicine full-time, tenured and tenure-earning faculty who have not received successful funding on a competitive renewal grant application are eligible to apply for bridge funding. A new application is not eligible for bridge funding unless it substitutes for an existing research grant. The College of Medicine will entertain two levels of support for bridge funding.

Level I support eligibility: Unsuccessful funding for a competitive renewal grant application from the NIH, and for which a critique has been provided.

Level II support eligibility: Unsuccessful funding for a competitive renewal grant application from a nationally-recognized non-NIH sponsor, and for which a competitive review has been provided.

#### Budget

1. Level I Support: Bridge funding for a maximum of \$60,000 may be requested. An investigator may apply for up to \$40,000 for the first 12 months of funding, during which time he/she is expected to submit a revised version of the grant. If this revision (A1) is unsuccessful, but the critique is positive and encouraging, an additional \$20,000 may be requested for a second year of bridge funding, during which time the investigator is expected to submit a second revision of the proposal (A2).
2. Level II Support: Bridge funding for a maximum of \$25,000 may be requested for a period of 12 months, during which time he/she is expected to submit a revised version of the grant.
3. Given the purpose of bridge funding, reasonable costs include technical assistance (graduate student stipend, post-docs, etc), supplies, and animal costs. The budget should reflect the real operational needs of the laboratory to remain functional at a reduced level of activity until the gap in funding is corrected.

4. Faculty salary may be considered at the request of the Chair. Travel to scientific meetings or conferences is generally excluded, but may be considered under extraordinary circumstances.

## Evaluation Criteria

1. The Bridge Funding Subcommittee will use the external review provided by the peer-review process as a prime consideration for evaluation. Triaged proposals will not be considered for funding.
2. The total resources available to the investigator and length of prior funding for the project under consideration will also be taken into consideration.

## Other

1. If funding occurs after bridge funds have been awarded, the unused portion of those funds must be returned to the College of Medicine.
2. If attempts at funding are not successful, any unused portion of awarded bridge funds may be rolled over into the next fiscal year.
3. Funds will be transferred to the investigators account in three quarterly payments, upon receipt of a letter to the Associate Dean for Research, signed by both investigator and Chair, verifying that additional external funding has not yet been secured.
4. Awards will depend on the availability of funds and will be made at the discretion of the Senior Associate Vice President for Research.

## Follow-Up

A procedure will be established to evaluate the success of this bridge funding program, and will be based on the number of individuals who receive bridge funding who are subsequently funded for that specific project.

## Process

1. A committee of 3-6 faculty, two of whom shall be members of the COM Committee on Research will be appointed to review applications and make appropriate recommendations to the Associate Dean for Research. These individuals should be investigators presently funded by at least one grant from the NIH (or other peer-reviewed granting agency) and have successfully received a competitive renewal.
2. The request for bridge funding must come from the Department Chair. The Chair should be the first level of review in the process and not just a conveyor of the application for bridge funding. The letter requesting bridge funds from the Chair must describe the strengths and weaknesses of both the P.I. and the research project for which bridge funding is requested and a recommendation for action by the committee. The Chair will also evaluate the resources available to the investigator including other grant funding. Consideration of these other resources should be included in the evaluation of the budget request. Requests for bridge funding that are not competitive should not be submitted.
3. The College of Medicine Dean's Office will provide a 1:1 match for Level I support funding. Departments must provide at least a 1:1 match for Level II Support funding.
4. In addition to the recommendation from the Chair, the application for bridge funding must include:

- the P.I.'s curriculum vitae
- a complete history of grant funding and pending applications
- the external review/summary statement of the project and its rebuttal by the investigator
- a one-page statement from the P.I. which includes a plan for achieving successful funding for the specific project for which bridge funding is requested
- a budget
- a summary of other funds that are available and that have or will be used to assist in the bridging process

No application will be reviewed without these documents.