

## Call for Applications

The **Oklahoma Tobacco Research Center (OTRC)** is soliciting applications for seed grant funding for FY 2011, the program's third annual funding cycle. Applications are invited for Research Projects for Junior Investigators, which includes new research ideas and the collection of preliminary data that will enable investigators to compete successfully for national research grants. A Principal Investigator (PI) is considered a Junior Investigator if he/she has not previously competed successfully as PI for a significant NIH independent research award (such as an R01).

OTRC expects to fund three to six proposals in FY11, with a maximum term of one year and maximum direct costs of \$50,000. Only applications screened as relevant to OTRC's mission will be accepted for review. A letter of intent with a brief description of the proposal is **required**. These submissions will be reviewed by the OTRC Scientific Advisory Committee and those identified as most relevant and promising will be invited to submit a complete proposal.

### Key Dates:

January 29, 2010: Letter of intent with brief description due. Send to...Laura DeLongy, OTRC Program Coordinator, [laura-delongy@ouhsc.edu](mailto:laura-delongy@ouhsc.edu), 405-271-8001 ext 50484

February 22, 2010: PIs will be notified if full application is requested

March 31, 2010: Full application due

May 3, 2010: Funding decisions made

July 1, 2010: Start date for awards

Awards must be initiated and completed during FY11, July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011.

Research Project applications that specifically address one of OTRC's primary research areas will have a greater likelihood of success. If this is the type of award you are seeking, you are urged to read the section in this document on primary research areas. If you have questions about these areas and the relevance of your proposal, you are encouraged to contact the OTRC Director at 405-271-2229 ext. 48061.

**Letters of Intent (either hard copy via mail or e-copy via email) must be received by 5:00 pm, Friday, January 29, 2010.**

**Full Applications (either hard copy via mail or e-copy via email) must be received by 5:00 pm, Wednesday, March 31, 2010.**

**No late materials or changes to your application will be allowed after the submission deadline.**

## Eligibility

Investigators from Oklahoma universities, state, tribal, and not-for-profit organizations are eligible for funding. Research undertaken with OTRC funds must be conducted primarily in Oklahoma. The PI must conduct and supervise the research project directly and in person. Eligible PIs include only Junior Investigators with the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research. A PI is considered a Junior Investigator if he/she has not previously competed successfully as PI for a significant NSF or NIH independent research award (such as an R01). Post-doctoral fellows are not eligible as PIs unless he/she will be assuming a faculty position at an Oklahoma university on or before July 1, 2010.

Current recipients of OTRC seed grant funding are not eligible.

Previously unfunded seed grant proposal PIs are encouraged to revise and re-submit applications using prior peer review comments as guidance. Revised, resubmitted proposal must also submit a Letter of Intent for this funding round.

PIs must also be OTRC members. OTRC membership is open to Oklahoma researchers, students, professionals and providers with an interest in tobacco control and prevention, cessation, or the etiology or prevention of tobacco-related diseases. To become a member, please go to <http://www.ouhsc.edu/otrc/membership.asp>.

## Maximum Annual Award

Maximum annual direct costs: \$50,000.

Indirect costs are paid to eligible institutions. (See below for information on indirect costs.)

**Term:** 1 year, July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011.

## Indirect Costs

In accordance with TSET's indirect cost policy, OTRC seed grant indirect costs are limited to an amount not to exceed 10% of all direct costs associated with the project.

## The OTRC Mission and Goals

*The mission of the OTRC is to reduce the burden of tobacco-related health problems in Oklahoma by stimulating the generation and dissemination of knowledge and the implementation and diffusion of effective practices.*

The goals of the OTRC are:

- To facilitate research that advances the prevention and treatment of tobacco related health problems.
- To facilitate the dissemination and exchange of knowledge relevant to the reduction of tobacco use and tobacco related health problems.

- To foster the implementation and diffusion of evidence-based practices relevant to the prevention and treatment of tobacco use and tobacco-related health problems.

OTRC funds research in all relevant scientific disciplines designed to improve tobacco control (i.e., public policies and programs for the prevention and cessation of tobacco use and nicotine addiction, and for reduction of exposure to secondhand smoke), and the diagnosis and treatment of tobacco-related disease (i.e., cancer, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease, pulmonary disease, and reproductive and other adverse health effects). **Research that is community-based and utilizes a collaborative approach, with direct application or translation to Oklahoma tobacco prevention and control programs, is particularly encouraged.**

The program advances tobacco-related science by:

- funding only the highest quality research, as determined by peer review
- supporting a comprehensive research infrastructure in Oklahoma
- encouraging talented investigators to pursue careers in tobacco research
- supporting participatory research with diverse communities and schools
- disseminating the results of funded research to OTRC stakeholders
- serving as an information resource on critical tobacco issues

## Source of Funds

In 2007, the Oklahoma Tobacco Research Center (OTRC) was established within the OU Cancer Institute to reduce the burden of tobacco-related health problems in Oklahoma by stimulating the generation and dissemination of knowledge and the implementation and diffusion of effective practices. Funding was provided by the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) with the purpose of extending the impact of TSET's tobacco control initiatives and leveraging TSET's investments to bring additional funding dollars from the NCI, CDC, and other sources to bear on tobacco use in Oklahoma.

## Evaluation Process

Letters of Intent and full applications in response to this call will be reviewed by the OTRC Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC is a panel of reviewers recruited from multiple research entities in Oklahoma specifically for their expertise in the scientific disciplines relevant to tobacco research.

The SAC will review Letters of Intent and identify those most relevant and promising. Full applications will be requested based on this review.

The SAC will evaluate full proposals and assign both a scientific merit score to each application as well as a score reflecting the relevance of the proposal to the mission of the OTRC. The assigned scientific merit score is based on a scale similar to that used by the National Institutes of Health. The SAC may also decide that an application is not sufficiently competitive and choose not to assign a score. Such an application will no longer be eligible for funding.

The assigned scores for applications are one factor in the decision-making process. Together with responsiveness to the program's mission, the scores are used by the SAC to recommend specific applications for funding.

Funding decisions will be announced in May 2010.

## **Relevance**

All submitted Letters of Intent and full applications are initially screened for their direct relevance to tobacco use or tobacco-related diseases. In evaluating the relevance of proposals, the SAC will consider whether the research is likely to result immediately or eventually in knowledge that will substantially reduce the frequency and/or severity of tobacco related illnesses in Oklahoma.

Proposed research that is not relevant is not eligible for funding and therefore will not undergo peer review for scientific merit. It is incumbent on the applicant to make a compelling case that the proposed work is directly relevant to the mission of OTRC.

With regard to biomedical research, relevant proposals either address the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, or treatment of a tobacco-related disease or investigate the impact of tobacco or tobacco smoke components on the development and/or progression of a disease. If a clear link between tobacco use and a disease is not well-established and accepted in the scientific literature, the investigator must propose an appropriate epidemiological or biological study to investigate a possible association.

If the focus of a study (i.e., a molecule, pathway, or physiological mechanism) has not been shown in the scientific literature to be affected by tobacco use, the proposal must either provide preliminary data demonstrating such an effect or include experiments to examine this link as a first stage of the project. The latter will require a justification in support of the likelihood of an association with or causation by tobacco use or tobacco smoke components.

## **Investigators from Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Groups**

OTRC recognizes the value to science and society of increasing the number of investigators who are members of racial and ethnic groups underrepresented among tobacco-related researchers. Underrepresented racial and ethnic investigators are encouraged to submit applications.

## **Primary Research Areas**

The following areas represent significant tobacco-related health problems or issues important for Oklahoma:

### **Prevention and Cessation of Tobacco Use and Tobacco-Related Health Disparities in Oklahoma's Diverse Populations**

Prevention and cessation of tobacco use in racial and ethnic groups, youth and young adults, women and girls, rural populations, and populations with co-addictions or mental disorders;

detection, diagnosis, and treatment of tobacco-related disease in these understudied populations; the differential distribution of tobacco-related cardiovascular, pulmonary disease and cancer in these populations; traditions, habits and patterns of tobacco use in these populations; relevant environmental or genetic variables in these populations.

### **Public Policy and Economics of Tobacco Use**

The effectiveness of public policies and programs for tobacco control, including their economic impact, especially among Oklahoma's diverse populations; the role of anti- and pro-tobacco forces and activities in shaping and affecting Oklahoma's tobacco control policies, including new strategies employed by the tobacco industry to establish and maintain political and commercial influence in Oklahoma; and, studies of approaches to enhance the effectiveness of tobacco control efforts in Oklahoma, especially those programs supported by the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET).

### **Secondhand Smoke**

Assessment of exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS), especially measures or models of exposure to SHS in non-laboratory settings (e.g., residences such as apartments or houses, outdoor dining areas, and building entrances and ventilation areas); the relationship of exposure to SHS and tobacco-related disease or reproductive health effects; and, program interventions, public policy, and economic studies designed to minimize or eliminate SHS.

### **Lung and Other Tobacco-Related Cancers**

Etiology and pathogenesis; molecular markers of susceptibility, inception, and progression; state-of-the-art methods for early detection and screening; novel and innovative treatments, particularly molecular-targeted therapies and pharmacogenomics; and chemoprevention.

### **Cardiovascular and Cerebrovascular Disease**

Mechanisms by which tobacco use promotes development or complications of cardiovascular disease and stroke, especially by pathologic effects on vascular function, inflammation, oxidation, thrombosis, or metabolism.

### **Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)**

Inception and pathogenesis of chronic bronchitis and emphysema (collectively "chronic obstructive pulmonary disease"); the molecular genetic mechanisms underlying differences in COPD susceptibility and progression, including differences between genders; and, research on more effective diagnostic and therapeutic options.

### **Development of Nicotine Dependence Treatments**

Disrupting the nicotine reward mechanism; understanding and developing treatments that can block the uptake of nicotine, either through desensitizing or "vaccinating" tobacco users; and animal or human studies to elucidate interventions that can break the causal chain in nicotine addiction and lead to more effective treatments for nicotine addiction and smoking cessation.

## Application Process

OTRC Research Award Application Form: [Click Here](#)

Certification of Non-Acceptance of Tobacco Funds: [Click Here](#)

Guidelines for Letters of Intent:

1. Cover letter on institutional letterhead with PI contact information, title of proposal, 2-3 sentence description, and other collaborators.
2. Brief description of the project (3-5 pages maximum) to include
  - OTRC relevance statement, specifically how the proposed research will benefit the Oklahoma Tobacco Control program and advance the mission of the OTRC
  - Background/rationale for the study
  - Specific aims/research questions
  - Methodology
  - Expected results

Letters of Intent are due January 29, 2010.

If a full application is requested after review of the Letter of Intent, each application must include:

1. Completed Research Award Application Form
2. PI Biosketch on NIH PHS 398 biosketch format page
3. Itemized budget using NIH PHS 398 form page 4
4. Detailed budget justification
5. Abstract of the proposal not to exceed 350 words
6. Project description not to exceed 10 pages, including the following information:
  - a. OTRC relevance statement
  - b. Background and significance
  - c. Research Plan and Methods
  - d. Literature cited
7. Relevant letters of support (if necessary)
8. Signed Certification of Non-Acceptance of Tobacco Funds

Full Applications are due March 31, 2010 at:

Oklahoma Tobacco Research Center  
Attn: Laura DeLongy  
975 NE 10th Street, BRC West Room 1474  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73104  
[laura-delongy@ouhsc.edu](mailto:laura-delongy@ouhsc.edu)

Questions concerning the **application or award process** should be directed to:

Laura DeLongy, OTRC Program Coordinator  
405-271-8001 ext 50484  
[laura-delongy@ouhsc.edu](mailto:laura-delongy@ouhsc.edu)