Louisiana Biomedical Research Network - LBRN
2013-14 Competition for INBRE Research Project

Deadlines

September 9, 2013	Announcement of RFA
October 1, 2013	Letter of Intent
November 1, 2013	Full proposal due
December 1, 2013	Announcement of Award

Objective

The purpose of this RFA is to solicit a new project for the INBRE program. The expected start date for this project is January 1, 2014 for the first year of funding through April 30, 2015. The selection and distribution of these projects by the Steering Committee will be based on the quality of the proposal and the needs of the INBRE program. Proposed projects should be consistent with the program's focal research areas (listed below). All interested researchers are encouraged to contact Dr. Bill Wischusen (ewischu@lsu.edu) prior to submitting a proposal to ensure that the proposed research is eligible for inclusion in this program.

Computational & Structural Biology

This area includes themes, for example, bioinformatics, development of new computational approaches to solving significant bio-medical questions, biological modeling or investigations of molecular structure.

Molecular Mechanism of Disease

This area includes investigations focused on understanding the molecular mechanisms of significant human diseases, including, but not restricted to cancer, metabolic disorders, and infectious diseases.

Preventive Medicine

This area includes basic research important in the prevention of major human diseases. Research topics might include work such as the development vaccines, tissue engineering, drugs or new diagnostic tests.

Eligibility

The project is open to investigators at existing LBRN PUI campuses (LA Tech, LSUS, SUBR, ULM and Xavier) who:

- have not had previous BRIN and/or INBRE full project funding, (researchers with previous INBRE pilot or summer funding are eligible)
- currently do not have or previously have not had R15, R21, or R01 or equivalent research funding

Current LBRN pilot project holders will be expected to submit a project to be considered for enhancement to a full project.

Total Funds Available

The full project funding is for 1.33 years. Starting Jan 1, 2014 through April 30, 2014 the amount is $40,000. The next funding period is May 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015 funding is for $120,000.

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Letter of Intent

Prospective applicants are required to submit a letter of intent that includes the following information:

- Name, address, email and telephone number of the Principal Investigator
- Names of mentors and other key personnel
- Descriptive title of proposed research
- State the research area focus in which your project fits

The letter of intent should be submitted via email to Dr. Bill Wischusen (ewischu@lsu.edu) no later than 4:30 pm on October 1, 2013.

Proposal Guidelines (Overview)

The proposal should contain the following items:

- PHS 398 Forms
- Research Plans/Project Description
- NIH Biographical Sketches

The proposal should be submitted via e-mail as a single PDF formatted file to Dr. Bill Wischusen (ewischu@lsu.edu) no later than 4:30 pm, November 1, 2013. **LATE** submissions will **NOT** be accepted.

Proposal Guidelines (Detailed)

For general formatting instructions follow the current **PHS 398** forms and guidelines, which can be found on the NIH Grant application website http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html. The proposal should contain the following items:

I. PHS 398 Forms

1. Face Page (form page 1)
2. Detailed Budget (form page 4 and 5) and Budget Justification (Continuation Page)
   Do not include mentor in the PI's budget
   a. PI's budget (form page 4) Budget $40,000 Total Cost for the period January 1, 2014 – April 30, 2014 *(at least 2 months commitment)* followed by the budget justification.
   b. PI's budget for years 4-5 (May 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015) *at least 6 months commitment the following years, for summer salary only up to 2 summer months can be requested on the grant*) Budget $120,000 Total Cost/year (form page 5 and Continuation Page for budget justification)
   c. Mentor's budget (form page 4 and Continuation Page for budget justification) Budget Total Cost for the period January 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015 followed by the budget justification. This should include mentor's salary (specify annual or academic) and maximum % effort (*only up to .9 month support)* and duties. This is for INBRE administrative purposes, which will come out of the INBRE Administrative Core's budget. **Please note that if you have multiple mentors listed, the Administrative Core could only pay the total of % of .9 month for mentors; therefore, % of .9 month will be divided up between the numbers of mentors that you listed.*

II. Research Plans/Project Description (**12 page limit**, use NIH Continuation Format Page):

i. **Cover Letter** (required for resubmitted applications). For all revised or resubmitted applications, please include an introduction that describes what action was taken in proposal resubmission.

1. **Cover page (Limit to 1 page)**
   - Project title
   - Performance site(s)
   - Lead project investigator or investigators if more than one person
   - Key personnel (personnel who are in the budget); include Collaborators and Mentors
   - Identify if the project includes human subjects and if any exemptions are claimed
   - Identify if vertebrate animals are included

2. **Abstract and Specific Aims (Limit to 1 page or less)**

3. **Background and Preliminary Results (Limit to 2 pages or less):** Describe rationale, significance, and potential impact. Include preliminary results only as needed to address these topics. Preliminary results are not a required element.

4. **Research Plan and Timeline (Limit to 5 pages):** Describe research approach(es) and innovation
   a. Describe the specific aims of the research project in an area that is a focus of the INBRE. Delineate the hypotheses to be tested. Preliminary studies are NOT required for INBRE applications, but applicants with preliminary results should describe them. In the absence of preliminary results, applicants should describe the rationale and scientific basis for the proposed research and provide a strong research plan. Concisely state the importance and health relevance of the proposed research to the specific aims.
   b. Describe the nature and scope of any scientific research collaborations
   c. Project Timeline (January 1, 2014-April 30, 2015)

5. **Investigators (limit to 1 page; use tables to present information where possible):** For project leaders, mentors, key personnel, and collaborators: Identify the institution, education level(s), and role in project.

   a. The candidate (Mentee)

      i. A single investigator at the awardee or network institutions should supervise each research project. Each investigator is responsible for ensuring that the project's specific aims are met. The research excellence of these projects will be enhanced by effectively using the scientific and technical strengths of collaborating investigators and/or mentors.

      ii. Individual development plan, including plans for developing a sustainable research program. See NIGMS website for more information.

      http://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/StrategicPlanImplementationBlueprint/IndividualDevelopmentPlans.htm

Note while the website describes these IDPs for post-doctoral researchers NIGMS has asked that we develop these for the INBRE researchers. This also replaces the requirement for a mentoring plan found in previous LBRN RFAs.

b. Mentor/collaborator

i. Mentor should have research expertise relevant to the scientific area(s) to be developed within the INBRE. The mentor may be a collaborator on the faculty investigator's research project. Mentor will help oversee the proposed training and career development of promising investigators. Each project investigator should be assigned at least one mentor.

The mentor is an established faculty member who has demonstrated the ability to advise others through the acquisition of external support and the maintenance of an independent research laboratory. In most instances, mentor should be selected from outside investigator's institution. If a suitable mentor is not available then it is acceptable to enlist appropriate mentors from the investigator's institution.

Mentor may request up to .9 person month and should be listed in the Administrative Core's budget section of the application and not in the individual projects' budget sections. The faculty investigators should clearly designate in the text the identity of their mentor(s) and describe the qualifications, both scientific and advisory, that make them appropriate to assist in the oversight of the project. In some cases, where appropriate, may serve as mentors to INBRE investigators and/or students. Letters of commitment from mentor(s) should be included in the application.

2. **Environment and Resources** (use Resources format page) **(Limit to 2 pages or less):** Provide details; use table format where possible.
   a. Research environment
   b. Research and Institutional Commitment
   c. Technical support
   d. Details of LBRN/COBRE infrastructure that will be utilized during the project
   e. Other

Additional Information. As appropriate to the project, include the following sections; There are no page limits on these sections.

a. Human Subjects*
b. Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children
c. Vertebrate Animal Care and Welfare*
d. Biohazards*
e. Literature Cited/Reference List

**(if applicable, approval letter needs to be attached)*

II. NIH Biographical Sketch

- Research project investigators and mentors must provide a biographical sketch as indicated in the PHS 398 instructions. This section must not exceed four pages per person.

IV. All Personnel Report Format Page

Allowable Costs:
Funds will be provided to continue building and strengthening research infrastructure and capacity at the lead and partner institutions. Funds allocated to partner institutions are to cover expenses including but not limited to salary, research support, and equipment acquisition.

Sharing resources among INBRE and COBRE investigators is strongly encouraged. If a core facility already exists for equipment and instrumentation supported by a COBRE program, these should not be proposed de novo in the INBRE application. However, if duplicate equipment is to be requested under this FOA, it should be appropriately justified. Under this FOA, COBRE investigators are not eligible for research funding from INBRE as project investigators. Similarly, INBRE investigators may not receive simultaneous research project support from a COBRE program. COBRE investigators may serve and be supported as mentors in INBRE programs as appropriate.

Salary costs are allowable to the extent that they are reasonable; conform to the established policy of the organization consistently applied regardless of the source of funds; and reflect no more than the percentage of time actually devoted to the NIH-funded project. If full-time 12-month salaries are not currently paid to comparable staff members, the salary proposed must be appropriately related to the existing salary.

It is expected that the research project investigators at the awardee and network partner institutions will devote at least 50 percent of their professional effort (equivalent to 6.0 person months) to career development and research activities. Institutions must provide release time for project investigators, thus permitting a significant time commitment to the research enterprise. To allow flexibility to investigators who cannot devote 6.0 consecutive months throughout the year, the effort can be distributed over the year to achieve a total of 6 person months; (for example, 4.0 person months during academic year and 2.0 person months in summer (up to two months) to account for a yearly 6.0 person months effort). Institutional cost sharing (in terms of release time) is required.

Other Allowable Costs Include:

- Research equipment and instrumentation for laboratories
- Supplies for research
- Salary support for undergraduate and graduate students and technical staff

New Research Project Selection Criteria

1. How well does this project fit into the current LBRN research themes (Computational & Structural Biology, Molecular Mechanism of Disease and Preventive Medicine)?
2. Does the project incorporate using computational tools and/or appropriate statistics approaches to address a biomedical research question?
3. What is the potential for this researcher and this research project to move to the next level during the duration of the project (2.5 years)? Include investigator training and qualification, and the appropriateness of the research to the experience level of the Project Investigator and other personnel.
4. Does the project address a **significant and relevant** biomedical question? Does the proposed research problem have the potential to advance the concepts or methods that drive the field and scientific knowledge in general.
5. Are the **approaches** appropriate to the question/s being investigated? Are the research plan, specific aims, experimental design, methodology, consideration of alternatives, data analysis, scope, and timetable appropriate.
6. Is there a mentoring team in place and the quality of the mentoring plans, mentor suitability, plans for recruitment, research training, and career development of investigators, postdoctoral fellows and students of the institutions involved in the network. Project PIs must have at least one mentor. The mentor/s are recommended to have the following qualifications: record of expertise in a field related to the project, sustained record of independent federal funding (ideally at the level of an NIH RO1) and record of mentoring graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and/or junior faculty.
7. Extent to which the research takes advantage of any unique features of the scientific environment or employs productive collaborative arrangements and/or is there evidence of an existing collaboration between the junior faculty member and one or more of the project mentors?
8. Is there evidence of departmental or institutional support for the junior researcher and the research project? Include adequacy of resources and availability of any specialized facilities needed.
9. Is there significant potential for the activities associated with this project to advance the biomedical educational climate on campus? Include the suitability of the plan for recruiting new faculty, if any and plans to be undertaken for capacity building at institution.