

Nebraska Neuroscience Alliance Endowed Fund and CNND Multiple Sclerosis Research Excellence Fund at the University of Nebraska Foundation

2016 Request for Applications Basic and translational research on the Zika Virus

Program Guidelines

The Nebraska Neuroscience Alliance Endowed Fund (NNA) and the Center for Neurovirology and Neurodegenerative Disorders Multiple Sclerosis Research Excellence Fund at the University of Nebraska Foundation are pleased to announce the first request for proposals for basic and translational research on the Zika Virus (ZIKV) and its complications.

This grant will support a single award up to \$85,000 supporting an interdisciplinary research team for studies on the immunologic, virologic or neurodevelopmental consequences of ZIKV exposure during pregnancy, the early postnatal period and/or its linkages to autoimmune disorders such as multiple sclerosis. The research would focus primarily on the ability of ZIKV infection to alter the developing central nervous system, including relevant cognitive and behavioral outcomes. NNA program staff will also review and consider applications over a broad range of disciplines beyond the listings of the RFA.

Applications need to include a research plan up to six pages with specific aims, background, preliminary data, research plan and intended outcomes including federal grant proposals, along with a detailed budget and biographical sketches of participating faculty members.

The deadline for submission is July 10, 2016 with review and funding decisions made by August 1, 2016.

Areas of priority include:

- Investigations of the mechanisms by which ZIKV affects the developing nervous system.
- Studies of virus-cell biology, replication cycle, cytopathicity and modes of entry.
- Studies of immunity at the cellular and innate levels.
- Studies to identify risk for sequelae in exposed but uninfected infants.
- Investigations of the developing nervous system in regards to sites of viral replication and secondary glial-neuronal responses.
- Studies to assess and characterize the neurodevelopmental consequences of ZIKV infection.
- Use of unique biomarkers to assess infection and secondary sequelae.
- Vaccine development and preventative strategies.

Applicant Eligibility

While all University of Nebraska Medical Center faculty members are eligible to apply, priority will be given to requests from collaborative research teams at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Application procedures

Applications must adhere to several criteria and will undergo a rigorous, objective review process.

Applications are due at 4:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday, July 11, 2016.

You may submit only one application. Research proposal must **not** exceed six pages (references are not included in the page limit).

Grant Forms and Submission

The proposal must be submitted in accordance with NIH application standards and UNMC grant application policies. Preparation of the application should follow the NIH guidelines for [PHS 398 \(revised 3/2016\)](#).

Please submit the following documents. * are required documents:
(to download forms, visit

*Title page

*Biosketch ([NIH format](#)) – all key personnel

*Budget ([NIH format](#)-form page 5)

*Budget Justification

*Research Proposal: Divided into Specific Aims, Background, Preliminary Data, Research Plan, and References. The Research Proposal (combined Specific Aims, Background, Preliminary Data, and Research Plan) must not exceed six pages; the References do not count against the six pages.

Letters of support

IRB or IACUC approval will be required for funded applications involving human or animal subjects, but approval is not required to submit your application.

Convert and combine the final documents into one PDF file. E-mail proposal to Dr. Howard Gendelman (hegendel@unmc.edu) by **4:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday, July 11, 2016**.

Credentials

To be eligible for this NNA RFA, you must possess a doctoral-level degree and have an academic appointment at or above the Instructor (faculty appointment), Assistant Professor level or equivalent (capable of submitting an independent NIH "R" application) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Preference

This grant will optimally be awarded to an interdisciplinary research team in the following categories, with the first category receiving the highest preference:

1. Defining the immunology, neurobiology, behavior and virology of ZIKA virus
2. Linkages to autoimmune disorders such as multiple sclerosis
3. Cross-disciplinary studies with emphasis on collaborative teams.

Identification of a mentor

For junior investigators, we strongly encourage the identification of a mentor prior to submission of the proposal. The mentor can assist with preparing the proposal and, if funded, with the conduct and publication of the study.

Regulatory approvals

For any grant that requires approval by a regulatory committee (e.g. Institutional Animal Care Use Committee Institutional Review Board, Biosafety – see face page for complete list), the PI is

encouraged to submit the study for approval before applying for the grant. These approvals often take several weeks. If awarded, no funds can be spent until all approved regulatory documents are received.

Resources

A number of [cores are available at UNMC](#). We encourage applicants to use these services.

Requirements and restrictions

- Budgets for faculty member salaries are not allowed.
- Travel funds are only available for unfunded junior investigators for travel to a relevant scientific meeting to present the results of this grant.
- Grants cannot support studies involving new drugs, treatments, or devices, or off-label use of a licensed drug.
- If an awarded grant includes work with humans or animals, Institutional Review Board or Institutional Animal Care Use Committee or other regulatory approval, all approvals must be submitted before awarded funds can be spent.
- Overspending on the award is not allowed and must be repaid.
- Any monies remaining after the funding period will be returned to NU Foundation award fund.
- The Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Neuroscience grant administrator will notify the principal investigator of the grant and UNMC Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA) of award. SPA will set up cost center number(s) or subcontracts for each grant awarded. Awardee is responsible for working with his/her department's grants manager to monitor and manage the funds and ensure that monies are not overspent. Any adjustments needed to balance the funds are the responsibility of the awardee.
- Awardee must generate written progress report for the Nebraska Neuroscience Alliance. The report should briefly summarize the research accomplishments as well as list research proposals and publications submitted based upon the project.
- Publications resulting from this award should acknowledge the award. Suggested wording: This work was supported in part by Nebraska Neuroscience Alliance Zika Virus 2016 Grant.

Budget

Up to \$85,000 (\$40,000- \$45,000/annum)

The budget should only list direct costs. No indirect costs are awarded.

Budget should include:

Reagents, travel (review requirements and restrictions), and technical support.

Duration

This grant will be awarded for two to three (maximum) years from the award date.

Fund management and other responsibilities

Grant recipient is responsible for managing his/her project's funding.

Any funds not used at the end of your award period will be returned to the NU Foundation award fund. Overspending on the grant is not allowed.

Evaluation

Applications are evaluated on a number of criteria, including investigator eligibility, scientific merit, relevance to ZIKV research, and potential for generating subsequent funding and publications.

All applications received are evaluated by expert intra- and as needed extra- mural reviewers. Reviewers are selected based on expertise and lack of conflicts of interest. NNA leadership will make the final funding decision.

Scientific merit

Grant reviewers are renowned experts in research. They evaluate each application on its innovation, feasibility, and potential contribution to the current body of knowledge. The grants will be scored using the [NIH scoring criterion](#)

Relevance

Grant applications must address an aspect of immunologic, virologic, or neurodevelopmental consequences of ZIKV exposure during pregnancy or the early postnatal period and/or its linkages to autoimmune disorders such as multiple sclerosis. Studies will be considered in virtually any area of basic science, clinical, behavioral, or public health research.

Notification

All applicants are notified of a decision typically within a month of the submission deadline. Along with the decision notice, applicants receive copies of the blinded reviewers' critiques. The critiques are intended to help applicants improve their studies regardless of the funding decision.

Payments

UNMC Sponsored Programs Administration will set up a UNMC cost center number.

Final Report

A final report is due 60 days after the end of the project period. The report should briefly summarize the research accomplishments as well as list research proposals submitted and/or funded along with publications based upon the project.

Publications and presentations

If studies funded by this grant result in presentations, abstracts and/or publications, please remember to acknowledge this funding source. Suggested wording: This work was supported in part by Nebraska Neuroscience Alliance Zika Virus 2016 Grant Initiative.

Please e-mail a PDF of your published work [papers, abstracts and/or presentations] to Dr. Gendelman (see below). If you need additional information please contact us.

Contact Information

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