

**PAUL L. FOSTER SOM SEED GRANT PROGRAM FOR FY09:  
SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS  
APPLICATIONS DUE: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Purpose:** The intent of this new program is to support applications that will address hypothesis-driven studies in clinical medicine, translational research, and basic science. Collaborative proposals between clinical and basic science faculty in the newly established Centers of Excellence are encouraged but are not required. All collaborative proposals between clinical faculty and faculty in the Centers of Excellence will be considered regardless of focus area. Collaborations with investigators outside of the SOM are eligible for funding as long as the SOM faculty member is the Principal Investigator. The goal of the SOM Seed Grant Program is to provide a modest amount of financial support so that a principal investigator(s) (PI) can conduct preliminary or pilot investigations that will assist in obtaining external funding for future research projects conducted at TTUHSC. ***The Seed Grant Program is designed to encourage new researchers and collaborative efforts between clinical and basic science faculty.*** However, pilot investigations in fields new to presently funded investigators will be considered.

**Funding:** A total of \$100,000 is available from the Dean of the School of Medicine for the funding of Seed Grants. Grants will be administered through the Office of the Associate Dean for Research.

**Submission Eligibility:** The PI must have a primary faculty appointment and more than 50% employment in the School of Medicine (including non-tenure track) and should not be considered in training. A faculty member may submit only one application per year as a PI to the SOM Seed Grant Program. A PI on one SOM Seed grant application **may not serve as a Co-Investigator** on any other SOM Seed Grant application. A faculty member **may** serve as a Co-Investigator on more than one SOM Seed Grant application. Failure to submit a Final Report from a previous seed grant award will disqualify a PI from future awards.

**Submission Procedures:** To give faculty members experience in using the forms and format required for NIH grant applications, **faculty will be required to use the PHS 398 forms and to submit their applications electronically, either as PDF (preferable) or Microsoft Word files.** A template for the PHS 398 forms (“398\_forms\_SeedGrant.doc”), which was developed expressly for the TTUHSC SOM Seed Grant program, may be downloaded as a MS Word file from the website below, as can the required Route Sheet. The application itself (i.e., the document created in the Seed Grant template) must be e-mailed to satisfy submission requirements. The Seed Grant Route Sheet, which is also available from the URL below) may be faxed, hand-delivered, or e-mailed (with electronic signatures). Please see the “Submission Deadline” section below for more information. Forms are available from:

<http://www.ttuhschool.edu/elpaso/research/>

Please review the following “Grantsmanship Advice for Seed Grant Applications” and “Submission Checklist” before submitting an application. Late or incomplete applications or those that exceed page limitations will be administratively withdrawn without review. The Route Sheet must be filled completely, including involvement of human subjects, animals, biohazardous material(s), recombinant DNA, and radioactivity, etc., as well as the status of required committee approvals.

Applications for projects that will require committee approvals (IRB, ACUC, etc.) may be submitted prior to receiving such final approvals; however, failure to submit to the TTUHSC Office of Sponsored Programs all required committee approvals *by November 1* (two months after the beginning date of the SOM Seed Grant) will result in forfeiture of the award.

**Application Contents:** The file “398\_forms\_SeedGrant.doc” includes all materials that you will need to generate an application for a School of Medicine seed grant. Replace the text that appears in red throughout the document with your own project’s content and narrative; be sure to change the text color to black before submission. Please use at least a 10-point font size for your research plan and other narrative contents.

Applicants who have previously prepared grant applications using the PHS 398 forms may adapt existing files, as long as the following pages and other materials are included in a single Word or PDF file:

- Face Page
- Description/ Performance Site(s) page
- Personnel/ Human Embryonic Stem Cells page
- Research Grant Table of Contents page
- Detailed Budget page
- Budget Justification page
- Biographical Sketch (limited to 2 pages for each investigator)
- Resources page

In addition to the pages listed above, the Seed Grant application file must include the following sections:

Research plan (limited to 8 pages), including

- A. Specific Aims
- B. Background and Significance
- C. Preliminary Observations
- D. Research Design and Methods
- E. Human Subjects (Including “Targeted/ Planned Enrollment Table,” if appropriate)
- F. Vertebrate Animals (if appropriate)
- G. Prospects for Future Funding
- H. Additional Grant Funds Justification (if appropriate)
- I. Previous Seed Grant Support
- J. Current and Pending Support
- K. Letters of Support from Consultants (if necessary); note that these letters must be electronic so that they can be added to the application file
- L. Literature Cited

Appendices may be added to the same Word or PDF file, or they may be sent as one separate file, but they must be submitted electronically as well. **Please include the PI’s name in all electronic file names** (e.g., smithSeedGrant.doc or smithSeedGrant.pdf). Please note that only the primary and secondary reviewers will receive a second appendices file.

**Submission Deadlines:** [**Administration of grant?**]

- \_\_\_\_\_: Electronic copies of *the SOM Seed Grant application file and appendices* are due to Dawn Bender in the office of the Associate Vice President for Research. These files may be e-mailed to Ms. Bender or delivered on a CD-ROM. You may send your application and appendices in PDF or PDF format, making sure to include the PI’s name in the file name(s). Word documents will be re-saved in PDF format before they are sent out for review.
- \_\_\_\_\_: The *signed Route Sheet* is due to Dawn Bender, via fax, mail, hand-delivery or e-mail (if the sheet and its signatures are all electronic).
- **[Ms. Bender’s contact information:** E-mail—dawn.bender@ttuhsc.edu; Office—2B106 HSC Building; Mailing address—MS 6202, TTUHSC, 3601 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 79430; Fax # 806-743-2656; Phone # 806-743-2556.]

**Grant Period:** Awards will start on \_\_\_\_\_ and expire on \_\_\_\_\_. After one year, the project is eligible for a one-year competitive renewal. The renewal requires a second grant submission that includes a positive progress report, evidence of productivity (external presentation or manuscript) and is dependent on availability of funds.

**Budget:** This program will support outstanding proposals with a maximum funding limit of \$25,000 per proposal. Collaborative proposals between clinicians and basic scientists will be considered for support in excess \$25,000 but not more than \$40,000. The total number of proposals funded will be determined by the quality of the proposals and their budget requirements. It is imperative that the budget be realistic and adequately justified.

**Seed Grant funds can be used for research supplies and salaries for direct technical support. Travel expenses, equipment, computers/software, and faculty or graduate student salaries may not be paid from Seed Grant funds.** No funds may be used to pay clinical charges to another department. The Committee will carefully review the proposed budget relative to the research plan and recommend budget amounts accordingly.

***Application Review:*** A **pre-submission peer review** of each grant submission is **required**. This reviewer may be any scientist selected by the PI. The reviewer must sign the Route Sheet indicating that the Peer Reviewer has read the application and reviewed it with the PI. The goal of this pre-submission peer review is to provide applicants with suggestions and commentary that may strengthen the project's design and the proposal's content and to improve the overall quality of Seed Grant submissions.

The review process is similar to that of the major external agencies. A primary and secondary reviewer reviews each application. While scientific merit will be the primary factor in judging the merit of a given proposal, other factors will also be considered (e.g. encouragement of new investigators; the PI's extramural and intramural funding history; etc). A written critique will be prepared by each reviewer, and numerical priority ranking will be given by all reviewers following discussion of each project.

## GRANTSMANSHIP ADVICE FOR SEED GRANT PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

The following information was prepared by the Faculty Research Committee as a supplement to the Submission Instructions. It is intended to help applicants prepare more competitive seed grant applications by avoiding several common mistakes observed during previous reviews.

1. Write your proposal so that it is understandable to reviewers who may be unfamiliar with the subject area of your proposal. Because the reviewers are unlikely to be experts in your field, it is imperative that you clearly and concisely explain the background, rationale, and long-range objectives of your project. You must also avoid the use of jargon and acronyms, as they are usually confusing and ambiguous (e.g., TPA means total parenteral alimentation to a nutritionist while it refers to a phorbol ester for an endocrinologist). Please use at least a 10-point font size.
2. Use your colleagues as a “sounding board” for your research plan before beginning the process of writing. It is also helpful to have one or two colleagues read and critically evaluate the application before you submit it. You must have a peer review for your application, and his or her name. The peer reviewer’s signature on the route sheet is mandatory.
3. Convince the reviewers of a reasonable probability that extramural funding agencies are or will be interested in the project. The purpose of the seed grant program is to provide seed money so that investigators can obtain data to strengthen applications to external funding sources. Extramural funding can be from many sources such as NIH, NSF, USDA, drug companies, private foundations, public charities, and so forth. The Faculty Research Committee will not approve seed grant applications for project that are not likely to continue beyond the period of the seed research project.
4. Be realistic (not overly ambitious) in the scope of your proposal. The specific research results that are required to justify a broader long-range project should constitute the scope of the proposed research. Remember, a seed grant is for one year only and involves only a relatively small budget. It is therefore important to focus the proposal on an essential but manageable aspect of a long-range project. For the same reason, you must avoid the temptation to condense a comprehensive proposal (such as an NIH grant application) into a seed grant. Indeed, a common error is to “cram” an entire 3- to 5-year proposal into a seed grant application. These proposals receive lower scores because they leave the impression that the PI is unfocused and doesn’t have an effective plan to achieve extramural funding. However, seed grants that present an overview of a comprehensive project and propose to focus on an important specific aim usually do well in review. Similarly, proposals that address one or two pivotal criticisms of an extramural grant review (such as an NIH summary statement) also tend to do well in review.
5. Read the instructions carefully.
6. If you would like additional information about the review process, a sample “SEED RESEARCH GRANT EVALUATION FORM” and “INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION FOR SEED GRANT REVIEWERS” are available from the Office of Research and the Graduate School, Room 2B106.
7. The SOM Faculty Research Committee understands that fully electronic Seed Grant submission and the use of PHS 398 forms will likely require some tolerant transition for faculty, committee members, and reviewers alike. Nonetheless use of the PHS 398 format will provide new investigators with valuable experience and will enable experienced investigators to use existing materials. Moreover, all federally funded grant programs and many privately funded ones will soon require only electronic submission, which greatly facilitates the review process. All faculty who submit SOM Seed Grant applications will be asked to evaluate the new submission system, and every effort will be made to continue to use a submission system that is practical, user-friendly, and prepares TTUHSC investigators to seek further support for their projects. Please feel free to contact a member of the SOM Faculty Research Committee with questions or comments. Direct questions about technical issues related to form completion to Betsy Jones, Ed.D., 806-743-1100 x233, [betsy.jones@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:betsy.jones@ttuhsc.edu).

## Submission Checklist

Please prepare your application document using a size 10 font or larger. Give the project a title with no more than 81 characters. Consecutively number all pages except materials included in the Appendix.

***Your application file must include the following items in this order:***

- o Route sheet (use required form) – Fax, mail, hand-deliver, or e-mail (with electronic signatures) this form to Dawn Bender

***E-mail one file containing the following information & sections***

*PHS 398 forms*

- o Face Page
- o Description/ Performance Site(s) page
- o Personnel/ Human Embryonic Stem Cells page (please note additional required information about the Peer Reviewer)
- o Research Grant Table of Contents page
- o Detailed Budget page
- o Budget Justification page
- o Biographical Sketch (limited to 2 pages for each investigator)
- o Resources page

*Research Plan*

- o Specific Aims
- o Background and Significance
- o Preliminary Observations
- o Research Design and Methods

*Other Information*

- o Human Subjects (including the Targeted/Planned enrollment form, if appropriate)
- o Vertebrate Animals (if appropriate)
- o Prospects for Future Funding
- o Additional Grant Funds Justification (if appropriate)
- o Previous Seed Grant Support
- o Current and Pending Support
- o Letters of Support from Consultants (if necessary); note that these letters must be electronic so that they can be added to the application file
- o Literature Cited

If appropriate, you may submit Appendices in the same file as the application or in a second electronic file. It may include such items as:

- o Copies of committee approvals (NOT the application) from IRB, ACUC, custom antibodies, IBC, RDBC, radioactivity sub-license
- o External funding agencies' interest
- o Significant publications relevant to this project

Appendices will be distributed only to the primary and secondary reviewers. Unsolicited items will not be distributed to reviewers. **The SOM Faculty Research Committee and the Seed Grant Review Committee will strictly adhere to these guidelines.** Applications not in compliance will be administratively withdrawn, and not reviewed.

If you have questions, contact Ms. Allie Ford in the Office of the Associate Dean for Research in El Paso at \_\_\_\_\_ or members of the SOM Faculty Research Committee.