



**INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE**

**2011 Spark Drug Discovery Grant  
Request for Application  
June 10, 2011**

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Letter of Intent Date: JULY 28, 2011

Full Application Date: SEPTEMBER 8, 2011

Award Date: SEPTEMBER 29, 2011

The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative is seeking proposals for its Spark Drug Discovery Grant award program. The primary purpose of the Spark Drug Discovery Grant is to support research aimed at identifying, optimizing and screening early stage drug candidates. Novel approaches (such as click chemistry) to the identification of structure-activity data and/or novel scaffolds that could provide a foundation for broader drug discovery efforts are highly encouraged to apply. This RFA will also support limited work in target validation and combination therapies.

Applications must include one investigator who is a Wake Forest University faculty member or a postdoctoral fellow in conjunction with a faculty member. Ideal teams will include members working on the early stage therapeutics candidate(s) as well as members with expertise in the translational and pre-IND aspects of drug development. The team may already be in place or assembled to carry out the proposed project. No preliminary/pilot data are required to be competitive, though it is a plus.

Award amounts will be composed of both budget dollars and in-kind services. The total maximum award is \$35,000 of which, up to \$15,000 is available for services provided by the WFBH Chemical Biology Core Lab. This facility will provide chemical libraries for screening, robotics to facilitate screening, click chemistry, as well as medicinal and analytical chemistry services. Up to an additional \$20,000 will be available for direct costs and project-based technical assistance, whereby skilled personnel will be provided to the awardees for the duration of two to four months. However, we recognize that successful applicants may need highly specialized personnel. Thus, the IEI cannot guarantee success in identifying an appropriate candidate. Further, the IEI will contact awardees who have requested in-kind technical services within 30 business days of grant award if we are unable to identify a candidate.

The grants will be awarded in the third quarter of 2011 (first quarter of FY2012). The award period is 6-18 months, with the option of a 6 month no-cost extension.

## **Applications**

The applications process is comprised of two phases: (1) a 2 page letter of intent: (2) a full application for projects that are selected to apply by the review committee.

Only one proposal will be accepted per PI. Submissions, which do not adhere to the required format and page limitations, will be returned without review. All documents should be submitted as a single PDF file. The font size should be no smaller than 11 point with all page margins at least 0.5 inch.

### Phase 1: Letter of Intent

The letter of intent must address as many of the questions posed in the evaluation criteria section of this RFA as possible given the nature of the proposed project. In addition, the letter of intent must include the following minimum information:

1. The name of the project
2. The anticipated team, their position(s)/affiliation(s) and contact information
3. A preliminary budget estimate and proposed use of funds
4. Chemical Biology Laboratory service requirements (if applicable)
5. In-kind technical service requirements, if applicable (2-4 months at \$5000/month)
6. Status of the work on the project completed to date (If applicable, include data)
7. How the award will advance the project to a successful conclusion
8. Why will the program result in a successful intellectual property producing endpoint
9. The team's commitment to submit a full proposal if selected

## Phase 2: Full Proposal

The full proposal should address all the questions posed in the evaluation criteria section of this RFA that are applicable to the current state of the project. Collaborations with industry and other institutions are encouraged. The maximum page length of the full submission should not exceed 8 pages. The font size for the submission should be no smaller than 11 point with all page margins at least 0.5 inch. In addition, the full submission must include the following minimum information:

1. The name of the project
2. The team, their position and contact information (Please include NIH style biosketches, these will not count toward the page limit)
3. Abstract of no more than 200 words
4. A final budget and justification
5. The status of the work on the project completed to-date with supporting data. A milestone chart such as a Gantt would be helpful
6. How the award will advance the project to a successful milestone or endpoint

The full proposal will undergo pre-review and feedback by a designated member of the IEI staff. This designated individual will be responsible for assisting applicants with translational, intellectual property and commercial issues as well as ensuring the full proposal has the best chance of funding based on the evaluation criteria.

Finalists will be required to make a fifteen-minute presentation with slides to the review committee. Presentations should address the potential of the project and how the grant funds will leverage the success of the project. This should be done in terms that are understandable by a well-educated person from outside the scientific community.

The committee will provide a brief response to the submission with a score based on the NIH review process based on a scale of 1 (exceptional) to 9 (poor).

## **Award Expectations**

Awardees will be expected to do the following within 3 months of project completion:

1. Submit a 2-3 page final report of results and lessons learned in a form that is suitable for internal publication to faculty peers.
2. Give a seminar along with other award recipients to present the project, results and lessons learned to the faculty.
3. Continue the project to the next milestone or endpoint, assuming successful results and available funding.
4. Continue engagement with the IEI team to help reach the objectives for the project.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation committee will consider the following criteria in both the letter of intent and the invited submission:

1. Does the proposed project contribute to WFBH's mission of improving health and well being?
2. Has a target been validated? Did the proposed team validate the target? Are there published studies on the target?
3. Does the project endpoint result in new development candidates or in the advancement of a previously identified compound?

4. Does the project endpoint result in a therapeutic agent that could potentially be advanced to preclinical development?
5. What is the assessment of the disease market? Is the new therapeutic agent a candidate for fast-track, accelerated approval or priority review according to the FDA?
6. Will the eventual endpoint result in a therapeutic agent that is unique and reputation building for the institution?
7. Does the project contribute to one of WFBH's strategic focus areas?
8. Does the project create an opportunity for increased collaboration and funding from industry?
9. Is a patent already in place for a successful advancement of the therapeutic agent to clinical studies? Are there any prior disclosures in publications or conference presentations that could make it difficult to obtain a patent?
10. Does the project include animal studies? Does the investigator have an IACUC protocol?
11. Are the team's qualifications adequate to ensure successful execution of the project?
12. Does the team have the time to commit to successfully execute the project?
13. Will the budget accomplish the items described in the proposal?
14. Are there other resources that may be leveraged by the funding of the proposed project?
15. Are there sources of funding available for any future funding requirements?
16. Does this award make a sustentative difference in the success of the project?

## Timeline

The time line for submissions and awards are given in the table below.

Item	Date
RFA announcement at the Innovation Summit	June 10, 2011
Letter of Intent Submission due date	July 28, 2011
Letter of Intent Evaluation Committee Meeting	August 3, 2011
First round winners announcement	August 5, 2011
Full submission due date	September 8, 2011
Oral Presentation by Finalists to Committee	September 15, 2011
IEI Grant Award announcement	September 29, 2011

Please email all submissions by 5:00pm Eastern time on the date of each the deadline to Connie Sharpe at [cosharpe@wakehealth.edu](mailto:cosharpe@wakehealth.edu).

## More Information

Please contact Jeff Schmitt at [jschmitt@wakehealth.edu](mailto:jschmitt@wakehealth.edu) or Carla María Lema Tomé at [cltome@wakehealth.edu](mailto:cltome@wakehealth.edu) for additional information or questions.