



Announces

**The 2016
Request for Applications (RFAs) for the
LIFELINE Grant ProgramTM**

RFA 016-01 (LL)

Award Amount: up to \$140,000 for up to 2 awards
(based on the availability of funds)

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Letter of Intent Deadline: March 25, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Application Deadline: April 8, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Earliest Award Date: September 9, 2016

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ABOUT THE LFA LIFELINE PROGRAM

The Lupus Foundation of America established its LIFELINE Grant Program[™] in response to the current lupus research funding environment and the potential decline in scientific momentum and loss of current and future lupus investigators. The Foundation observed that the federal research funds devoted to lupus were already inadequate prior to the recent funding freeze and, as part of its mission, has worked for many years to increase the financial commitment to lupus research. Now, the recent across-the-board cuts in scientific research, while stifling progress in general, are especially damaging to lupus research. The most frustrating aspect of this is that lupus research has hit a pivotal mark. Scientific findings have placed us on the brink of breakthroughs at a time when federal funds—the largest funds available for lupus research—are disappearing.

The organization sees this situation as a crisis and, in support of the community and the advancement of lupus research, has created the LIFELINE Grant Program.

The purpose of the Foundation's LIFELINE Grant Program is to provide temporary salary support for faculty who experience a gap in external funding for a specific, previously funded research project due to the decreased funding available from government sources. The award is intended to keep an investigator's project on track while they reapply for funding. Applications focusing on basic, clinical and/or translational research will be considered.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The LIFELINE Grant (RFA 016-01 LL) will provide up to two (2) one-year grant awards in the amount of up to \$140,000. The grants will be awarded based on the availability of funds. Funds can be used at the discretion of the Primary Investigator but are limited to supporting salary and fringe benefits. The LFA will not support use of the funds to cover indirect costs.

ELIGIBILITY & EXCLUSIONS

Eligibility

1. Applicants must have a previously scored but unfunded lupus-specific RO1 or equivalent federal grant application from the previous 12 months with the expectation that with LIFELINE funding, a fundable priority could be achieved on the next submission of either a new (A0) application (without a substantial redesign of the content and scope of the project) or a resubmission (A1) application.
 - The 12 month timeline for funding is linked specifically to the date a revised application was entered into the eRA Commons or equivalent granting agency system (that information will need to be provided).
2. Applications must clearly demonstrate a bridge between existing publications and eventual support rather than requesting funding for an unpublished project repeatedly denied support and with no existing foundation from which a bridge to eventual external funding could be built.
3. Applicant must have been funded by the federal government in the past 3 years in an area related to lupus at an academic, medical, or research institution in the U.S., Canada, or Mexico.

Exclusions

1. Research projects funded by pilot-project grants (R21), infrastructure grants and biotech funded research contracts are ineligible.
2. Principal investigators with bridge funding from other sources or reserves are not eligible.
3. Faculty without a demonstrated history of external funding, postdoctoral fellows, projects to be performed while the PI is on sabbatical, visiting professors, faculty without evidence of investigative independence and faculty whose work will not continue at the University.
4. Awards may not cover budget reductions in existing awards from external sponsors or cost overruns from previous cycles.
5. Applications which were previously reviewed and triaged (did not receive a score) are ineligible.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In addition to the original peer review, which each application will have already received and which will also be taken into consideration, the Foundation will be evaluating applications based on the following assessments:

1. Likelihood of external funding within one year, as based on the score of the reviewed application and the applicant's response to the critique
2. Likelihood that a break in funding will result in the termination of the project
3. The severity of the disruption to the investigator's laboratory/research group if funding is not provided (at some level)
4. The severity of consequences to the PI's career if funding is not provided
5. Evaluation of the requested budget
6. Significance of the research: Does the study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or clinical practice be advanced?

LETTER OF INTENT & ONLINE SUBMISSION

Letters of intent (LOIs) must be submitted online via Altum's proposalCENTRAL online system by **5 p.m. ET on March 25, 2016**. This submission represents a binding letter of intent that cannot be altered during submission of the full application. Responses to LOI submissions will be sent via proposalCENTRAL on a weekly basis, up until the LOI deadline.

Letters of intent **must** contain the following information:

1. Full contact information (name, highest degree, title, full mailing address, phone number, fax number, and email address) for the applicant and the name(s) of institution(s) where the research will be conducted
2. Descriptive project title
3. Dates of last review, funding agency of last review and confirmation of score

Submit the letter of intent via your proposalCENTRAL account at <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/Login.asp>

REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF GRANT APPLICATION

Complete online application packages (with all required attachments and supportive documentation) must be submitted by **5:00 P.M. EST on April 8, 2016** via Altum's proposalCENTRAL online system. Hard copies will not be accepted under any circumstances.

The online application **must** include the following components:

1. Grant application cover page, including:
 - a. Project title and dates of proposed project
 - b. The following must be provided for the applicant, as well as the institutional official and signing official: name, highest degree, title, email address, direct phone and fax numbers, and institutional street address
 - c. Dated original signatures from the applicant and institutional signing official (note that all dated signatures must be obtained on the same grant application cover page)
 - d. IRB and/or IACUC approval date, as well as Human Subjects Assurance Number and/or Animal Welfare Assurance Number (If these are not available at the time of application submission, they will be required upon acceptance of the award and prior to disbursement of any funds to the sponsoring institution)
 - e. Institutional grant administrator's (if different from the institutional official and signing official) name, highest degree, title, email address, direct phone and fax numbers, and institutional street address
2. A single spaced proposal narrative, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font of no more than 6 pages which:
 - a. Describes the proposed research (abstract of the submitted grant is sufficient, if appropriate)
 - b. Provides justification for the funds needed to keep the program afloat, including a plan for resubmission to the original funding source as well as a plan for funding should federal funds not be obtained a second time
 - c. Details the reason the application and project qualifies for the LIFELINE funding and the implications should the funds not be received (i.e. loss of staffing or investigator protected time etc.)
3. A brief but specific budget and proposed breakdown (this is in addition to the budget provided with the previously submitted RO1 or equivalent federal government grant application) for use of the funds being requested.

4. Grant application and budget submitted to a federal government funding agency. The revisions should be highlighted.
5. Score and review summary statements for an RO1 or equivalent federal government grant; the proposal must have received a score.
6. Rebuttal letter addressing the points raised by reviewers or specific plans for addressing reviewer comments.
7. Research proposal abstract and lay summary:
 - a. Scientific abstract (3000 character max)
 - b. Lay summary of proposal for LFA's use in press releases (3000 character max)
8. Record of PI's funding for past 5 years with funding amounts and funding periods listed for each grant (not more than 4 pages combined).
9. List of publications arising from previous work related to this project.

APPLICATION MATERIALS & ONLINE SUBMISSION

Visit the LFA's National Research Program RFA homepage, <http://www.lupus.org/rfa>, to learn more information.

The Lupus Foundation of America, Inc. (LFA) utilizes an electronic grant submission process. All interested grant applicants must submit their LOI and full application packages through Altum's proposalCENTRAL online system: <https://proposalcentral.altum.com/Login.asp>. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Applicants are encouraged to register and complete a professional proposalCENTRAL profile as soon as possible. Applicants should ensure that their grants and contracts office has registered their institutional, financial, and signing officials with proposalCENTRAL.

A proposalCENTRAL helpline is available to answer questions from applicants, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. ET. Customer support is available via phone at 1-800-875-2562 or by email at pcsupport@altum.com.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Online application packages must be submitted in their entirety via Altum's proposalCENTRAL online system and must be accompanied by all required documentation, including the grant application cover page with dated original signatures from the applicant and institutional signing official, no later than **5:00 P.M. EST on April 8, 2016**. No application materials will be accepted after this deadline. Only one proposal per applicant will be accepted.

Earliest notification of grant awards will be made in writing around **September 9, 2016**.

USE OF FUNDS & CONDITIONS OF AWARD

1. Funds from this award must be utilized to support research-related activities of the awardee. Funds from this award cannot be used for any other reason, including indirect costs. Any unused funds must be returned to LFA.
2. Applications will be accepted from those possessing the rank of Assistant Professor (or equivalent) or above who direct a laboratory dedicated at least in part to the investigation of lupus at an academic, medical, or research institution in the U.S., Canada, or Mexico. Applicants directing laboratories in Canada or Mexico are required to be in collaboration with a US-based investigator. The US-based collaborator must be added as key personnel in proposalCENTRAL.
3. Each Principal Investigator must assure LFA of his/her home institution and intended work location. LFA must be advised at the time of application of all moves, contemplated or real. The institution at which the proposed project will be completed must be given at the time of application.
4. An interim and final progress report (originally signed and dated by the applicant, but not the co-PI(s)) documenting the nature and outcomes of the research conducted must be submitted electronically to Anita Roach, MS, LFA Research Program Manager (roach@lupus.org), by the mid- and end-points of the grant award, respectively. A formatted progress report form will be provided to awardees simultaneously with award letters. Each award payment will be disbursed only after LFA's receipt of specific deliverables indicated in the award letter, such as progress reports.
5. All publications (including primary and review-type peer-reviewed journal articles, abstracts, commentaries, magazine articles, as well as national and/or local media coverage, or any such coverage at the home institution or that of a collaborator on the project) resulting from research funded either wholly or partially by this grant award must acknowledge financial contributions from the Lupus Foundation of America, Inc. In addition, copies of such publications must be provided to the LFA within 30 days of final production. Moreover, all publicity and information disseminated by the home institution of the awardee or co-PI(s) about such research must acknowledge financial contributions from the Lupus Foundation of America, Inc.

6. Each applicant must indicate on his/her cover letter (printed on institutional letterhead, as well as originally signed and dated by the applicant) that all proposed research will be conducted according to the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services relevant to the ethical conduct of research on humans and animals. In addition, each applicant's institution must agree to hold the LFA harmless from any and all claims which may arise from research-related activities funded either wholly or partially by the Lupus Foundation of America, Inc.
7. Applicants proposing to conduct research on animals must provide the LFA with a letter (printed on institutional letterhead, as well as originally signed and dated by an appropriate university official) from the sponsoring institution's IACUC documenting current approval of the proposed research and its compliance with NIH guidelines for the care and use of animals in research. Applicants proposing to conduct research involving human subjects must provide the LFA with a letter (printed on institutional letterhead, as well as originally signed and dated by an appropriate university official) from the sponsoring institution's IRB documenting current approval of the proposed research and its compliance with NIH guidelines for the use of human subjects in research. IRB and/or IACUC approval are not required upon the date of application submission, but are required upon LFA's offer of the award. No award funds will be disbursed until written IRB and/or IACUC approval have been received by LFA. All IACUC and IRB approval documents must contain the full name, title, address, phone number, and email for the IACUC or IRB Chair in order for LFA funding to be disbursed.
8. Each award is for one-time use only and cannot be postponed, extended, modified, renewed, or transferred to another individual or institution. In addition, no additional funds will be provided beyond the amount stipulated in the award letter.
9. Each award payment will be made in the form of a check payable in U.S. dollars to a designated institutional grant official authorized to receive, deposit, and appropriately manage funds from such a check at the sponsoring institution. Under no circumstances will a check be made payable or available to an applicant, co-PI, or other individual associated with the proposed research.
10. Any patentable discoveries resulting from research funded either wholly or partially by LFA must be reported to LFA's Research Program Manager (roach@lupus.org) as soon as any relevant decisions to pursue a patent are made. A patent application resulting from any such research-related activities cannot be made without the prior written consent of the LFA.