

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

BRIDGE FUNDING

ISSUED BY THE SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH FUND
ADMINISTERED BY THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA (MUSC)

RFP 2017 – B

Date of Release: August 28, 2017

Deadline for Submission: Open

Background: Amendment (Bill S54 44-38-510) to Section 2, Chapter 38, Title 44 of the 1976 SC Code was ratified on July 20, 2000 and authorized the new South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund (SCIRF) provided from a \$100 surcharge on each Driving Under the Influence (DUI) conviction. The SCIRF is administered by the SCIRF Board appointed by the Governor and is attached to MUSC for staff and administrative purposes. The law authorizes the SCIRF to utilize monies to cover basic operating and administrative costs but directed that the balance be provided for spinal cord injury (SCI) research projects.

SCI is a serious cause of disability, results in an increased lifelong risk of secondary health conditions, and is typically associated with elevated risk of mortality. Often traumatic in origin, it may also result from inflammatory, neoplastic, developmental, or rarely infectious causes. The consequences of SCI are legion, including paralysis of legs and arms, even muscles of respiration; loss of sensation and autonomic control; chronic pain; impairment of bowel, bladder, and sexual function; metabolic disorders, such as hypercalcemia; muscle spasticity with contractures of joints, fractures, and heterotopic ossification; complications such as decubitus ulcers, uncontrolled blood pressure, and frequent infections. People with SCI may face extraordinary demands due to the costs of medical care, limitations in rehabilitation resources after profound loss of mobility, and the absence of environmental supports. The families of people with SCI also face additional demands, and the costs of care to families and the residents of South Carolina are extraordinary and ongoing. The long-term goal of this research initiative is to minimize the risk and incidence of SCI, interrupt or reverse the process of SCI, and improve the health and quality of life for residents of South Carolina with SCI.

Areas of potential research interest include: basic neurobiology, including regeneration of cells and axons, modulation of inflammatory and destructive processes, prevention of injury-induced neurotoxicity or secondary injury; pre-clinical studies, including refinement of animal models of SCI; translation of pre-clinical findings into treatment, including pharmacological trials, surgical approaches, and previously unexplored treatments; clinical issues, including diagnostic assessment and monitoring, relationship to other spinal cord disorders and psychological disorders; outcomes of rehabilitation, including therapies (prosthetic, physical, occupational, speech/language, recreational), secondary health conditions, quality of life (technological solutions, functional improvement), and attendant care; epidemiology, including factors affecting incidence, availability, and quality of SCI care in South Carolina; education and prevention, including education curriculum for people and families in appropriate and adequate SCI care (classroom, career), community (prevention of alcohol-related injury, opportunities for therapy and rehabilitation), and health care providers (curriculum at South Carolina colleges and universities, professional education).

Request for Proposals: The SCIRF invites applications for *Bridge Funding* grants. The goal of this request for proposals is to provide an investigator with a research program in spinal cord injury with a research grant whose federal competing continuation application was not funded, an opportunity to obtain one year of bridge support.

Funding Mechanism: Bridge Funding Grants

Bridge Funding grants will not exceed \$75,000 over a 12-month period. The project may be basic science, applied, or translational. We are particularly interested in funding projects specifically addressing issues faced by people with SCI in South Carolina.

Eligibility and Terms of Support: *Bridge Funding* grant applications will be accepted from investigators in South Carolina who have a research program in spinal cord injury with a research grant whose federal competing continuation application was not funded. The investigator must have already unsuccessfully applied for all available institutional funds, such as departmental or university based funding. The investigator must also demonstrate the importance of continuing the line of research. Investigators must be located at a non-profit facility that is currently supported by state or federal funding in South Carolina.

Reporting/Presentations: A Technical Progress Report is due at 6 months. A Final Report is due within 60 days after termination of the grant. All reports should be submitted to the Executive Director. In addition, all applicants will be required to present their research/findings at a SCIRF meeting and/or Scientific Conference once per grant year.

Funding: *Bridge Funding* grants will not exceed \$75,000 over a 12 month period. Consideration for an award is the demonstrated need by the investigator for such funds to support the laboratory until a revised application for extramural support is funded. If the extramural proposal is funded prior to the end of the bridging funds, remaining funds must be returned. If the funds are not expended at the end of 1 year, investigators may request a no-cost extension, but approval of such a request will depend on having an encouraging review by a federal agency that suggests future funding is likely. The funds may be used to cover a maximum of 20% of the PI's salary. The SCIRF does not provide support for indirect costs and any such related costs essential to the proposed research should be included in the direct cost budget request.

Timeframes: This mechanism is open, so there is no specific deadline. The review of all *Bridge Funding* grant proposals will be completed within 60 days following the receipt of the application. The SCIRF will make money available within 30 days following approval from the Board of Directors and receipt of signed acceptance forms from successful applicants.

Review Process: *Bridge Funding* grant proposals will be reviewed by the SCIRF Scientific Directors. The SCIRF Board of Directors will consider these reviews in making all final award decisions.

Submission Address: Grant applications should be submitted in PDF form by e-mail to the SCIRF Executive Director.

Application Format: The proposal must not exceed 8 pages, not including the Face Page, Abstract or any vita/biosketch.

- I. Face Page
- II. Abstract
- III. Statement of Need addressing the following criteria:
 - A. Critique sheet reviews of the unfunded proposal
 - B. Address the specific concerns of the review panel
 - C. New and projected progress prior to resubmission

- D. Simple budget and a budget justification for the interim funds
 - E. List of the funds currently available for no cost extensions and other support
- IV. Value to the State of South Carolina (benefit to the people of the State)
- V. Biosketch (of all critical participants) – abridged NIH format

Review Criteria: *Bridge Funding* grant proposals will be reviewed based on the value of the research program to SCI research in the state of South Carolina and the likelihood that the project will receive a competitive renewal.

Number of Awards: The SCIRF anticipates making up to 4 *Bridge Funding* grant awards per year.

Awarding of Funds: Projects will be awarded by grant or contract based upon applicable South Carolina policies, procedures, and laws concerning the expenditure of State funds. Grants or contracts are made to the principal investigator's institution, not to any individual or principal investigator.

For Questions or Additional Information: Potential applicants should contact Catherine Leigh Graham, Executive Director, South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund. Questions regarding applied or clinical research should be addressed to Dr. James Krause, Scientific Director, South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund. Basic science questions should be addressed to Dr. Naren Banik, Associate Scientific Director, South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Research Fund.

Catherine Leigh Graham, MEBME

Executive Director

Email: grahacat@musc.edu

Phone: 843-614-1756

James S. Krause, PhD

Scientific Director

Email: krause@musc.edu

Phone: 843-792-1337

Naren Banik, PhD

Associate Scientific Director

Email: baniknl@musc.edu

Phone: 843-792-7594

FACE PAGE
SOUTH CAROLINA SPINAL CORD INJURY RESEARCH FUND
BRIDGE FUNDING
RESPONSE TO: RFP 2017 – B

Title of Project:

Name of Principal Investigator:

Institution:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

Is this a resubmission:

Yes
 No

Total Amount Requested:

Name of Contact Person:

Phone of Contact Person:

Signatures

Principal Investigator: _____

Authorized Institutional Official: _____