

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CURE TAKING FLIGHT AWARD

Promoting the Careers of Young Investigators

CURE seeks to promote the careers of young investigators to allow them to develop a research focus independent of their mentor(s). Researchers may propose basic or clinical studies, but this award mechanism is not intended to support clinical trials. Research that involves collaboration and a multidisciplinary approach is desirable. Applicant will be required to discuss how this avenue of research is independent from his or her mentor’s research, and will lead him or her to a path of independent epilepsy research. We encourage studies that will provide new directions for epilepsy therapy, prevention and, ultimately, a cure and that will allow applicants to collect the data necessary to support grant application to the National Institutes of Health or similar granting agency. Requests may be made for up to \$100,000 for one year.

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PRIORITY AREAS

The following 2018 priority areas reflect CURE’s focus on advances that have the potential to truly transform and save lives. Prevention and disease modification/elimination are critical goals and consistent with our mission.

- Transformative research to enhance our understanding of the cellular, molecular, genetic and systems-level mechanisms that lead to any of the epilepsies, facilitating the continued investigation of disease-modifying or preventative strategies

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- Innovative approaches that can prevent, modify and/or arrest the development of acquired epilepsy after stroke, tumor, viral infection, etc.*
- Research that will inform the development of novel therapies to prevent onset or halt the progression of the severe pediatric epilepsies
- Research focused on new, effective treatments for the >30% of the epilepsy population who are pharmacoresistant
- Novel research that furthers our understanding of the causes and ultimate elimination of SUDEP
- Translational, clinical, and clinically-informed basic research that will facilitate elevated understanding of the cellular-, molecular-, and systems-level mechanisms that underlie the relationships between sleep and epilepsy.

**Due to the exciting launch of our Post-Traumatic Epilepsy Team Science Initiative in collaboration with the Department of Defense, this priority area has been slightly revised to exclude epilepsy as a result of head injury.*

Based on CURE's current research objectives, lower priority will be given for research in the following areas:

- Research that focuses solely on a comorbid condition without also seeking to address/understand the accompanying epilepsy
- Research that focuses solely on improving localization of the epileptic seizure focus

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You must fall into one of the following categories to be eligible for the Taking Flight Award:

- A senior postdoctoral fellow who has a minimum of 3 years postdoctoral experience
- A clinical fellow who is a Neurology Resident in his/her Neurology training and considering Epilepsy Fellowships
- Newly appointed faculty within one year of having completed postdoctoral training

Individuals from any country are eligible to apply; you do not have to be a US citizen or working in the US to apply for this award. All materials must be submitted in English.

BUDGET

Requests may be made for up to \$100,000 for one year. Funding requests may include salary support for the PI, technical staff and/or collaborators; supplies, animal costs, publication fees etc.; and travel to an epilepsy-related conference if the PI is presenting his/her CURE-funded research. Funds are not to be used to purchase equipment. Indirect costs are not supported.

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2018 FUNDING CYCLE DETAILS

In 2018, CURE will issue one request for proposals for the Taking Flight award.

2018 Taking Flight Award Timeline

Activity	Approximate Date
Letter of Intent Deadline	Monday, January 8 th , 2018 – 9pm ET
Full Application Invitations	Wednesday, February 21 st , 2018
Full Application Deadline	Wednesday, March 28 th , 2018 – 9pm ET
Anticipated Award Announcement	July 2018
Anticipated Project Start Date	September 2018

LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI should clearly and succinctly outline the hypothesis to be tested, the specific aims, and provide a brief description of the research plan according to the guidelines in this announcement.

Letter of Intent Instructions:

Below are instructions for the required **scientific summary**, **future directions** and **award relevance** sections, which together can be no longer than two (2) pages in length.

LOIs exceeding two pages of text will not be reviewed.

- 1) **Scientific Summary:** Clearly and succinctly outline the hypothesis and specific aims, and provide a brief description of how the proposed research plan aligns with CURE's mission and with CURE's desire to push epilepsy research forward by leaps rather than by incremental steps (1-page maximum).
- 2) **Future Directions:** Describe what next steps will be taken once the goals of your proposed project have been achieved. (1/2-page maximum, including spaces)
- 3) **Award Relevance:** Explain how this avenue of research is independent from your mentor's research, and how will it lead to a path of independent epilepsy research. Please make sure to name your mentor(s) somewhere in this section. (1/2-page maximum, this includes spaces)

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A few things to note:

- It is important to keep in mind that a key factor that reviewers consider when assessing applications is feasibility. Lower scores will be given to proposals that are not realistically achievable within a 1-year timeframe. The “Future Directions” section enables you to explain how your research will progress once the goals of your proposed project have been achieved.
- Graphs and charts do not count towards the two-page text description of your project.
- References are not required at the LOI phase. However, if you decide to include references they do not count towards the page limitation.
- We no longer require LOIs to include lay summaries since lay reviewers now only participate in the review of full proposals.

PROPOSALCENTRAL INSTRUCTIONS

LOIs must be submitted through proposalCENTRAL (<https://proposalcentral.altum.com>). In order to begin an application, applicants will need to create a professional profile, if one does not already exist.

Instructions for each section of the application in proposalCENTRAL:

- 1) *Title Page*: Enter proposal title (maximum 150 characters, including spaces).
- 2) *Download Templates & Instructions*: Find a copy of the guidelines for your reference.
- 3) *Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal*: Follow the instructions if you want to grant access to any other individuals.
- 4) *Applicant/PI*: This section should auto-populate from the applicant’s professional profile. Double-check that the information is complete and correct. If it is not, click Edit Professional Profile to update the information. Indicate whether you are a senior postdoctoral fellow, a clinical fellow, or a new faculty member.
- 5) *Institution & Contacts*: Information should auto-populate from applicant’s profile.
- 6) *Keywords*: Add at least 3 keywords that best describe the specific focus of your research proposal.
- 7) *Current and Pending Support*: List all current and pending support for you and any co-investigators. Pending support includes grants that have been submitted but for which decisions have not yet been communicated. Current and pending support is required for the PI and co-PI, but is not required for collaborators.
- 8) *Attach LOI and Biosketch*: Once the LOI is finalized per the instructions below, attach by uploading the PDF into this section of proposalCENTRAL. You should also upload your biosketch into Section 8 of the application. While your biosketch can be in NIH format, please note that this formatting is not required.

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- 9) *Validate*: The system will check for required components that have not been completed. Applicants will not be able to submit until all required components are completed.
- 10) *Submit*: Hit Submit after your application has been successfully validated.

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

- Type font: 12-point
- Type density: No more than 15 characters per inch (including spaces). For proportional spacing, the average for any representative section of text should not exceed either 15 characters per inch or 114 characters per line.
- Spacing: Single-spaced between lines of text, no more than five lines of type within a vertical inch.
- Margins: Minimum of 0.5-inch top, bottom, right, and 1-inch left.

Inquiries: Questions regarding these guidelines are welcome and should be directed to Liz Higgins at Liz.Higgins@CUREepilepsy.org or 312-255-1801.

APPLICANT FAQs

Answers to a series of frequently asked questions may be found below. If after reviewing additional clarification is needed, please reach out to Liz Higgins at Liz.Higgins@CUREepilepsy.org.

Q Are international applicants eligible to apply?

A Yes, international applicants are eligible to apply for CURE grants. All application materials must be submitted in English and should be written with a clear hypothesis and specific aims as is consistent with the U.S. grant making system.

Q Are multiple researchers from the same institution allowed to apply for the same grant?

A Yes. There is no limit to the number of researchers from the same institution who can apply for the same grant.

Q I'm interested in submitting a LOI for an open CURE award with a scientist who is currently funded by CURE. Is this allowed?

A Yes, you can apply for an open award as long as you would no longer be receiving salary from the current award by the start date of the new award for which you are applying. Grantees cannot receive funding on two different awards at the same time.

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Q I was invited to submit a full application last year, but was not awarded funding. I have addressed the concerns voiced in the reviews of my original application and would like to reapply. Can I reapply, and if so, what is the process?

A Yes, we encourage you to reapply. However, you must go through CURE's standard application process. The first step is to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI).

Q I received a CURE grant in the past. Can I apply again?

A Yes. You are welcome to apply for a grant as a current/former CURE grantee. It should be noted, however, that a current grantee cannot receive funding on two different awards at the same time. So, you can apply for a new award as long as the funding for the new award would begin after your current award has ended.

Q Can I apply for an award if I am an active reviewer for CURE?

A Yes. If you are an active reviewer you can still apply for an award. We will just make sure that you are not assigned to applications in the award category for which you applied.

Q Can I submit more than one application in the same cycle?

A Yes, if the two applications have completely different hypothesis and specific aims.

Q Does CURE only fund academic laboratories?

A CURE funds research from academic and non-academic laboratories. We fund researchers working at universities, companies and non-profit research institutions.

Q If I am submitting with another researcher, do we both need to apply?

A CURE welcomes collaborative proposals with more than one principal investigator. However, one application must be submitted on behalf of the collaboration, under one PI's account in proposalCENTRAL.

Q Can multidisciplinary funding be split between two institutions?

A Yes, funding can be split amount multiple institutions. However, CURE will only contract with the primary institution, which will be responsible for negotiating subcontracts with the institutions of any collaborators/co-PIs involved with the project. CURE requires detailed budgets outlining the allocation of funds to each institution.

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Q Who can receive salary from the grant?

A Grant funds can be allocated to cover the salaries of investigators, postdocs, and graduate students in relation to the percentage of effort spent on the project, as well as research supplies and some travel expenses (see below). **Indirect costs are not covered.**

Q Can grant funds be used for travel expenses?

A Yes. There is a travel cap of \$1,500 USD for international applicants and \$1,000 USD for U.S. and Canadian applicants per year which can be budgeted for a maximum of 2 investigators (the PI and Co-PI). If awarded funds, CURE encourages all grantees to attend the annual AES meeting in December. Additional funds outside of the award will not be given to attend this event.

Q If I can't submit by the deadline, can I request an extension?

A No, CURE does not provide deadline extensions.