

## The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

### Office of the Vice President for Research

#### NIH BRIDGE FUNDING POLICY

- As the NIH budget for research becomes more restrictive and the NIH puts in place its roadmap initiatives, it has become much more difficult for investigators to sustain uninterrupted NIH funding.
- It is expected that currently funded competitive investigators will suffer lapses in NIH funding.
- To address this issue, the Office of the Vice President for Research (VPR) is establishing a "Bridge Funding Program" for the institution.
- This program is intended to provide bridge funding for previously funded NIH investigators whose competitive renewal applications do not receive a fundable priority score.
- The program will provide matching funds to those provided by the department chair, center director and dean to allow the investigator up to 3 cycles of bridge support (e.g. through the A2 submission cycle).

#### General Guidelines:

- Given the new climate for federal funding, it is recommended that investigators begin planning in the last two years of the current grant for carryover funds that will allow some funds for a no-cost extension period.
- Requests for bridge funding will be limited to previously NIH-funded investigators who do not have current NIH or other extramural funding, or, for investigators whose NIH A1 competitive renewal applications were not funded.
- Research Career Development Awards and administrative components of PO1/center grants are excluded from participation in this program.
- The applicant has to have submitted a competitive renewal application to be eligible for these bridge funds with a previous priority score at 25% or under (i.e. 0-25%).
- The maximum amount of funds that will be made available from the VPR office will be \$30,000 per award per application cycle.
- Any funds that can be made available to the investigator by the department/center/school/VPR office should be used as the first source of bridge funding. The source and extent of all funds available to the investigator including carry over funds, VPR research incentive/reward program funds, individual 48xxx Project ID's (T accounts), and the matching funding required under this program must be detailed in the application packet.
- A deadline of the 5<sup>th</sup> day of each month has been established for this program. Applicants may request support as needed.
- Funds cannot be used for faculty salaries and as such departments/schools at a minimum should bear the salary components of faculty, graduate students and residents/fellows carrying out grant supported research. A 1:1 match is required by both the investigator's department and school (dean's office). Salary for the principal investigator used to offset prior effort on the previous NIH segment is allowable for usage as matching funds.
- Matching funding can also be requested from center directors; in this case a 2:1 match is required (e.g. the department/dean/center director total match will be up to 60K if 30K is requested from the VPR bridge program).
- The application for bridge funding can be submitted after the initial review of the first competitive renewal proposal and/or after review of A1 and A2 competitive renewal applications if necessary.
- If extramural grant funds (for the project in question) become available to the investigator during the bridge funding period, any remaining bridge funds will be returned to the office of the VPR
- Review of requests for bridge funding will be carried out by the University Research Council with decisions expected within 60 days of application.

**Application Components:**

- Competitively reviewed grant applications (both proposals for A1 and all three proposals for A2 application) including budget pages.
- NIH Summary Statements
- Draft 3 page Introduction to be submitted with revised application.
- One page statement from the PI with other information that strengthens the case for bridge funding.
- Budget including summary of other bridge funds available to the investigator and a plan for the use of the bridge funding.
- For bridge funding requests based on A1 and A2 applications, in addition to the above requested information, the investigator should provide (1) a full list of publications and presentations authored or coauthored by the applicant during the previous 6 month period; (2) a complete list of expenses charged against the bridge funding provided to date; (3) a description of progress to date; and (4) copies of *all* grant submissions and summary statements during the previous 6 month period. Unobligated funds may not be carried over from one 6-month period to the next.