

**UPMC Competitive Medical Research Fund (CMRF)  
Fiscal Year 2018 Solicitation**

**CMRF Grant Application Instructions**

**Deadline:** All applications must be submitted electronically, in PDF format, to Ms. Selena Crawford at [sac32@pitt.edu](mailto:sac32@pitt.edu) by 11:59 pm, Monday, January 9, 2017. No paper applications will be accepted. In any given application cycle, only one application per Principal Investigator will be accepted. An individual may, however, serve as a consultant on more than one application. See detailed information on submission procedures below.

**General Instructions, Format, and Guidelines**

Font, Margins:

The font must be Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype or Georgia, and at least 11-point. Type density must be no more than 15 characters per inch, and type must be no more than six lines per inch. Margins in all directions must be at least one-half inch. Text in figures, charts, tables, legends or footnotes may be smaller in size, but no smaller than 9-point, and must be in black type and readily legible. **Any application that exceeds the stated page limits or does not conform to the font size/margin guidelines will be withdrawn from consideration without review and without appeal.**

Please complete all appropriate forms included in the CMRF Application Packet, which can be downloaded at <http://oorhs.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/CMRF2018ApplicationPacket.doc>.

The complete CMRF application should be assembled as follows and submitted as a single PDF file:

1. Checklist
2. Face Page
3. Cost Share Agreement Page
4. CMRF Eligibility Clarification Page
5. Letter of Support from applicant's Department Chair
6. Abstract Page (two copies: one copy included in the main application file, the second copy as a separate PDF file)
7. Table of Contents
8. Budget, including budget justification
9. Biographical Sketch(es) of PI and all Co-Investigators
10. Research Plan
11. Bibliography
12. Consortium/Contractual Arrangements (if applicable)
13. Appendices

**1. Checklist**

Please indicate all documents enclosed in the application on the checklist.

**2. Face Page**

The CMRF Face Page must be signed by the Principal Investigator (applicant) and the Principal Investigator's immediate supervisor. **Applications submitted without signatures will be withdrawn from consideration without review or appeal.** Please answer all questions on the Face Page. If the question is not applicable, indicate so by entering N/A.

### 3. Cost Share Agreement Page

Any funds awarded will support direct costs only; no indirect support will be provided. A CMRF award may not be used for salary support for the Principal Investigator, but investigator effort must be reflected on the budget page and must be cost shared by the department or other entity that will support such effort. Investigator salary should not be shown on the budget page.

The CMRF Cost Sharing Agreement Page must be signed by the Principal Investigator's department chair or appropriate responsibility center director (*e.g.*, division chief or institute director) who can authorize cost sharing against an Entity-02 or -04 institutional account. This signature certifies acceptance of Principal Investigator cost shared effort. The appropriate institutional account number against which the effort will be charged must also be provided. If the project is funded, cost shared effort must be reflected on the SPAR document and copies of the relevant SPAR must be provided to the CMRF administration upon request. An applicant who is currently the recipient of a mentored career development award (*e.g.*, K12, K23, *etc.*) may subsume the effort devoted to his or her CMRF project under the career development award as long as this project proposed is consistent with the career development award. Please contact Dr. Anthony Brickner, Office of Research, Health Sciences at [agb10@pitt.edu](mailto:agb10@pitt.edu) for verification of eligibility to subsume effort related to this announcement.

### 4. CMRF Eligibility Clarification Page

*This section is not an abstract*, but should be used to address the following, where applicable:

- a. **Need for funding from the CMRF for the proposed project.** Describe what role CMRF support will play in the applicant's research and career plans, future grant applications, *etc.*
- b. **Ongoing Research.** If the CMRF application represents a request for funds to extend an ongoing project into a new direction, it is essential to specify clearly how the proposed project differs from the ongoing research. The source of funding for the ongoing research should be identified, and the reason(s) why that source is not available for the proposed CMRF project should be given.
- c. **Investigator Independence.** If the applicant works in the laboratory of a senior investigator, he or she must clearly indicate how CMRF funding will be used to support an independent research program and how the proposed research differs from ongoing activities in the senior investigator's laboratory. CMRF funds are not intended to fund either the research or personnel of the senior investigator. Rather, the proposed research must be a readily portable project capable of establishing the applicant as an independent researcher at the university. (Please note: other support information and abstracts for active and pending grant applications of the senior investigator must be included in the Appendix.)

If the spaces provided are insufficient, one additional page may be included for each section of the CMRF Summary page.

### 5. Letter of Departmental Support

A letter of departmental commitment to the career development of the applicant from the applicant's department chair is required. Demonstration of this commitment will be one of the criteria used in evaluating the application. Additional letters of support, *e.g.*, from a division chief, may be included. However, letters from division chiefs, research directors, or laboratory supervisors will not be accepted in lieu of a departmental chair's letter of support.

### 6. Abstract Page

Submit two copies of the abstract – one as a stand-alone PDF file and the other incorporated into the full application packet. All co-investigators, collaborators, and consultants for the proposed CMRF project must be listed on the abstract page.

### 7. Table of Contents Page

Complete this page last. Pages should be numbered consecutively.

## 8. Budget

The standard CMRF award is up to \$25,000, to be expended over a period of up to 24 months. However, this amount can be increased to a maximum of \$40,000 if the Principal Investigator can make a compelling case that the proposed goals cannot be achieved with the standard \$25,000 award. The budget page must reflect the entire budget for the project. If the costs of the proposed project would exceed the CMRF award, the source of funds that will enable the completion of the project must be specified.

When preparing the budget, please consider the following restrictions:

1. Items of equipment exceeding \$500 must be specifically addressed in the Budget Justification section.
2. Personal computer purchase will be approved only when it can be demonstrated that the computer is essential for the proposed work.
3. Travel expenses can be budgeted as long as they are not a significant portion of the budget and only if the PI can make a compelling case that the travel is necessary, *i.e.*, that the work cannot be completed if the travel does not occur. Note that travel to attend a meeting is not allowed, unless research for the project is to be conducted at that meeting.
4. Salary support for the Principal Investigator or any other named professorial rank investigator may not be requested, but PI effort (% or calendar months) on the proposed study must be indicated on the budget page. Do not provide information regarding the salary of the PI or any other professorial rank investigator.

Please use the budget form included in the application packet. An additional continuation page may be included if the “Budget Justification” section is insufficient.

## 9. Biographical Sketches and Other Support

NIH Biographical Sketches (2015 format; [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424R-R\\_biosketch\\_VerC.docx](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SF424R-R_biosketch_VerC.docx)) must be included for the Principal Investigator and each named co-investigator (see pages I-88 and I-89 of the SF424 Application Guide, (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide/forms-d/general-forms-d.pdf>)). These named individuals are not required to have eRA Commons accounts. Applicants working within the laboratory of a more senior investigator must include a biographical sketch for that investigator, even if he or she is not listed as a co-investigator on the CMRF project. Each biographical sketch must include a personal statement that describes qualifications and expected contributions to the CMRF project. Publications listed on the biographical sketches should be restricted to the 15 most relevant to the proposed CMRF project.

Each biographical sketch must list all current and pending support. An NIH-format Other Support document that specifies the duration and annual direct costs for each of the Principal Investigator’s awards must also be included (see pages III-7 through III-10 of the Supplemental Grant Application Instructions, <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/SupplementalInstructions.pdf>). A statement addressing potential scientific or budgetary overlap with the CMRF application must be included for each source of support listed. In situations where such an overlap exists between the CMRF application and the current support of the applicant or co-investigators, the applicant must state his or her proposed action for resolution of the overlap. Likewise, for overlap that may exist if pending applications are funded, the applicant must state his or her proposed action for resolution of the overlap if both grants are awarded. If there is no such overlap, clearly state the differences between the funded research and that proposed in the CMRF application.

If any individual, including the Principal Investigator, has no other support, this should be stated explicitly. Abstracts of current grants and pending applications for each named individual must be included as Appendices.

## 10. Research Plan

The Research Plan should be prepared in the style of the current NIH R21 grant application (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r21.htm>), and contain the following sections:

**Introduction (to be included for resubmissions only).** A resubmission of a previously unfunded CMRF application must include a brief (one page maximum) introduction to the Research Plan, summarizing the relevant changes or revisions made in response to the reviewers' comments. This Introduction is not included in the page total for the Research Plan.

**Specific Aims.** One page maximum.

**Research Strategy.** This section should not exceed six single-spaced pages and should be organized as follows:

**(a) Significance**

- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
- Explain how the proposed project will enable the candidate to develop hypotheses, preliminary data, and methods necessary to successfully compete for extramural funding.

**(b) Innovation**

- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
- Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.

**(c) Approach**

- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include information on how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.
- Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
- Discuss any available preliminary studies, data, and or experience pertinent to this application as part of the Approach section.

Immediately following the Research Plan, include:

**Human Subjects** (if applicable; two-page maximum)

**Vertebrate Animals** (if applicable; two-page maximum)

Failure to include required Human Subjects or Vertebrate Animals sections will result in the application being withdrawn from consideration without review and without appeal.

Do not include Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), human Stem Cell Research Oversight Committee (hSCRO), or Committee for Oversight of Research and Clinical Training Involving Decedents (CORID) approvals in the CMRF application. However, due to the relatively short period between award notification and release of funds (approximately four weeks), applicants are strongly encouraged to prepare the requisite protocols for submission and approval well in advance of the CMRF award date July 1, contingent on approvals of relevant regulatory protocols). If a CMRF application will lead to an award, the OORHS will require copies of approval letters from all of the relevant University regulatory committees before funds will be released. The approvals must be specific for the CMRF grant

application submitted, and the Principal Investigator on the CMRF application must be the named PI on the protocol. The use of IACUC, IBC, IRB, hESCRO and/or CORID approval for research projects other than those proposed in the grant application is not permitted and will result in a delay in awarding CMRF funds until the appropriate approvals are obtained and provided to OORHS.

### **11. Bibliography** (no page limit)

### **12. Letters of Collaboration**

Include letters from collaborators who have agreed to supply facilities, equipment or reagents necessary for the proposed research.

### **13. Appendices**

This section should be used for the following items:

- a) Abstracts for currently funded research and pending applications for all named faculty-level personnel. This includes K awards held by the Principal Investigator. If the applicant works in the laboratory/research group of a more senior investigator, abstracts of the active and pending projects of that senior investigator must be included, even if this person is not a co-investigator on the CMRF project.
- b) Applicants may include copies of no more than three relevant manuscripts, accepted for publication, that describe research that they have performed that is related to the proposed work. These manuscripts should be included in the appendix material and must be in PDF format. Please note, however, that reviewers are under no obligation to read these manuscripts. Do not include submitted manuscripts (not yet accepted) or previously published papers that are freely available elsewhere (*i.e.*, available online or through the University library system).

### **Submission Process**

Complete CMRF applications must be submitted electronically, in PDF format, by 11:59 pm, **Monday, January 9, 2017**. **No exceptions to this deadline will be made, and no supplementary materials will be accepted after the deadline.** A complete application consists of two PDF files; one containing the full application, including the abstract, and the other containing the abstract only. The PDF files must not contain conversion errors and must conform to the font size/margin guidelines listed above. If conversion errors cannot be remedied, please include one representative page in Word format along with the two PDF files to demonstrate that font size/margin requirements are met. Applications should be sent to Ms. Selena A. Crawford at [sac32@pitt.edu](mailto:sac32@pitt.edu).

For more information, contact:

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