

Alberta Transplant Innovation Fund

Introduction

In partnership with Astellas Pharma Canada Inc. (Astellas), the University Hospital Foundation and the Alberta Economic Development and Trade, the Alberta Transplant Innovation Fund (ATIF) is pleased to invite applications from Alberta-based investigators or teams of investigators for funding to help in advancing transplant technologies, improve care for transplant patients and/or increase organ donations and the viability of donated organs. The research fund is a one year commitment. Up to a maximum of \$100,000 for one (1) year may be requested.

This request for proposals (RFP) is intended to support the creation and development of high-quality translational research initiatives that will generate innovative approaches to solving health issues in the area of transplantation. The fund is aimed at supporting pre-clinical research with *a focus on novel, discovery research and a high potential for commercialization*. The recipients of these grants will be encouraged to leverage the ATIF funding award to apply for further funding from provincial and national research grant programs (e.g. AI, CIHR, etc.). The application process will include a Letter of Intent (LOI; see below) evaluated by a review committee that includes industry representation. This will be followed by an invitation for a full application for highly rated LOIs.

Program Objectives and Important Dates

Translational research ideas should be highly innovative and hypothesis-driven, the outcome of which have the potential to alter the course of existing treatment in transplantation. The objective is to promote the production, translation and commercialization of research findings to improve the health of Albertans and/or the healthcare system.

ATIF Objectives

- 1) Advancing Alberta's transplant technologies
 - Areas of consideration could include clinical research, new treatments, diagnostics, companion diagnostics, health technology assessment, education initiatives for patients and primary care physicians, patient support services, training opportunities for surgeons in the use of robotics and new technologies, the development of a quality assurance database to monitor the outcome and quality of life of transplant patients.
 - Acceleration of Alberta's transplant technologies and innovations from research to commercialization
- 2) Providing better care for Alberta transplant patients
- 3) Validating and testing new transplant technologies from Alberta and abroad
- 4) Increasing organ donation and availability of organs

Important Dates

LOI due date: **February 20, 2017 (by 4pm)**

Notification letters to successful LOI applicants: **March 20, 2017**

Full application due date: **May 1, 2017**

Notification letters to successful full application applicants: **June 12, 2017**

Eligibility and Conditions

- Full-time faculty appointees of any Alberta-based post-secondary institution can act as principal or co-investigator
- Researchers can be a principal investigator for one application and co-investigator on one additional application. If they are not a principal investigator, they may be co-investigator on a maximum of two applications
- Each individual investigator must contribute sufficient time to the research project to ensure the achievement of its objectives
- Recipients will acknowledge funding support from ATIF in all presentations and publications that result from the funded project

Eligible Costs

- Salaries of research trainees (graduate and postdoctoral students) and other personnel whose participation is essential to the collaborative research productivity of the team
- Purchase of equipment (see below for limitations)
- Operating costs for the project, which must be distinct from those for which the team members currently receive funding
- Costs associated with data collection and maintenance of information directly related to the research project
- Administrative overhead costs, which are incidental expenses like protocol approvals, special training, packaging/shipping, set up costs, etc. that are directly related to the project

Ineligible Costs

- Purchase of major equipment (over \$10,000/year and over \$25,000 total for the duration of the research project)
- Salaries of Principal investigators
- Funding of unrelated research projects held by individual team members
- Indirect costs
- Not more than 50% of requested funds can be used for salaries of technical personnel or trainees working directly on the project

Funding is subject to a satisfactory interim progress report submitted to Alberta Transplant Innovation Fund Steering Committee after the first 6 months from receiving the award and every 12 months thereafter until the completion of the project.

LETTER OF INTENT GUIDELINES

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) that will be competitively evaluated by a review committee based on scientific merit and relevance to the goals of the ATIF fund. The LOI must not exceed three (3) pages excluding references, tables and figures. The LOI should be written with typeface no smaller than 12 point font and must include the following information:

1. Name of principal investigator and co-investigator(s) (if any)
2. Investigators(s) institution(s)
3. Project title
4. Background
5. Proposed research and its novelty

6. How the research addresses an important and unmet needs in transplantation
7. Methodology overview
8. Lay Summary
9. Budget Outline

****Please include any operational impact to AHS**

Include CV of principal investigator and co-investigator(s) (if any)

FULL PROPOSAL

Invitations will be sent out March 20, 2017 to those selected to proceed to the full application stage. Instructions for submitting full proposals will be provided at that time.

EVALUATION PROCESS

This competition has a two-step application process: a letter of intent followed by a detailed application. A **panel of external expert reviewers** will evaluate all applications submitted in response to this RFP. Recommendations on funding will be made to the Steering Committee of the Alberta Transplant Innovation Fund.

NON-CONFIDENTIALITY, NON-DISCLOSURE and INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) PROTECTION

Letters of intent will be accepted solely on a non-confidential basis, and should not contain any applicant or third party confidential information. Information pertaining to letters of intent and subsequent full proposals will not be disclosed beyond the review committee. The Terms of Reference for the ATIF award stipulate that any data generated using these funds will be evaluated by the review committee for commercial potential prior to any dissemination (publications, conferences, media etc). This ensures IP will be appropriately protected prior to results being disclosed.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, unless the Parties agree otherwise, no research project proposal shall disclose confidential information, and no research project proposal, any report or final report shall disclose the actual chemical structure of any proprietary compound or molecular entity, or any data from which the proprietary compound's or molecular entity's chemical structure may be readily determined.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THE LOI IS 4PM FEBRUARY 20, 2017.

Please submit this by email (preferably in PDF format) to:

Judi Bahl-Manager, Strategic Partnerships

judi.bahl@ahs.ca

780-407-6883