Seed Grant Funding to Catalyze
UTEP-TTUHSC El Paso Joint Research Projects

Application Submission Deadline: April 1, 2021, 3 p.m. Mountain Time
Submit Application to: OVPRseedgrants.ep@ttuhsc.edu

Program Information

The Offices of the Vice President for Research at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) are pleased to announce a request for proposals in accordance to guidance of the joint research seed grant-funding program. The overall goal of the program is to encourage the development of new inter-institutional early stage research projects that have a high promise of leading to extramural research funding, as well as high-quality peer-reviewed publications and presentations. This program has the strong support and encouragement from Presidents Wilson and Lange and will help foster increased inter-institutional collaboration.

The funding will catalyze the development of new inter-institutional research teams or stimulate new ideas from existing teams. The eligible scope of work includes biomedical, translational and/or clinical research projects from UTEP and TTUHSC El Paso faculty members. Funding cannot be used to support or supplement research with current or previous external funding. The applicants must clearly and convincingly show that the proposed project does not overlap with currently or previously funded research.

If human or animal subjects are included in the project, then Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care Use Committee (IACUC) protocols must be submitted to the appropriate committee(s) for review prior to submitting the grant application. Approvals must be obtained from the relevant committee, either UTEP or TTUHSC, by the project start date; otherwise, the award will be forfeited.

Eligibility

The Co-Principal Investigators (PI) is limited to one from each campus:
- must have a faculty appointment and be a full-time compensated employee of UTEP or TTUHSC El Paso.
- must meet the requirements for PI status in accordance to the UTEP's or TTUHSC El Paso’s policy by the application due date listed above.
- additional collaborators/co-investigators are permitted, but only one PI from each university per application; no more than one application per PI.

Funding Information
Project Period: one year, with the earliest start date of May 1, 2021.

Maximum grant request: up to $25,000 per year per joint project (maximum $12,500 per institution) for up to 1 year; the amount awarded may be less than the amount requested based on the reviewers’ recommendations.

Allowable costs: research reagents, supplies and research core services, including animal per diem charges; research equipment (<$5,000), salary and applicable fringe benefits for direct research staff or students that are currently employed by UTEP or TTUHSC El Paso.

Examples of unallowable costs: faculty salary and fringe benefits, travel expenses, publication costs, computers, iPads, cell phones, clinical services, sub-awards to other institutions/agencies, external contractual services that are available within each institution (e.g., core facilities, Laboratory Animal Resource Center, etc.).

Application Instructions (form provided below)

General Information

- All required sections and fields must be completed.
- Incomplete or incorrectly completed applications will be administratively rejected.

Project Information and Abstract (p. 1 of application form)

- Please elaborate on how the proposed project does not overlap with currently or previously funded research and represents a new and collaborative direction.
- If the project requires IRB or IACUC approval, select ‘Yes.’ You will be required to enter the date of IRB/IACUC submission, as applicable.
- The “Grant Amount Requested” field at the bottom of the first page will auto-populate from the budget totals on the second and third pages.
- The project start and end dates are pre-populated and cannot be changed.

Budget and Budget Justification (pp. 2-3 of application form)

- Requested amount must not exceed $25,000 per year for up to 1 years. Each institution will fund its own portion of the work, with a maximum budget of $12,500 per institution.
- The “Category Subtotal” and “Total Direct Costs” fields will automatically sum the line item amounts.
- You may combine similar items in one budget line item, e.g., tissue culture supplies and reagents, western blotting reagents, and provide a more detailed description in the Budget Justification section.
- The Budget Justification must include a concise but well-justified description, which clearly describes the relevance and rationale for each of the items being requested and how the items are essential to the project.

Project Description (p. 4 – 9; six pages maximum; Arial 11-point font; 0.75” or greater margins)

Specific Aims – up to 1 page
- brief background and definition of the research question.
- hypotheses and specific aims of the proposed research.
**Significance & Innovation** – up to 1 page
importance of the problem and critical barrier to progress.
how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, human health, and/or clinical practice.
relevance to the El Paso region or other pertinent populations.
discuss how these preliminary data are critical for a subsequent grant proposals.

**Research Strategy and Methods** – 4 pages, not to exceed 6 pages for Project Description
conceptual background, including relevant prior work and the rationale for the project (e.g., what will be learned, why it is important, etc.).
key experiments or procedures to be performed; include methods/mechanisms of data collection and methods for analysis and interpretation of results
timeline of work to be completed during the project period

**References Cited**- no limit

Biosketches for Co-PIs and Faculty Co-investigators/collaborators

- follow current NIH biosketch format; 5 pages maximum.

**Submission Method**

- The completed application must be emailed as a single merged pdf file to OVPRseedgrants.ep@ttuhsc.edu by the due date and time listed above.

**Application Tips and Review Criteria**

- Is there a clear description of how this project is a new avenue of research and that the project does not overlap with existing or previously funded projects?

- Are the goals, objectives and expected results stated clearly, and are they reasonable for the project amount and period?

- Is the research plan clearly described and does it reflect the goals and objectives of the project?

- If the proposed research is completed, does the project have a high probability of obtaining extramural support? Have those funding opportunities been identified?

- Do the PI’s clearly describe the significance and merit of the research?

- Are possible barriers or technical difficulties addressed adequately and are alternative plans or solutions provided?

- Do the PI’s (and collaborators) have the experience and expertise needed to successfully complete the project?

- Does the project further the missions of UTEP and TTUHSC El Paso?
Grant Administration

- The Co-PI team is responsible for:
  - Administering grant funds in accordance with seed grant and UTEP or TTUHSC El Paso institutional policies.
  - Submitting required reports by the due dates.
  - Successfully completing the project and expending all grant funds by the project end date.
    - All expenditures must be completed and fully invoiced by the grant end date.
    - No more than one (1) Budget Revision per grant year may be submitted for review and approval.
  - Applying to an external funding source within one year of the completion date of the project.
  - Submitting 1 or more peer-reviewed publications with PIs as first or corresponding authors on the work supported by this seed grant.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I have current external funding or if I have a current start-up package?
A: Yes.

Q: Am I eligible to apply if I'm a previous recipient of a UTEP or TTUHSC El Paso seed grant or mini-seed grant?
A: Yes.

Q: May I include study participant stipends?
A: Yes.

Q: Are salary and fringe benefits for the PI or other faculty allowed?
A: No.

Q: May the PI or other faculty/staff receive monetary compensation (of any kind)?
A: No.

Q: May I include a subaward in the budget category?
A: No.

Q: Are publication costs an allowable expense?
A: No.

Q: Will review critiques be provided?
A: No, but the Vice Presidents for Research are available to meet with applicants whose projects were not selected for funding to provide guidance and advice toward a future application.

Q: When I submit my application, will someone pre-review it and let me know if I’m missing anything?
A: No, the PI is responsible for completing the application according to the instructions.
Q: Will I receive a confirmation email when I submit my application?
A: Yes, you will receive a confirmation email within one business day of your submission.

Q: Is there any reason you would accept late applications?
A: No.

Additional Questions?

Please email additional questions to ORSPRA@utep.edu or OVPRseedgrants.ep@ttuhsc.edu.

See next pages for Application Form
Application for UTEP-TTUHSC El Paso Joint Seed Grant Research Projects

Project Title:

Co-Principal Investigator (UTEP): Name, title, department, contact information

Co-Principal Investigator (TTUHSC El Paso): Name, title, department, contact information

Project Abstract (follow NIH guidelines and limits):

Total Funds Requested ($):

UTEP Portion ($):
TTUHSC El Paso Portion ($):

Co-PI Signatures and Date:
PROPOSED BUDGET & JUSTIFICATION

A. Permanent Equipment (not to exceed $5,000):

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Total Equipment $ __

B. Supplies and reagents (itemize):

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Total Reagents and Supplies $ ____

C. Research Services (core facility, animal charges, etc. - refer to guidelines for restrictions).

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Total Research Services $ __
D. Research personnel salaries and benefits (refer to guidelines for restrictions)

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Total Salary and Benefits $ __

E. Other Items

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Total Other $ __

GRANT TOTAL FOR PROJECT: $____

Budget justification:
pp. 4 and following: follow the format and page limits defined above

Project Description (6 pages maximum; Arial 11-point, 0.75” margins)

References Cited (unlimited)

Biosketches for PIs and faculty co-investigators