



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

CURE INNOVATOR AWARD

Promoting Innovation

The CURE Innovator Award supports the exploration of a highly innovative, often risky new concept or untested theory that addresses an important problem relevant to epilepsy. The proposed research must reflect ideas substantially different from those being pursued by anyone in the epilepsy research field. The program is not intended to support the logical progression of an already established research project but, instead, allows Principal Investigators (PIs) the opportunity to pursue radically unconventional, paradigm-shifting hypotheses. This award mechanism supports high-risk studies that have the potential to reveal entirely new areas of epilepsy research. Research completed through an Innovator Award must provide sufficient preliminary data to enable the PI to prove or disprove their groundbreaking, original, and/or unconventional hypothesis and have the potential, if the scope of work is successful, to move epilepsy research forward by leaps rather than by incremental steps.

Preliminary data is not necessary to receive this grant but may be included.

Innovator Award applications will be evaluated based on:

- Importance of the problem
• Novelty and innovation of the hypothesis and/or proposed methodology
• Magnitude of the potential impact of the work
• Logic of the experimental plan and likelihood of some success

Requests may be made for up to \$50,000 for one year.

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### AREAS OF INTEREST

This program awards seed grants to researchers submitting innovative proposals that will provide new directions for epilepsy disease modifying therapies, prevention and, ultimately, a cure. We specifically encourage studies that may not be currently fundable by other agencies or other mechanisms because of their preliminary, innovative or unconventional nature.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

This award is available to both established and early career investigators\*. Researchers who serve on CURE’s Scientific Advisory Council are ineligible to apply for or sponsor a grant for the duration of their term. International applicants are welcome. All materials must be submitted in English.

*\* Generally, early career investigators are university faculty at the assistant professor level (or hold an equivalent position in a non-university research organization). Established investigators are university faculty at the associate professor level or above. Post-doctoral fellows may not apply for this award.*

### BUDGET

Requests may be made for up to \$50,000 for one year. Funding requests may include salary support for the PI, technical staff and/or collaborators; supplies, animal costs, 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.

### 2018 FUNDING CYCLE DETAILS

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

**2018 Innovator Award Timeline:**

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

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### 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** and **future directions** 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 ½-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)

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:* Download LOI guidelines and other available instructions (if provided) as needed.

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- 3) *Enable Other Users to Access this Proposal:* Use this optional section to grant access to a collaborator or co-investigator.
- 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 an early career or established investigator.
- 5) *Institution & Contacts:* Information should auto-populate from applicant's profile.
- 6) *Collaborators/Co-Principal Investigators:* Please enter information for any co-investigators or collaborators, if applicable.
- 7) *Keywords:* Select at least 3 keywords from the list that best describe the specific focus of your research proposal.
- 8) *Current and Pending Support:* List all current and pending support for you and any co-investigators. Pending support includes any grant applications that you have 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.
- 9) *Attach LOI:* Once the LOI is finalized per the instructions below, attach by uploading the PDF into this section of proposalCENTRAL.
- 10) *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.
- 11) *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](mailto: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](mailto:Liz.Higgins@CUREepilepsy.org).

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**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.

**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?**

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- 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.
- 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.