

Department of Pediatrics

Guidelines for Application for Departmental Research Funds

Rationale: The department plans to have a small research budget (depending on departmental resources) that will foster research development and contribute, in part, to sustaining research productivity among faculty members. In order to have a fair and transparent process for requests by members of the Department of Pediatrics for funding of small research projects or to support bridge funding of ongoing projects, the application process for such funding requests is outlined below.

Types of Research Operating Fund Requests Considered

1. Start-up operating/equipment grants *(amount and duration dependent on negotiated need)*

New faculty members who are full-time members of Pediatrics may request funds as part of their start-up hiring package or within the first 5 years of their appointment at McMaster as a means to establish their research while developing grants submissions. Such funding can be used to hire research assistants, to support graduate students, towards operating costs of research, or for small equipment purchases.

2. Pilot/Proof of Concept grants *(a one-time grant to a maximum of up to 15K for one year)*

Faculty members may apply for small grants to support pilot study research to establish feasibility or 'proof of concept' in preparation for a major grant proposal or small equipment purchases essential for the conduct of their research.

3. Bridge grants

In rare situations, funding to support ongoing research may be requested in the case of failure to obtain a renewal grant if it was scored in the fundable range. This opportunity allows faculty to resubmit their research proposal to the same or different granting agency without the loss of momentum, staff or trainees. Applications that were 'streamlined' (triaged for non-review by the funding agency) will not be considered as there is little chance of successfully securing future competitive funds.

Application & Review Process

1. Application

(NOTE: Please use the application form provided for completing this application).

A detailed proposal (not more than 4 pages) must be submitted that covers each of the areas outlined below:

- Rationale for need for research funds. Where relevant, this should include details of grant applications submitted that were not successful, ratings and reviewers' comments.

- Detailed research plan including timelines for the conduct of the research and the expected outcomes of the research.
- A description of how proposed research is linked with research visions and priorities established by sub-specialty divisions, the department and/or Faculty of Health Sciences.
- A brief Knowledge Translation plan (up to 250 words) to indicate how the investigator plans to share results and with whom.
- Budget and justification to support the research plan and related budget. Also, justification must be given for why small equipment (<\$2000) needed is not available or not appropriate through shared use of other laboratories in FHS.
- Plans for future funding must include submission dates and expected dates for funding notices that relate to the research for which start-up/bridge funding is being requested.

For Bridge Funding Applications

- Details must be provided of current research staff and trainees, other projects and what measures the applicant is taking to reduce research expenditures until competitive grant funds are secured.

2. Adjudication of Funding Proposals

Adjudication of funding proposals will be the responsibility of the Research Advisory Committee. However, they may appoint ad hoc review panels as required.

Criteria for Pilot/Proof of Concept Study or Start-up Funds include:

- Primarily to support new faculty members within 5 years of appointment to McMaster or mid-career faculty who have decided to engage more in research having established themselves clinically or can provide sound rationale for a major change in research direction
- Scientifically sound and meritorious proposal
- Support of research training with commitment of highly qualified research mentors within or outside our department
- High probability of successfully collecting the pilot data
- High likelihood of future funding [for the main or larger study] from external sources
- Evidence of plans for external funding
- Well linked with research visions and priorities established by sub-specialty divisions, the department and Faculty of Health Sciences. This aspect must include a clear outline of the measures that will indicate the value added by this award to the research productivity or training capacity of the division, department or faculty
- Well defined timelines that are realistic for completion of the project

Criteria for Bridge Funding include:

- Primarily to provide faculty members with funding support to keep research personnel/study continuation for a short period until grant funds can be secured (on occasion of loss of grant)

renewal). Priority will be given to faculty who do NOT hold any other grants from a Tri-Council or other national granting agency.

- Sound justification for need for bridge funding (lack of success in grant competition with plans for re-submission; essential pilot data to apply for major research funding etc.)
- Evidence of highly ranked but unfunded grant submission that has high likelihood of subsequent success with funding from external granting agency. Well defined timelines with clearly identified deliverables.
- Well linked with research visions of the department and Faculty of Health Sciences. This aspect must include a clear outline of the measures that will indicate the value added by this award to the research productivity or training capacity of the division, department or faculty.
- High probability of knowledge translation

Accountability

A **report** must be submitted to the Research Advisory Committee each year on the anniversary of receipt of the funds and at study completion. This report must outline the progress of the research in relation to the timelines and deliverables set out in the application and include:

- Declaration of any external sources of funding applied for or received in the past year that relate to the supported project.
- If/when external funding is received; any overlap with the intended use of the departmental funding may require reimbursement to the department.
- If a significant change of focus in the research has occurred at any time, a revised proposal must be reviewed/approved by the RAC.

Questions?

Dr. Stephanie Atkinson
Associate Chair, Research
Department of Pediatrics
satkins@mcmaster.ca
x75641