

**AMC21 RELOAD
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**

2015 SOM Blue Sky Awards

PURPOSE: The promise of UAB is knowledge that will change our world. The UAB School of Medicine invites applications for high-risk research that tackles big problems in science and medicine that might deliver on that promise. This is a call for your blue sky, big dream idea. Support will provide highly creative faculty with a track record of outstanding success with the opportunity to test the feasibility of their “grand idea” and prepare that idea for an application for extramural funding. The goal is to foster high-payoff work that promises to be transformational but for which other funding sources are limited.

DURATION: Up to two (2) years.

RANGE OF REQUESTED FUNDS: Up to \$100,000/year per application.

ELIGIBILITY: The PI of the application must have a primary appointment in a Department within the SOM, and a record of substantial accomplishment in the subject area. One of the criteria for eligibility is a track record of high quality, high profile publications. **The overall theme of the research should be relevant to at least one of the three research focus areas of the AMC21 Strategic Plan, specifically: 1) Fundamentals of Basic Science Discovery; 2) Outcomes/Health Disparities/Population Health; and 3) Inflammation, Infection and Immunity (I3).** Projects can be basic science, translational science, or clinical science.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Combine the following components into one .pdf file, page numbered in bottom right corner, and the file saved as PI’s last name (i.e., Vickers.pdf):

- **Cover Page** – include Title of project, Principal Investigator’s name, title, department, phone number, and e-mail address; Names, titles and department affiliations of any co-investigators; Focus area(s) represented.
- **Abstract** – one (1) page executive summary of the proposal including the unique or distinctive aspects of the project that qualify it as truly innovative, the potential impact and the expertise of the PI.
- **Budget** – include the following budget categories: personnel (salary and fringe); materials and supplies; equipment; travel; contractual services; other services.
- **Budget Justification**
- **Proposal** – four (4) single-spaced pages, 11 point Arial font, ½ inch margins.
- **Biosketch** –the NIH biosketch of the PI.
- **Letter of Support** – from an investigator outside of UAB who can speak to the potential

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impact of the project proposed and to the track record of the PI and his/her recognition within the field.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL SHOULD INCLUDE (4 pages):

- **Overview:** Provide an overview of this field, a clear and concise description of the goals of the project, and the need for this project. Also include how your project relates to at least one of the three research focus areas.
- **Relevant Efforts:** Describe past and current efforts that are relevant to this project.
- **Goals and Methodology:** State the major goals of this project and summarize the methodologies and time frame to be used in achieving them.
- **Impact:** Describe the potential transformational impact(s) of achieving these goals. How will results, resources, or best practices be disseminated?
- **Expertise:** Description of how your research accomplishments and/or personal characteristics provide evidence of innovation or creativity.
- **Potential for Funding:** Explanation of how the proposal will lead to successful external funding from the NIH or other funding agency (provide specifics if known RFA's are available).

FUNDS AVAILABLE: It is anticipated that up to **4** grants, based on scientific merit, will be awarded during the 2015 fiscal year. Funding for the award will be limited to a maximum of **\$100,000/yr.**, and a project period of up to two years, pending appropriate progress and achieving benchmarks. Because the scope and nature of the proposed research will vary from application to application, the size of the award may vary. Funds provided under this award can be utilized for support of critical pilot projects, support for non-faculty personnel, and other expenses that are crucial to developing a competitive proposal.

REVIEW PROCEDURES: Applications will be reviewed by faculty of the SOM and potentially external faculty with appropriate expertise. Evaluation will be based on the track record of the principal investigator, the potential impact, the innovation of the proposed project, the lack of duplication with existing programs and how well the proposal fits the identified research focus area(s). The first round of review will narrow the applications to a list of no more than 8; these applicants will be invited to give a 20-minute chalk talk to the research leaders within the SOM. Of these, up to four to be awarded will be selected.

Successful applicants will be expected to provide semi-annual, written progress reports and meet with SOM leadership every six months.



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APPLICATION SUBMISSION: Applications must be submitted online via the SOM research funding website <http://www.uab.edu/medicine/home/research/funding-opportunities>. Complete the requested form fields and upload the application as one .pdf, naming the file with the last name of the PI (i.e., Vickers.pdf).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. Can faculty salary support be requested?

Answer: No-only support for non-faculty personnel can be requested.

2. If a co-investigator or a component of the project is from another institution, can support be provided?

Answer: No-support for this RFA must stay at UAB and be used internally. There are complex issues with indirects at other institutions that make it untenable to provide support outside of UAB.

3. If the investigators are proposing a project or experiments that require IRB, IACUC, FDA approval (IND approval) before the project can begin, can they use the JIT "option" and not start the regulatory paperwork unless the project is chosen for funding?

Answer: Yes.

4. Can the investigator request funding for projects that will be submitted to non-NIH entities for funding?

Answer: Yes – the investigator can send applications to other federal agencies (i.e. DOD, DARPA, NSF etc) or foundations, however highly competitive applications that are targeted to NIH are preferred.

5. Can NIH budget forms and NIH biosketch be used for this application?

Answer: Yes.

6. Are the proposals required to go through OSP?

Answer: No.

DEADLINE: 5:00 PM, FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2015.

Questions regarding scientific issues should be addressed to:

Anupam Agarwal, M.D.
Executive Vice Dean, SOM

Phone: 205-996-6650

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Interim Senior Associate Dean for Research
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Questions regarding application issues should be addressed to:

Mary Jo Pharis

Phone: 205-996-6681

Email: somresearch@uab.edu

SCHEDULE:

April 13, 2015 – Announcement

June 12, 2015 – Application Deadline

July 17, 2015 – Scientific Reviews Completed

July 24, 2015 – Administrative Review Completed

Week of August 3, 2015 – Chalk Talks

August 10, 2015 – Funding Start Date

UPCOMING REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA):

Incentive for 1 R01 Investigators to Submit 2nd R01: \$50,000/yr to investigators with novel ideas, preliminary data and/or publications. Deliverable for first year is submission of grant. Based on extramural funding agency score and critiques, additional **\$50,000** for 2nd year to address critiques, get additional preliminary data, and resubmit. Goal by year 2 is funded new R01 grant. **RFA will be released in Summer of 2015 (July).**