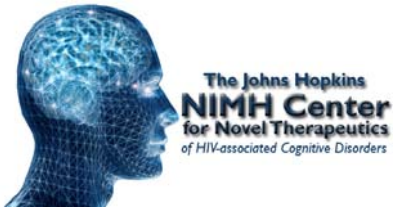

JHU NIMH Center Developmental Pilot Grants

These pilot grants are primarily designed to support innovative faculty research, which has not yet reached a point in development where NIH funding is likely. Thus, it is expected that proposals will outline a plan that will generate sufficient preliminary data to eventually make NIH funding likely. Indeed, the success of the program will be judged, in part, by the number of pilot grants accomplishing this goal. The eventual availability of non-NIH funding sources is, of course, recognized, as is the difficulty of getting governmental funding for highly innovative work. Therefore, successful attainment of subsequent long term funding is only one criterion of the program's success. Equally important is providing the seed money for innovative and cross-disciplinary research for publication in peer reviewed journals. Proposals are expected to address at least one area of thematic importance to the JHU NIMH Center: ***Detection of early neurological disease, Neuropathogenesis, Neurological treatments, development of biomarkers or animal models, assessment of the impact of cognitive dysfunction on everyday function, behavioral or psychological aspects of HIV-associated cognitive disorders, the impact of co-infections or confounding illnesses on HIV-associuated cognitive disorders.***

Junior investigators and those not previously involved in HIV research are particularly encouraged to apply. The goals of the Pilot Grant program are reflected in the attached scoring system below.

Who May Apply?

Any faculty member at the Johns Hopkins University or at other institutions (including international sites) in which the applicant will be actively collaborating with a JHU NIMH Center faculty investigator will be eligible to apply for a Neuro-AIDS pilot grant through this Core. That includes research associates and instructors (or the equivalent rank), in addition to more senior faculty. Undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows, will **not** be eligible to apply as Principal or Co-Investigators for pilot grants, but can participate in funded research with a faculty PI.

Recipients of pilot grants will not be eligible to apply for another pilot grant in the year following their award. They may apply for another grant after two years, even if they have received a no-cost one-year extension. Unsuccessful applicants may apply in consecutive years. Investigators who have applied to but not been funded by CFAR will be permitted to apply for Neuro-AIDS development funds. However, investigators who have had applications funded by CFAR will not be permitted to receive additional funding for the same study by the Neuro-AIDS program.

Funding and Time Lines

Two to four pilot grants per year are expected to be awarded in the range of $25,000-$50,000 in direct costs. No indirect costs are included, as these are covered by the NIMH Center grant. Funds may be used for faculty or fellow salary support, **but not for stipends paid to undergraduate or graduate students, or for tuition.** Funds may be used for travel essential to the conduct of research, but not for travel to established meetings or conferences. The review committee recognizes the high per diem costs of some international

sites, but expects investigators to exercise ingenuity and judgment in budgeting for overseas room and board. Funds may not be used for equipment.

Funding will be for one year with the possibility of a one-time, no-cost extension upon written request and evaluation by the Executive Committee (listed above). The request for a no-cost extension must be received within the 12-month period of the original award.

Beyond the 1-2 year period of funding, successful applicants are required to update the Center operations office on continued progress in the funded area of research. It is crucial that we monitor successes in areas for which pilot funding was provided, as this will be the ultimate measure of the Center's value to the Hopkins HIV community. It will also figure prominently in the evaluation of the JHU NIMH Center when it is competitively reviewed for renewed funding. Any publications of work funded in part by a JHU NIMH Center pilot grant should acknowledge this funding source.

Submission Deadline and Start Date of Awards

The application process will be in two stages. First, a 1-2 page 'letter of intent' due September 15th, 2006, describing the proposed project in outline, and the background and experience of the investigator(s). The letter should be submitted electronically to: lashmor1@jhmi.edu and should be formatted to address briefly each of the aspects used to score pilot grants:

1. *Scientific merit, including feasibility and experimental design (10 points)*
2. *Scientific impact and novelty (9 points)*
3. *PI new to Neuro-AIDS research (4 points)*
4. *New collaboration between investigators (1 point)*
5. *New area of research for PI (1 point)*

Total: *25 points*

Applicants are encouraged to contact the NIMH Center to discuss proposed projects: lashmore@jhmi.edu or 410 955 0956.

Second, the letters of intent will be reviewed rapidly, by October 20th, successful applicants will be invited to submit a fuller grant application. This should be in RO1 format, with details of hypotheses, background and introduction, preliminary data, and methods. Further details are included below. This will be submitted electronically and due in the JHU NIMH Center Operations Office, Meyer 6-109, by 4:00 p.m., on November 15th, 2006. The NIH-style biosketch of investigators should accompany the document.

We anticipate announcing the awards by December 15th, with funding to start by January 15th, 2007.

The following are the instructions for pilot grant proposal submissions:

Instructions for Pilot Grant Proposal Submissions to JHU NIMH Center

Grants must be submitted as PDF files containing:

I. Title of Proposal, names and departmental affiliations of all investigators, name(s) of Principal Investigator(s). Funding can be divided among more than one PI, but this must be reflected in the budget with clear justification.

II. NIH format Biographical Sketch and Other Support page for all investigators

III. Itemized Budget (does not need ORA review) with justification, including salary, supplies, equipment, travel, etc.

III. Research Plan ~ RO1 format abbreviated.

General Format: The Research Plan should be no longer than 5 single-spaced pages, including figures, using a font of 11 point. Figures may be integrated within the text or included as a separate appendix, but the total number of pages must be 5 or fewer. References may be attached on separate, additional pages, and should be carefully chosen, not to exceed 30 in number. References are not included in the 5 page limit. The name of the PI(s) should appear in the right top corner of each page. The Research Plan comprises the following components within the 5 page limit:

Brief Introduction or Abstract: This section is recommended, and is intended to help the author orient the reviewer with respect to the sections, which follow. It may be in the form of a comprehensive abstract or a more limited introduction. Any new collaborations or highly innovative aspects should be succinctly noted. Relevance to the NIMH Center Grant theme of Therapeutics should also be indicated.

Specific Aims: Aims should highlight specific hypotheses to be tested. If new techniques, new populations, or new collaborations are utilized to test these hypotheses, they should be emphasized.

Background (including Preliminary Results if available), and Significance: In addition to scientific background and significance, this section may indicate how success of the pilot grant will affect subsequent research and funding. The section on Significance should indicate relevance to the NIMH Center Grant theme of Therapeutics**.** This section should clarify how answers to the questions asked will advance the field.

Experimental Design: Experiments should be related to the hypotheses or questions addressed, Methods should be brief but sufficiently detailed to convince reviewers of feasibility and validity, with details focused on the novel aspects of the project rather than published or standard techniques. Statistical approaches to data analysis should be outlined where applicable.

Anticipated Problems and Possible Solutions: Any anticipated experimental or interpretive problems should be addressed, with alternative approaches when possible. Risks and drawbacks of this approach should be addressed, especially if human subjects are involved

Letters of collaboration as needed may be submitted as PDF documents as well. Other appendices are not permitted

Scoring System

Scoring System (maximum possible points awarded for each category):

1. *Scientific merit, including feasibility and experimental design (10 points)*
2. *Scientific impact and novelty (9 points)*
3. *PI new to Neuro-AIDS research (4 points)*
4. *New collaboration between investigators (1 points)*
5. *New area of research for PI (1 point)*

Total: *25 points*