



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH SEED GRANTS: GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) Interdisciplinary Research Seed Grant program is designed to foster interdisciplinary collaborative efforts among Ohio State faculty and affiliated faculty and to enhance competitiveness for extramural funding by supporting innovative, well-defined research projects. Given that the primary goal of seed grant funding is to grow the interdisciplinary research enterprise in infectious diseases, it is important that proposals provide sufficient evidence that an award will lead to a high probability of success in near-future extramural funding applications. IDI seed grants are not intended to provide bridge funding or resources for projects that have stalled due to lack of funding.

ELIGIBILITY

The lead faculty must be a member of the IDI and hold a faculty or affiliated faculty appointment with The Ohio State University. To become a member of IDI, fill out our [membership survey](#) on the IDI website. The team of investigators must include at least two faculty members and be interdisciplinary, defined as involving at least two disciplines. Although interdisciplinary research typically spans multiple departments/colleges, it is possible that a team from a single college could still make a case for interdisciplinarity. As the seed grant program is intended to facilitate collaborations among Ohio State investigators, inclusion of researchers outside of Ohio State is allowed, but such inclusion cannot be the sole basis for interdisciplinarity. Personnel from core facilities or services similarly do not fulfill the requirement for faculty representing different disciplines. A faculty member may submit only one application per cycle as PI or co-PI and resubmissions are limited to one. PIs and/or co-PIs who have received IDI Interdisciplinary Seed Grant awards are not eligible for additional awards for two years after the award date. For example, if you received an IDI Interdisciplinary Seed Grant award in the spring 2023 round, you are not eligible to submit a proposal until the fall 2025 round.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Seed grant applications will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers representing various disciplines and areas of specialization within the IDI thematic areas, using an NIH-style review format and scoring system. As such, it is the responsibility of the PI and the proposal team to draft the proposal for panel of reviewers of diverse expertise. Review panel results will be provided to the IDI Executive Committee for final funding decisions based on availability of funds and strategic investment decisions. All requests for funding will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Significance/Scope and Impact: The research project should address an important problem or critical barrier in the field of infectious diseases or microbiology and further the goals of IDI by contributing to meaningful advancements in one (or more) of the following thematic programs (A-E): A. Antimicrobial Resistance B. Ecology, Epidemiology & Population Health C. Host Defense & Microbial Biology D. Microbial Communities E. Viruses & Emerging Pathogens

2. Investigator(s)/Interdisciplinarity: Proposals must be clearly interdisciplinary in nature, representing two or more areas. The team members should be well suited for the project and bring complementary expertise. The individual roles of faculty leads should be explained and how they will be integrated into the project.



3. Innovation/Extramural Potential: Specific aims and proposed work should be novel and innovative. The potential for return on investment for the research project in the form of subsequent extramural funding is critical, and any commercialization activities related to this seed grant must be reported to the IDI. Applicants should identify clear plans to apply for external funding that are based upon the proposed work. Applicants should address why IDI funding is critical to this effort.

4. Approach/Feasibility: The overall strategy and methods to achieve the specific aims should be sound and well-reasoned. Potential problems and alternative approaches should be addressed. Human subject and vertebrate animal considerations should be briefly described.

TIMELINE AND FUNDING

Applications are accepted twice per year. The maximum seed grant award amount is \$25,000 for a one-year project. The work proposed and funds requested should be realistic, appropriate for the work and timeframe, and well justified. Cost sharing by departments/colleges is not required.

CYCLE	REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS	APPLICATIONS DUE	EARLIEST START DATE
Fall	September 1	October 1	December 1
Spring	March 1	April 1	June 1

We strongly encourage applicants to express their intent to apply for a seed grant in advance of the application deadline.

- Please email IDI@osu.edu with the following:
 - Name of PI
 - Names of co-investigators
 - Project title
- Please do so by September 15 for Fall cycles and March 15 for Spring cycles

FUNDING PROCESS AND EXPECTATIONS

Funding decisions will be communicated via email following discussion of meritorious awards with the IDI Executive Committee (typically within 60 days of the proposal due date). Proposals that are not selected for funding may be revised according to feedback and resubmitted once in a subsequent round. A formal award letter requiring the PI(s) signature(s) will be sent prior to the release of funds. IDI staff will work with the applicant’s college/departmental fiscal professional to coordinate a funds transfer. Funds may not be used to cover prior period expenses and may not be subsequently transferred to other funds.

By accepting an IDI Interdisciplinary Seed Grant, the PI must agree to the following:

- Serve as an IDI Interdisciplinary Seed Grant reviewer for the cycle following the cycle in which the proposal was awarded.
- Any commercialization activities related to this seed grant must be reported to the IDI
- The IDI financial support will be acknowledged in all materials or publications arising from the work.
- A final progress report summarizing results and their use in extramural funding plans will be submitted as required.



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- Annual updates up to 5 years after award date regarding outcomes of the seed grant (e.g., publications, presentations, grant submissions, grant awards, intellectual property) will be submitted within two weeks of the request date
- The IDI cost center CC10995 must be listed on the ePA-005 (at 0% award credit) for any extramural proposals that arise from this award.



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH SEED GRANTS: APPLICATION

Applicants should carefully review the Interdisciplinary Research Seed Grant Guidelines prior to preparing an application. If you have questions about the Interdisciplinary Research Seed Grant program, eligibility for submission, and whether your proposal meets the criteria for a seed grant (i.e., innovative, interdisciplinary, well-defined research projects), please reach out to the IDI Interdisciplinary Research Seed Grant Program chair, Chad Rappleye (rappleye.1@osu.edu).

Applications are limited to THREE pages, including any charts, graphs, and tables associated with sections A “Introduction” and B “Project Narrative” below. References, timeline, resubmission narrative, budget summary table, budget narrative/justification, and biosketches are NOT included in the three-page limit. Applications must be single-spaced with half-inch (.5) margins and 11-point font (or larger). Applications that exceed or attempt to bypass formatting requirements to gain additional space will be returned without review.

Proposals are due at 5:00PM EST on the dates shown in the funding cycle table above. If the due date falls on a weekend or university holiday, the due date is the next business day at 5:00PM EST. Applicants are required to submit proposals via the [IDI Qualtrics survey](#). The proposal must be attached to the Qualtrics survey as a single PDF document. You will receive an email confirming your application submission. Applications should be organized as follows:

A. Introduction

- **Title**
- **Abstract:** Brief description of the proposed research project, in terms that are understandable to a general scientific audience. (~150 words). Include a brief description of the problem and gap addressed by the proposed research as well as how the proposal aligns with or supports one or more thematic program(s).
- **Interdisciplinary Team/Network:** Provide a list of team members and their affiliation (college and department). Describe their project roles/responsibilities and how their involvement will contribute to success. Discuss unique aspects of the team/network and address any new partnerships, collaborations, funding, or commercialization opportunities.
- **Innovation:** Describe what is novel and innovative about the proposed project. State how this work is distinct from other projects (proposals and awards) of the members of the research team. (~150 words)

B. Project Narrative

- **Rationale and Significance:** What is the significance of the overarching line of research investigation? Include the current status of research, any preliminary data, and summarize significant published work in the literature.
- **Objectives/Aims:** Describe the scope of the project. Include a clear statement of the specific objectives/aims, including hypotheses to be tested and research questions to be addressed.
- **Research Methods/Approach:** Briefly articulate the research design, methods, data analysis, application of results, and discussion of any limitations of the procedures. Be sure to briefly address considerations related to human or animal subjects.



- **Expected Outcomes:** Provide a detailed description of the outcomes expected from the project (e.g., extramural funding proposals, publications), including new findings and/or insights that will be generated and how activities will be integrated across infectious disease teaching and research. What is the specific plan to translate results of the proposed work to applications for significant extramural funding, including agencies and funding mechanisms?

The following information (including sections C “Budget Summary,” D “Budget Narrative/Justification,” and E “Faculty Biosketches”) is not included in the three-page limit.

- **References**
- **Timeline:** Include a table or Gantt chart of key milestones or outcomes with their associated dates.
- **Resubmission Narrative:** If this proposal is a resubmission, please explain what changes were made to the proposal based on reviewer feedback received from a previous round and the date of original submission. (Maximum of 250 words)
- **Animal/Human Subject Information:** If this proposal includes animal and/or human subjects, please provide detailed information.

C. Budget Summary

Item (and brief description)	Requested Funds	Matching Support (Not required, but list as applicable)
A. Personnel (Salary & Benefits) <i>(Note: Faculty effort is not allowable)</i>		
B. Supplies		
C. Equipment		
D. Outreach		
E. Travel		
F. Services		
G. Other		
Total (\$)		

D. Budget Narrative/Justification

E. Faculty Biosketches: Biosketches for the faculty PI(s) and Co-I(s) must be submitted with the grant. Please use the standard NIH format or similar biosketch to include current and pending funding. Each biosketch limited to no more than 5 pages in length.