

*Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation (IAMI)
The University of Kansas*

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Deadline: June 12, 2009

Program Overview

Inspired by the opportunity to grow educational and entrepreneurial capacity, the Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation (IAMI) at KU was established upon the belief that: *ideas are translated to innovation to improve health*. The Institute will focus on education and research that advances medical innovations. The result will ultimately accelerate the number and quality of new drugs, medical devices, and drug–medical device combinations flowing from the investigator’s bench to the patient’s bedside. IAMI was created in December 2008 at KU through a partnership involving the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the KU Endowment Association. Combined, both organizations committed a total of \$16.1 million of seed funding to support IAMI for five years; with a long-term goal to make IAMI self-sufficient.

The Institute is being led by Dr. Scott Weir; who has joint appointments at both campuses. IAMI is forming collaborative relationships with faculty and researchers involved in pharmaceutical and bioengineering research from both campuses and associated with various KU schools, academic departments, institutes, and centers. An industry advisory board consisting of internationally recognized leaders in medical innovation will provide overall strategic leadership.

IAMI is developing a unique and novel approach for generating medical innovation by integrating entrepreneurial education with Proof-Of-Concept (POC) research projects that will be performed by KU faculty and researchers. These projects will become a high priority and the Institute expects to support several of these projects on an annual basis. POC projects are intended to be applied research projects that demonstrate early-stage technical viability in terms of solving problems and/or providing significant improvements associated with known drug and medical device technology platforms. To generate these POC projects, IAMI is implementing periodic Requests For Proposals as to generate a portfolio of funded projects that ultimately generate new medical innovation into the marketplace.

Overview of the Request For Proposals (RFP)

Description of Proof-Of-Concept (POC) Projects

The goal of the POC projects is to generate new and innovative drugs, medical devices, and drug- device combinations. These projects will take advantage of KU’s R&D expertise in pharmacy, bioengineering, and medicine. The following are examples of areas that are expected to be addressed through the POC projects:

- Novel drug targets
- Novel drug candidates
- Drug formulation
- Drug delivery platforms
- Medical devices
- Biomaterials
- Combination drug-devices
- Bioengineering tools for developing devices, materials, and combinations

POC projects will have the following characteristics:

1. Applied research that represents an extension from a base of strong, innovative, and fundamental scientific research at KU.
2. Research that can demonstrate initial or early-stage technical viability in terms of solving or diminishing significant problems or providing significant improvements associated with known technology and products platforms related to drugs, medical devices, and/or medicine.
3. The technical approach is unique and novel.
4. Defined milestones that are achievable within a specified timeframe and have the potential to evolve into subsequent phases of early-stage technology and/or product development.

Eligibility

Full-time, faculty and professional research staff employed by the University of Kansas located at the Lawrence and KUMC campuses are eligible to apply as the Principal Investigator and/or Co-Principal Investigators. Each project must have one Principal Investigator and he or she can apply as the Principal Investigator for multiple projects. However, an individual can only be awarded one grant per each RFP as a Principal Investigator. Individuals may apply as Co-Principal Investigator on multiple projects.

Because the technical focus of the projects will be in one or more of the areas of pharmaceuticals, bioengineering and/or medicine, the Principal Investigators are expected to be associated with the schools of Pharmacy; Engineering; Medicine; Allied Health; and other departments, institutes, and centers which have strong research efforts related to drugs, medical devices, and/or medicine. Co-Principal Investigators can be associated with any KU school, institute, or center.

Project Duration

Because the focus is on funding proof-of-concept projects, the duration for each project will be based upon meeting project milestones. It is anticipated that many of the projects will be completed within 12 months. Each funded project may be extended and/or renewed based upon how well the project milestones are achieved. Renewal for existing projects will be evaluated on a competitive basis with new project applications.

Project Budget and Allowable Expenses

Project funding is determined by the scope of work and in meeting project milestones. It is anticipated that most projects will range between \$50,000 to \$100,000. For this RFP, a total of 12 – 15 projects are expected to be funded. Funds are to be used for KU expenses and these include: salary support of faculty, graduate and doctoral students, and other research staff; operating supplies; minor equipment items; prototyping expenses; imaging time; and travel directly associated with the research activity. The project budget may include non-KU expenses if it can be demonstrated that KU does not have the necessary personnel or facilities to perform the specified research tasks.

Interdisciplinary Research Approach

In many cases, medical innovation comes about through the “cross-pollination” of ideas from researchers with different backgrounds. Additionally, medical research that involves interaction with clinicians, physicians, patients, and/or medical companies has a higher probability of being commercialized and improving patient care. Therefore, interdisciplinary and collaborative research is a high priority. Principal Investigators are strongly encouraged to put together research teams that represent different but related backgrounds. Potential examples of these research teams include:

- Researchers from two or more of the following: schools of Pharmacy, Engineering, Medicine, or Allied Health; or other departments, institutes, and centers which have strong research efforts related to drugs, medical devices, and medicine.
- Researcher(s) from KU-Lawrence and/or KUMC (as stated in the first bullet) *and* a physician or clinician at KUMC.

- Researcher(s) from KU-Lawrence and/or KUMC (as stated in the first bullet) *and* a physician, clinician, patient's group, and/or drug or medical device company outside of KU.

Evaluation Criteria and Process

The project proposals will be evaluated on five main criteria:

1. Potential to improve health care.
2. Technical merit and uniqueness of research.
3. Meeting the parameters of proof-of-concept research.
4. Level of interdisciplinary and collaborative research.
5. Likelihood for commercialization.

Each proposal will be evaluated by the IAMI industrial advisory board in accordance with the set of evaluation criteria. The board will make the award decisions. All funded projects will be subject to standard KU compliance policies.

Timeline

RFP released:	April 24, 2009
Proposals due:	June 12, 2009
Evaluations completed:	August 19, 2009
Awards announced:	August 21, 2009

Post Award Project Management

One of the key aspects of this POC program is that each funded project will receive ongoing project support and guidance from one or more project directors employed by IAMI to help advance the research towards the next steps in the overall commercialization process. The vision is that each project will have a multi-functional team that uses a broad base of resources to fully respond to the wide spectrum of topics that are typically associated with POC projects. Each team will develop project milestones and should expect to provide periodic updates to IAMI.

Secondly, for those proposals that are not funded, the IAMI team plans to evaluate them for possible next steps. For example, some of these proposals could be revised to better meet the POC criteria and resubmitted at a later date. Or the proposal may be better positioned for a federal research grant or other funding opportunities. The goal is for IAMI to generate as much value as possible from the proposals.

Help Desk for Submitting Proposals

IAMI will provide a help desk for KU researchers that plan to submit proposals to answer questions and provide basic assistance in completing the proposal application. The point of contact for all proposals is Michael Hughes with the Office of Project and Portfolio Management, oppm@kumc.edu (913-588-2079). Based on the nature of the questions and/or the primary area of focus, Michael will refer questions to a member of the IAMI management team who will assist in the application process.

Application

To view or download a copy of the formal application and instructions, go to <http://www2.kumc.edu/iami/>
The length of the proposal should range between 5 to 10 pages and not exceed 10 pages.

Submission

To improve the proposal development process, IAMI would greatly appreciate those researchers who intend to submit proposals, send an email to IAMI by **May 15, 2009** and express their intent. This email should contain the researcher's name, proposal title, and very short project description. **Full applications must be submitted by June 12, 2009.** All correspondence should be sent via e-mail to Michael Hughes, oppm@kumc.edu