

**BIONEXUS KC**  
**Collaborate2Cure Award**  
**(Issue Date October 13, 2021)**

**Request for Proposals**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5:00 pm on November 15, 2021**

**Funding date for successful proposal(s) – January 15, 2022**

BioNexus KC is pleased to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Collaborate2Cure Research Awards to be submitted for funding consideration. 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 life sciences research strategic initiatives in the KC region. The organization supports the 10 key stakeholder institutions listed below and other life sciences stakeholders in the region:

- Children’s Mercy
- Kansas City University
- Kansas State University
- MRIGlobal
- Saint Luke’s Health System
- University Health (formerly known as Truman Medical Centers)
- University of Kansas
- University of Kansas Medical Center
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- University of Missouri-Kansas City

**PURPOSE**

Collaborate2Cure is a program designed to foster regional scientific collaboration in a focused research area. In collaboration with various stakeholders, BioNexus KC selects scientific research areas consistent with regional research expertise and conducts a series of presentations highlighting current research projects underway in the scientific topic area. Attendees are invited representing expertise in the focus area, multidisciplinary approaches to new investigations in the topic area, life sciences industry representatives, students at all educational levels, and the general public. Each session is streamed live via Zoom and remote participants can directly interact with presenter question and answer sessions. The goal is to foster collaboration between regional scientists to develop new technologies/therapeutics and increase regional technology transfer/commercialization activities. As new content in the specific scientific focus area is exhausted, brief proposals will be invited for multidisciplinary collaborative research grants addressing novel approaches and/or technologies in the focus area. 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. There will be one award per specific focus area, subject to BioNexus KC funds.

PLEASE NOTE: Collaborate2Cure is a multi-year series of events designed to stimulate collaboration and solve specific scientific challenges in the KC region. Each year, Collaborate2Cure addresses a new health challenge; past challenges have included cancer immunotherapy, mitochondrial diseases, and value-based healthcare. BioNexus KC appreciates the term “cure” takes on a contextual meaning within the autism community – its use here is only as part of the name of this long-standing program term series and not specifically applied to the autism-focused events in this series.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

**All full-time researchers at BioNexus KC stakeholder institutions that attended the Collaborate2Cure series focused on Autism Spectrum Disorder** are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Proposals must include evidence of inter-institutional collaborative research as a criterion for acceptance. A lead institution must be identified, and the Principal Investigator must be from that institution. Additional investigators should be listed as co-principal or collaborating investigators. While proposals that include industry partners are strongly encouraged, awards will be made through the academic partner.

## **SCOPE**

Collaborate2Cure proposals should address critical question(s) in autism spectrum disorder research that expand the body of knowledge related to autism intervention and treatment, produce practical and clearly objective results, have the potential to impact public policy, and provide outcomes that offer to enhance quality of life for persons with autism and their families. While applicants are always free to submit on any relevant area of research or intervention, BioNexus KC is placing an emphasis on research that addresses the following areas:

- Analysis, evaluation, or comparison of current models of assessment, intervention, or systems of service delivery, including policy analysis
- Applied aspects of educational, behavioral, or social/communicative intervention
- Effective intervention across the lifespan for individuals considered to be severely impacted by autism
- Adult issues such as continuing education, employment, residential supports, and sexuality
- Instruction, quality-of-life determinants, and “later intervention”
- Issues related to family support, social and community integration, assessment and intervention with challenging behavior
- Use of technology in support of learners with autism spectrum disorder

The proposal should clearly identify how the investigators are taking new, innovative approaches to advance the effectiveness and impact of this therapeutic approach. The proposal must also include a plan for utilizing critical preliminary data to secure follow-on funding.

## REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Proposals must address an important and relevant question(s) related to Collaborate2Cure topics, with a potential for producing unique intellectual property and/or commercialization potential.
2. Proposals should describe how the award will facilitate the development and submission of a proposal(s) seeking external funding from government and/or private agencies.
3. Merit review criteria closely resembles those used by Federal granting agencies such as NIH and NSF. Criteria includes scientific and technical significance, originality and likelihood of success of achieving external funding, and potential for commercialization.
4. Qualifications and research experience of the Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigators and collaborating investigators are important considerations.
5. Proposals must present a realistic assessment of the scope of work proposed for the one-year period of funding.
6. Appropriateness of the proposed budget.
7. Proposals must provide clear evidence of inter-institutional collaborative research to be considered for review. Specific roles for each collaborating investigator and mechanisms enabling the collaborative effort must be clearly defined.

Upon receipt, proposals will undergo an administrative review to assure compliance with submission requirements and appropriate institutional signatures and assurances were obtained.

Proposals will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by three reviewers with suitable expertise in proposal research areas. Additionally, proposals will be evaluated for the commercialization potential of the project.

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DISPOSITION

The intellectual property involved in these grants is crucial to the overall success of life sciences research efforts and will enhance the economic and well-being of the region. Subsequent to the disclosure of any inventions to the stakeholder institution Technology Transfer Office that were developed pursuant to the work performed under the collaboration funded by this initiative, representatives from the contributing institutions will convene under the direction of the BioNexus KC to confirm inventorship based on the respective intellectual input of the inventing parties, including background intellectual property rights previously owned by a party, and an appropriate allocation of percentage ownership of the intellectual property, if jointly developed/invented. Participating institutions will, in turn, distribute future royalty income received in accordance with existing institutional policies.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- A. An original five-page proposal should be submitted to Dennis Ridenour, President and CEO, BioNexus KC, **before 5:00 pm on November 15, 2021**. Proposals must describe the nature of the project, outline the features of the project, and identify the Principal Investigator, Co-PIs, collaborating investigators, lead institution and

collaborating institutions. Proposals either must be signed by all collaborating investigators or be accompanied by appropriate commitment letters. **Original signatures** are required on the proposal. **Fax copies will not be accepted.**

- B. All proposals should be set to print single side on standard 8.5 by 11-inch paper. All margins should be at 1 inch and font size must be 12 points or larger with no more than 6 lines per inch. All pages except the cover page should be numbered at the bottom center of the page; this includes pages that are not part of the page limitations. Note: margins and type size must be consistent throughout each required section of the proposal.
- C. All proposals should be no longer than 5 pages in length and include the Cover Page found in Appendix A (Cover Page does not count toward page limitations). Proposals that do not follow the page limits will be eliminated from competition. Tables and figures are to be included within the page limitations.
- D. It is the responsibility of the investigator(s) to comply with any existing University or institutional policies and guidelines regarding the use of human subjects, animal welfare, conflict of interest, hazardous materials, etc. In addition, it is the responsibility of the investigator(s) to work with their university or institution's technology licensing and commercialization office on matters pertaining to intellectual property.
- E. 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. A Detailed Budget must be included 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 from BioNexus KC.
  - d. A budget justification description must follow the budget and detail the rationale for all budget requests. Supply items should be summarized within major categories (e.g. PCR, software, tissue culture, etc.)
  - e. The NIH biographical sketch form 398/2590, (also found at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/biosketch.pdf>) must be used for each investigator and must not exceed three pages 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.

- f. Appendices must include the following:
- i. 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 proposal cannot be substituted for this requirement.**
  - ii. Personnel biosketches
  - iii. Resources - description of research environment
  - iv. Budget and budget justification
  - v. Literature cited in the research proposal
  - vi. Lay summary of the project
- F. 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.
- G. 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 to assure compliance with submission requirements detailed in the RFP.

Proposals will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by three reviewers with suitable expertise in proposal research areas. Additionally, proposals will be evaluated for the commercialization potential of the project.

## **POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS**

Upon notification of funding award, the PI will have 30 days to submit a detailed project description including budget. The research plan is limited to 10 pages and should be consistent with formatting requirements listed above. The plan should include a brief background, specific project aims, experimental design, brief description of methods to be used, detailed data analysis plan, project milestones and timeline, and specific plans for commercialization and future funding. Funds will not be released until a final IRB or IACUC approval is received by BioNexus KC.

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

1) Submit an electronic original application in an editable PDF format (not an image) with **original signatures** to:

Dennis Ridenour  
President and CEO  
BioNexus KC  
30 W. Pershing Rd.  
Suite 210  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
Phone: 816-753-7700

[dridenour@bionexuskc.org](mailto:dridenour@bionexuskc.org)

2) Submit a duplicate copy to Sharon Newman at:

[snewman@bionexuskc.org](mailto:snewman@bionexuskc.org)