Institute for Human Infections and Immunity
PILOT RESEARCH GRANTS IN INFECTIONS OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this IHII Pilot Grant Program is to stimulate the development of new interdisciplinary research initiatives on infections of the central nervous system. UTMB has considerable strength in neurosciences and infectious diseases, but few collaborations between these research communities. Because interdisciplinary research in this area represents a potential unique niche for our research programs, pilot funding is being made available to encourage collaborations that will lead to externally funded projects and that will also serve as examples of novel research approaches that capitalize on our expertise and facilities.

ELIGIBILITY

Any IHII faculty member is eligible to apply, and investigators with strong track records of external funding as well as junior faculty without major start-up resources are especially encouraged. Proposals must include the major involvement of neuroscientists and be truly interdisciplinary in nature.

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

An ad hoc committee of infectious disease and neuroscience investigators will review all proposals. Reviewers will be asked to address the strengths and weakness of the proposal, as well as the likelihood that successful completion of the proposed project will advance the IHII’s goals and will lead to new extramural grant support, especially for major NIH initiatives. Reviewers will specifically be asked to comment in the following categories:

Significance: Does the study address an important topic related to infections of the central nervous system? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the overall UTMB infectious disease program and on achieving interdisciplinary, collaborative research between the IHII and neuroscience communities?

Approach: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

Innovation: Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?

Investigator: Are the investigators appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Does the project represent a true collaboration between infectious disease and neuroscience investigators?

Environment: Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful, novel collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?

FUNDING AVAILABLE

Funding of up to $30,000 for FY14, with a start date of March 1, 2014, is available (i.e. 6 months) and a second year of up to $50,000 will be available subject to the availability of funding and adequate progress. Faculty salary will not be funded, and requests for equipment and travel must be highly justified and must be part of the work plan (i.e. travel to attend scientific conferences will not be funded). If extramural funding is obtained for the same project in excess of the amount of the award, during the period of IHII support, the unexpended funds will be returned to the IHII for reallocation. An investigator may hold only one IHII Pilot Research Grant at any time. Recipients of an IHII Pilot Grant may reapply for another award only upon termination of his/her existing Pilot Research Grant, and the evaluations of final reports from past IHII grants will be considered. Grantees and mentors agree by acceptance of funding to include the IHII in their affiliation on all publications and presentations arising from the grant, and to acknowledge IHII financial support. The IHII will expect the submission of a related extramural grant within 6 months of completing IHII pilot funding for an investigator to be eligible to apply for future IHII awards.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Grant Preparation:
Applicants should complete the following forms in the order listed (copies of all PHS 398 forms are available at

- PHS 398 Form Page 1 – Face Page
- PHS 398 Form Page 2 – Abstract and Performance Site(s)
- PHS 398 Form Page 3 – Table of Contents
- PHS 398 Form Page 4 – Detailed Budget for Initial Budget Period
- PHS 398 Form Page 5 – Budget for Entire Proposed Project Period
- PHS 398 Continuation pages containing the following information:

1. A description of how the proposed project will foster collaborative engagements between infectious diseases and neuroscience investigators. **This section should not exceed ½ page.**
2. A description of how IHII support will lead to new extramural grant support and novel, interdisciplinary research approaches. **This section should not exceed ½ page.**
3. **The proposed research plan:** Organize the research plan to answer these questions. (a) What do you intend to do? (Specific Aims) (b) Why is the work important? (Significance); what has already been done? (Background) (c) How are you going to do the work/interpret the results? (Experimental Approach and Methods). Please include a statement of the relevance of the proposed project to the goals of the IHII. **This section should not exceed 3 pages.**

The following section should not exceed fifteen pages.

1. A list of cited literature
2. **PHS 398 Biographical Sketch:** A current 4 page NIH-style biographical sketch including other support information) should be included for the principal investigator and all co-investigators. Junior investigators should also list start-up funds available for their research program.
3. **OSP proposal routing form:** An Office of Sponsored Programs Proposal Routing form must accompany all intramural research grant applications (copies of this form are available at the OSP web page: [http://research.utmb.edu/osp/forms.shtm](http://research.utmb.edu/osp/forms.shtm))

**Grant Submission:** Please submit the grant application as a **single PDF file** to:

IHII Pilot Research Program  
C/O Mary Ives  
6.200 Galveston National Laboratory, Route 0610

Direct inquiries about the preparation of your application to Andrew McNees, PhD at extension 66506 or via email (amcnees@utmb.edu).

Applications are due by **January 15, 2014 by 5 PM**. Late applications will not be reviewed unless there are extenuating circumstances and an extension is approved by the IHII Director. While investigators may submit more than one application for consideration in a single round of competition, no more than one grant will be awarded to an investigator in a given round.

**Awards will be made on approximately March 1, 2014.**