

Request for Planning Grant Applications: Fall 2009
Planning the Future of Regenerative Medicine in Atlanta

*The Georgia Tech/Emory Center (GTEC) for the Engineering of Living Tissues
and The Atlanta Clinical and Translational Science Institute,
Established by an NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA)*

Letter of Intent due Sept 1, 2009 for new proposals, Proposal due Sept 15, 2009

Introduction

The Georgia Tech/Emory Center (GTEC) for the Engineering of Living Tissues and the Atlanta Clinical and Translational Science Institute (ACTSI) have partnered in the establishment of this interinstitutional grant program for regenerative medicine.

GTEC's central mission is to nurture and seed the formation of inter-disciplinary research ideas and teams that will generate large, competitive team and/or center proposals in the next two to four years. Because of the multifaceted nature of the field, research projects require team approaches combining areas of expertise.

Last year, 5 planning grants were awarded, three of which were renewed for a second year of funding in summer 2009 based on excellent progress towards building successful extramural proposals and inter-disciplinary teams in the area of Regenerative Medicine. This call for planning grants is aimed at **new groups intending to pursue a multi-disciplinary project** in the area of regenerative medicine that has the potential for multi-investigator extramural funding in a 2-3-year time horizon

Deadlines

Letters of Intent for new proposals are due Sept 1, 2009. New grants are due Sept 15, 2009.

Background

Regenerative medicine has the potential to revolutionize health care and provide therapeutics for currently untreatable conditions. Several compelling challenges/ideas/research themes related to regenerative medicine remain to be explored including, for example:

- functional or molecular imaging as it pertains to assessing tissue function/physiology, wound healing, and angiogenesis
- understanding the role of inflammation and the immune system in the healing response, in transplanted cell fate, and in regeneration
- adaptive or rationally designed materials for endogenous repair or reconstruction of tissues or imaging, and/or biomolecular reporters for non-invasive monitoring of tissue health and pathologies.

Goals

The goals of this request for applications are to: (1) foster research that will unearth ideas and/or themes that will be the foundation of team-based or center proposals; (2) develop collaborative teams around which the larger proposals can be formed; and (3) produce preliminary data that will support the proposals and establish a track record for the team. This RFA may be viewed as being a **planning grant** for a larger, multi-disciplinary proposal to be submitted for external funding.

Eligibility

Only permanent, full time faculty in the professorial ranks (assistant, associate, full) may apply.

Budgets

Awards will range from **\$50,000 to \$100,000 in direct costs for the first year** with the possibility of similar

level of support for the 2nd and 3rd years subject to meeting the eligibility conditions for renewal as described below. Teams consisting of members from more than one institution are strongly encouraged. Funds may be used for salary and fringe benefit support of faculty, graduate students and other research staff, but may not be used for general staff or administrative support. Operating supplies, minor equipment items, and travel directly associated with the research activity are eligible for support. Publication expenses will not be supported. If involving animal or human work, funding will only be released after IACUC or IRB approvals are obtained for the work.

Criteria

Proposals will be selected based on the following criteria: (1) scientific excellence, (2) likelihood of obtaining external funding, (3) formation of interinstitutional teams that involve an interdisciplinary approach, (4) the strength of the team, and (5) potential for clinical relevance. Such proposals must be submitted by teams comprising 4-6 investigators (groups larger than 6 are ok, but groups smaller than 4 are not eligible), identifying the lead investigator or co-lead investigators. Investigators may participate in more than one team, but cannot be PIs on more than one proposal. Proposals should explain the importance of the proposed area to regenerative medicine (note that the areas listed in the background are example areas and while they may serve as possible areas for a proposal, they are not intended to limit the areas that will be considered in any way). Additionally, proposals should include a plan for submitting a competitive, external, team or center based proposal in the 2nd or 3rd year of the project and identifying appropriate opportunities for its submission (NSF ERC/STC, DARPA, NIH program projects, BRPs or Translational Research Grants). Projects may be renewed based on demonstrable progress towards large proposal submission, such as summary statements of submitted proposals.

Format

Proposals should not exceed five pages, excluding a cover page, a budget page and a two-page NIH format biosketch of co-investigators. The cover page must contain the project title, names of the investigators, amount requested, a one-paragraph summary, and the approval/signature of the department chair of the PI/Co-PI. Eligibility for renewal in 2010 will be contingent upon clear demonstration of satisfactory progress towards submitting a multi-investigator proposal and availability of funds.

New grant proposals must include:

- Significance
- Description of the project and subprojects and how the science may be translated to pre-clinical or clinical studies
- Team for this proposal and for the planned center/team proposal
- Goals and milestones, including submission plan for smaller R01 scale proposals along the way.
- Timeline of the project, including the plan for submitting a large proposal (and appropriate agencies and RFAs)

Submission

Proposals should be submitted via email to Meg McDevitt (megan.mcdevitt@ibb.gatech.edu) by 5:00 pm on Sept 15, 2009, and new funding is expected to commence starting October 1, 2009 subject to submission of IACUC and other approvals being submitted. Technical questions should be directed to the co-chairs: Ravi Bellamkonda, GTEC (404-385-5038, ravi@gatech.edu), Robert N. Taylor, ACTSI (404-727-9106, robert.n.taylor@emory.edu), and W. Robert Taylor, GTEC (404-727-8921, wtaylor@emory.edu)

Each new proposal will be peer-reviewed using experts internal and external to GT/Emory. In order to prepare for the review process, a letter of intent for new proposals is requested by Sept 1, 2009. This brief letter should include the title of the project, a short 100 word abstract, and a list of team members, and it should be submitted by e-mail to Meg McDevitt (megan.mcdevitt@ibb.gatech.edu).