

BIONEXUS KC
NEXUS OF ANIMAL AND HUMAN HEALTH RESEARCH GRANTS
(Issue Date 10 June 2020)
Request for Proposals

APPLICATION DEADLINES

- 1. Letter of Intent is due by 5:00 pm on 8 July 2020.**
- 2. Full application must be received by 5:00 pm on 5 August 2020.**
Applications received after 5:00 will not be accepted.
- 3. Funding date for successful proposals – 1 November 2020.**

BioNexus KC is pleased to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Nexus of Animal and Human Health Research Grants to be submitted for funding consideration. Funding for this grant program is provided by the Hall Family Foundation. Background, Scope, Eligibility, Review Criteria, Application Procedures, the Review Process, and submission instructions are provided below.

BACKGROUND

BioNexus KC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity organization which serves as the coordinating body for the Kansas City region's life science research initiatives by functioning as a facilitator, matchmaker, and funder of collaborative research initiatives and assisting in the commercialization of resulting intellectual property. BioNexus KC supports the ten key stakeholder institutions listed below and other life sciences stakeholders in the region:

- Children's Mercy
- MRIGlobal
- Saint Luke's Hospital
- Kansas City University
- Kansas State University
- Truman Medical Centers
- University of Kansas
- University of Kansas Medical Center
- University of Missouri – Columbia
- University of Missouri - Kansas City

PURPOSE

This RFP serves to stimulate development and submission of major multidisciplinary research proposals from investigators in the life sciences to government or private agencies. BioNexus KC's approach for achieving this goal is to support research development grants capable of generating critical preliminary data needed to develop competitive proposals for submission to external agencies. Proposals are invited for multidisciplinary collaborative research development grants consistent with the scope of this specific RFP. Awards are limited to \$50,000 for one year and are intended to exploit investigator and facility strengths leading to highly competitive proposals directed toward future external funding. The number of awards will be subject to available BioNexus KC funds.

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ELIGIBILITY

All full-time researchers at BioNexus KC key stakeholder institutions are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Proposals including evidence of inter-institutional collaborative research are preferred for this funding program, but not an absolute requirement. A lead stakeholder institution must be identified and the Principal Investigator must be from that institution. Additional investigators should be listed as co-principal or collaborating investigators.

SCOPE

BioNexus KC's *Path to 2025* strategic assessment set forth a regional vision statement stating "The Kansas City region is a global leader at the nexus of animal and human health benefitting all of our citizens and the economy." The statement recognizes the region's international stature as a leader in animal health and seeks to leverage that strength to enhance recognition of our significant regional assets in human health. Nexus opportunities represent a broad range of biomedical research activities, ranging from using naturally occurring diseases in animals as a model for assessing human drug efficacy to repurposing human drugs for use in animal disease. **Proposals must clearly identify the nexus opportunity to be examined and how the research team intends to generate critical preliminary data needed for future collaborative proposal submissions to external agencies.** Proposals received from collaborative research teams spanning two or more organizations will receive priority consideration.

Human-animal nexus opportunities include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- 1) Dogs and cats get cancer just as people do and some types like osteosarcoma, lymphoma and glioblastoma are almost indistinguishable.
- 2) Chronic diseases including osteoarthritis and renal disease are very similar between animals and people.
- 3) Because dogs and cats live in our environment, they become excellent sentinels for understanding environmental effects on humans.
- 4) Drugs that have failed human applications for toxicity or other concerns, may not exhibit similar toxicity in animals because of different receptors or affinity.
- 5) Purebred dogs are inbred by definition and present with many genetic abnormalities that could be a model for rare human diseases.
- 6) Animals and people both suffer from behavioral disorders like obsessive-compulsive disorder.
- 7) Obesity and associated secondary sequela are common in dogs and people.
- 8) Dogs rarely have atherosclerotic disease and stroke which provides an opportunity to understand potential preventive mechanisms for people.

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REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Proposals must document specific evidence of inter-institutional collaborative research (when present).
2. Proposals must address an important and relevant question(s) related to the **SCOPE** of this RFP listed herein.
3. Proposals should describe how the proposed grant support will facilitate the development and submission of a proposal(s) seeking external funding from government and/or private agencies. The long-term expectations regarding the institutions extended research programs and potential for expanded research in related areas of research should also be articulated.
4. Merit review criteria are essentially the same as those used by Federal granting agencies such as NIH and NSF. Criteria include scientific and technical significance, innovation, approach, and likelihood of success of achieving external funding.
5. Qualifications and research experience of the Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigators and collaborating investigators are important considerations.
6. Proposals must present a realistic assessment of the scope of work proposed for the one year period of funding.
7. Appropriateness of the proposed budget.

Upon receipt, proposals will undergo an administrative review to assure compliance with submission requirements and that appropriate institutional signatures and assurances were obtained. Proposals will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit and assigned NIH-type priority scores. Upon receipt of peer review scores, the proposals will be ranked and final award decisions will be made based on priority scores and available funds.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- A. An **original** one-page letter of intent should be submitted to the office of Dr. Keith Gary, Vice President, BioNexus KC, by **8 July 2020 before 5:00 pm**. Letters of intent must briefly describe the nature of the project, outline the features of the proposal, and identify the Principal Investigator (PI), Co-PIs, collaborating investigators, lead institution, and collaborating institutions. Letters of intent either must bear **original signatures** of all collaborating investigators or be accompanied by appropriate commitment letters bearing **original signatures**. PDF files containing documents bearing original signatures are allowable. **Fax copies will not be accepted.**
- B. PI's selected to submit full proposals will be notified via e-mail. Full proposals must be submitted to Dr. Keith Gary, Vice President, BioNexus KC by **5 August 2020 before 5:00 p.m. Applications received after 5:00 will not be accepted.**
- C. Full proposals should use the latest version of PHS 398 forms available electronically at <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>.

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Institutional administrative review and approval of applications by all applicable stakeholder institutions must be completed prior to submission. Hard copy with signed approval from the lead institution's signatory official must be submitted to BioNexus KC prior to the stated deadline for full consideration.

- D. Strict compliance to the following criteria is necessary in preparing the proposal:
- a. The Face Page should identify only the lead institution and Principal Investigator in addition to other required information about the lead institution.
 - b. The Description, Performance Sites, and Key Personnel should clearly detail collaborating investigators and institutions.
 - c. The Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period Page must be used and should reflect the following:
 - i. Requests may be up to \$50,000 for one year.
 - ii. Salary and fringe benefits may be requested and must be in accord with set institutional guidelines.
 - iii. Indirect cost rates may not exceed 10%. Indirect costs must be included within the \$50,000 limit.
 - iv. Equipment requests may not exceed 20% of the total request.
 - v. The budget and budget justification should only represent funds requested of BioNexus KC.
 - d. Separate budget justification page must follow the budget page and detail the rationale for all budget requests. Supply items should be summarized within major categories (e.g. image analysis, tissue culture, etc.)
 - e. DO NOT INCLUDE the Budget for Entire Proposed Period of Support Page
 - f. The NIH biographical sketch form 398/2590, (also found at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>) must be used for each investigator. The Principal Investigator's Biographical Sketch Format Pages must be first followed alphabetically (last name) by all other investigators. The biosketches must be provided as an appendix.
 - g. The Resources Format Page must detail resources that are to be used at the collaborating institutions toward completion of the project. Use additional pages as necessary.
 - h. DO NOT INCLUDE the Checklist Form Page and Personal Data Form Page
 - i. The Research Plan must be no more than 10 single-spaced pages at 12 pt Arial or Times New Roman font with one inch margins throughout. The research plan should include Specific Aims, Background and Significance, Preliminary studies (if any), and Research Design and Methods. Additional essential items may be included in appendices.
 - j. Appendices must include the following:

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- i. A lay executive summary of the proposal. The lay summary should be succinct, not exceeding one page in length at 12 pt Arial or Times new Roman font with one inch margins throughout.
 - ii. Signed letters of commitment, **with original signatures**, from each Co-PI and collaborative research investigator named in the budget must be provided as an appendix. **Signatures obtained on the original letter of intent cannot be substituted for this requirement.**
- E. IRB or IACUC approval is not required unless the proposal is funded. Funds will not be released until a final IRB or IACUC approval is received by BioNexus KC.
- F. The budget and budget justification should clearly delineate which costs will be incurred at each institution. One option is to submit a combined budget along with sub-budgets for each institution. Another option is to subcontract with collaborating institutions and provide the supporting budget form.

REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals will undergo an initial administrative review by BioNexus KC staff to assure compliance with submission requirements detailed in the RFP. Proposals will then be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by peer review and assigned NIH-type priority scores (see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/peer/peer.htm>).

Applicants may submit up to three names of peers whom they wish not to review their application. This is to avoid selection of someone with whom the applicant(s) does not wish to share the proposal or whom they feel will not provide an objective review. BioNexus KC will not select these persons when contacting potential reviewers to develop an appropriate peer review group.

Upon receipt of peer review scores, the proposals will be ranked and final award decisions made based on priority scores and available funds.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

1) Submit an electronic version in editable PDF format (not imaged) of the **full** application to:

Keith Gary, PhD
Vice President
BioNexus KC
kgary@kclifesciences.org

2) Copy Sharon Newman (snewman@kclifesciences.org) on the electronic submission.