

Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

(Updated 10/13/09)

1. **Must I register with TEDCO Funds for every new proposal and/or RFP that I wish to submit a proposal for?**
 - A given individual should only register once to be eligible to apply for any RFP for which their institution (university or company) is eligible. Re-registration with TEDCO Funds leads to multiple applications under a single PI or confusion as to which version of a PI is associated with each proposal.
2. **How do I register for TEDCO Funds?**
 - Go to <http://www.tedcofunds.org/Portal.asp> and click on "Create a new user account" link in the column on the left (the second item listed). This will allow you to populate your contact information in our system and request a user id and password. The TEDCO Staff will respond to your request within 1 working day.
3. **How do I apply?**
 - Click on "TEDCO Funds Quick Application Checklist" and read the User Manual for Stem Cells and then go to <http://www.tedcofunds.org/Portal.asp> login and start a new application according to the instructions.
4. **How do I submit a Letter of Intent?**
 - Letters of Intent were due November 12, 2009. If you did not submit a letter of intent by the deadline you are NOT eligible to submit a proposal for funding under either RFA. The purpose of letters of intent is to assemble an appropriate Scientific Review Committee so letters of intent will still be accepted and are encouraged but not required.
5. To submit a letter of intent go to <http://www.tedcofunds.org> and click on "Send Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund Letter of Intent" on the left side corner of the page. From there, you will be directed to a new email message. Attach the Letter of Intent to the email and press send.
6. **I am involved with two different projects as Principal Investigator ("PI"). Can I apply separately for both projects?**
 - No. An individual may only serve as the PI in one Application for an Investigator-Initiated Research Grant or an Exploratory Research Grant. However, you may participate as an additional investigator or collaborator in any number of Applications under the two RFAs.
7. **Can a postdoc serve as PI in an exploratory grant?**
 - The Principal Investigator (PI), who also may be known as the Project Director (PD), is the individual, designated by the awardee, responsible for the scientific or technical aspects of the grant and for day-to-day management of the project or program. Each Applicant sets rules as to who may serve as Principal Investigator for extramurally funded research programs. An authorized Principal Investigator at an Applicant may submit a proposal to the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund. The MSCRF Scientific Review Committee will consider during peer review whether the Principal Investigator on a proposal has the appropriate qualifications to fulfill the role of PI.
8. **What is included in the 15 page Research Plan and what additional items are required or permitted?**
 - The RFA specifies that "Applications for Investigator-Initiated/Exploratory Research Grants shall not exceed fifteen (15) pages, including tables and figures, and including all required sections other than the two Project Summaries." The RFA 15-page limit

refers to the TEDCO Funds Research Plan section, which includes specific aims, background and significance, preliminary studies, research design and methods, budget and budget justification, as well as the sections on translation potential and/or plan, impact on biotechnology in Maryland, and ethics.

- In implementing the RFA, TEDCO Funds has several Application Information Pages that make up the proposal. These include: Application Program Information, Project Description . Technical, Project Description . Non-technical, Key Personnel, Other Significant Contributors, Translational Potential or Plan, Research Plan, Appendices and Budget Overview.
- The TEDCO Funds Budget Overview pages include detailed line-item budgets for each program component (one component each for the primary applicant and any consortium members). The online forms for the detailed budget are not part of the Research Plan and do not count against the 15 page limit. The Research Plan must include a budget section that incorporates only the Budget Overview table from TEDCO Funds. **Proposals do not have to include NIH format budget pages.**
- The two required Summaries are separate and in addition to this 15 page length limit. The two Project Summaries can not exceed 3,000 characters each. They do not have to be duplicated in the Appendix.
- **Literature cited need not be included in the page-limited Research Plan.** Literature cited should be included in the Appendix along with biosketches, list of available resources and human and animal subjects sections. One Appendix is permitted for each application. The Appendix is separate and in addition to the Research Plan, the references and the Project Summaries. The Appendix shall not exceed an additional 25 pages, including tables and figures
- The TEDCO Funds system requires an applicant to fill in several forms that correspond roughly to the first several pages of an NIH grant proposal. The text in these Application forms does not count against the 15 page limit.
- Consultants' letters of support stating their willingness and commitment to help on the proposed studies can be part of the 25 page limit appendix.
- Although there are no required forms to use other than the online forms in TEDCO Funds, it is permissible to use NIH format forms (e.g. Biosketches, Resources, etc.) to submit required information.
- **Resubmitting** applications can use up to three additional pages in the appendix (Max of 28 pages) to answer the reviewers' critiques.

9. I am a university research administrator and I registered to submit my PI's grant proposal. Can I submit on behalf of my PIs or do my PIs have to submit proposals themselves?

- Administrators at the universities with the authority to submit grant proposals to extramural funding agencies are designated as Agency Authorized Officials in TEDCO Funds. Faculty and staff members who are not authorized to submit proposals are designated as Applicant Administrators. Applicant Administrators can create and edit proposals to the Stem Cell Research Fund in TEDCO Funds. Only Agency Authorized Officials may submit proposals. University research administrators may contact TEDCO to discuss alternate arrangements that are consistent with their existing policies. Companies must set their internal policies regarding appropriate roles for Principal Investigators / Project Directors. There is also a designation within TEDCO Funds for Applicant Staff who may edit existing proposals to which they have been given access by their institution. Please contact TEDCO via email at MSCRFinfo@marylandtedco.org to designate specific individuals for any of these roles.

10. Do the Investigator-Initiated Grants and Exploratory Research Grants include indirect costs?

- The limits for Investigator-Initiated Grants and for Exploratory Research Grants are for direct costs only. Facilities and Administrative costs (indirect costs), not to exceed fifteen percent (15%) of direct costs are also allowed.
11. **Can a federal laboratory apply for a grant from the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund?**
 - Federal laboratories are not eligible to apply for Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund grants. However, a federal laboratory in Maryland may be a collaborator in a Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund project if the laboratory is in Maryland.
 12. **Are grants examining disease models in animal models (e.g., mice) along with human experiments allowed for this funding mechanism?**
 - Grant proposals to the MSCRF must involve work on human stem cells. Tasks in support of a project exploring human stem cells may involve any scientifically appropriate tasks, including work on animal models.
 13. **In your Request for Applications it says that applications should be prepared according to the guidelines established for PHS398. Should the application be prepared and submitted on the NIH forms as well? Specifically, should I use the NIH face page and checklist forms? The TEDCO Funds website has a different format for the electronic submission than what the NIH forms require.**
 - The reference in the RFA to PHS398 guidelines was meant to refer to font size, margins and other mechanical aspects of the documents to be submitted. The application should be prepared in accordance with the RFA instructions and submitted through TEDCO Funds as described in FAQs 1 . 3. The program announcement will use forms on the TEDCO Funds on-line proposal submission and management system at www.tedcofunds.org. Interested parties should register with TEDCO Funds and download instructions on how to submit from the TEDCO website at: http://www.mscref.org/_media/client/pdf/fundingopps/TEDCOFunds_Instruction.pdf
 14. **What type of budget format, modular or non modular, should MSCRF proposal budgets that we are submitting to the State?**
 - The modular format is not available for MSCRF proposals under either RFA. Stem cell proposal budgets must be prepared in line item format using TEDCOFunds.
 15. **As an Agency Authorized Official, I am wondering how we will be notified of when the applications are ready for us to submit. Will we receive an e-mail, or do we need to rely on our investigators to let us know that they have completed the electronic application**
 - Agency Authorized Officials may log onto TEDCOFunds and get a list of applications in process either in their task list or by clicking on the Quick Link View All Applicant Applications. The Agency Authorized Official will have a Submit button active when the application is ready to submit. By clicking on this and answering the questions on the subsequent verification pages you can submit an application. Although TEDCOFunds does not automatically notify Agency Authorized Officials when an application is able to be submitted, the Principal Investigator should notify you when they are ready to submit their application.
 16. **For the budget requirements, there are two categories for Personnel and Fringe, one that ends with Fringe and another with Personnel. Does it matter which one we use?**
 - The Personnel and Fringe Benefits category in the TEDCO Funds budget pages has two subcategories: Personnel and Fringe Benefits. The Personnel subcategory refers to salary expense for personnel. The Fringe Benefits category refers to fringe benefits for

personnel and should be used to request funding for fringe benefits. Each entry should contain the information requested in the [TEDCO Funds Quick Application Checklist](#).

17. **One of our principal investigators is considering using a university outside of Maryland to do some analysis for a project to be proposed to the Stem Cell Fund. The research would be done here, but the level of analysis that the outside university can provide would be very helpful. Can we do a subcontract with a university outside of Maryland using some MSCRF funding for this purpose?**
 - The RFA states that collaborations with non-Maryland based organizations or persons may be allowable so long as the applicant can demonstrate that none of the MSCRF funding will be used for personnel costs outside the State of Maryland. Personnel costs outside of MD are not eligible for MD stem cell funds. Non-personnel costs are eligible for MD funds. For example, rental of time on expensive core equipment outside of Maryland is eligible, but the cost of paying the personnel outside of Maryland who operate the equipment and conduct the analysis would not be eligible.
18. **You have a separate section for Translational Potential/Plan and budget in the on-line application. Do you also need these items within the Research Plan as well?**
 - The translational potential/plan must also be a part of the page-limited Research Plan section of the application.
19. **When an MSCRF proposal (for either RFA) is complete, how is it submitted? Who has the authorization to submit proposals to the MSCRF?**
 - For universities, only an authorized official of the university may submit proposals. Principal investigators who complete proposals must notify the appropriate research administration office for their campus and comply with the university policy on approval of grant proposals. Once the approval process is complete, the Agency Authorized Official at the university should submit the proposal to TEDCO Funds.
 - For companies, internal procedures for approval of grant proposals differ. Each company should advise TEDCO who is authorized to sign proposals on behalf of the company and that individual will be designated as an Agency Authorized Official. If there are principal investigators who are not authorized to submit proposals the company should advise TEDCO and we will designate those individuals as Applicant Administrators, with privileges to initiate and edit proposals but not to submit them.
20. **In TEDCO funds the “Application program information” page of the Stem Cell Research proposal reports an error regarding the human subject question, even though I selected “NO”.**
 - The [TEDCO Funds Quick Application Checklist](#) Section 10 states you must click on Yes or No for Human Subjects Research to indicate whether Human Subjects will be included in the research. If you click yes, you must provide a Human Subjects Assurance Number. You must also click Yes or No for Research Exempt (if the human subjects research is exempt from IRB review), Clinical Trial (if clinical trials are included in the proposed project) and NIH-defined Phase III Clinical Trial (if the study is part of an NIH-defined Phase III Clinical Trial). If you select No for Human Subjects Research you must not click on any of the other buttons (Research Exempt, Clinical Trial or NIH-defined Phase III Clinical Trial). If you have made an incorrect entry, to deselect the offending buttons position the cursor over it and double click the left mouse button. This will remove the error.
21. **Are the IRB Human Research and IACUC Vertebrate Animal Assurances handled using a “just in time” procedure like NIH does? If so, what should I enter in the assurance number and date boxes?**
 - Yes, the MSCRF uses just-in-time procedures similar to those used by NIH to handle approval of Human and Vertebrate Animal Research. If the IRB or IACUC Assurance Number is known, you may enter it in the appropriate box. If it is pending, simply leave

the box blank. The Stem Cell proposal documents in TEDCO Funds have been changed to allow this without reporting an error. If you have a proposal in progress that has this error reported, simply go to the Application Program Information page and resave it to eliminate the error. Administrative procedures for handling just-in-time documentation of IRB and IACUC review will be finalized before any awards are made.

22. Should the attachments be in PDF or Word?

- Only PDF format is acceptable for TEDCO funds attachments! Furthermore, TEDCO funds server is running a Windows-based system and does not recognize the file type without a three letter extension. If you are using a Macintosh system you may rectify this problem by appending .pdf (for PDF documents) to the file name.

23. I am trying to add an Agency Authorized Official at my institution to the Application contact list in my proposal so they can access my proposal and submit it. I can see the Agency Authorized Official in the Master menu of Applicant Contacts but not in the dropdown list for "control access to application".

- This is normal. Agency Authorized Officials have access to all proposals from their institutions. Their names do not appear in the list of specific access permissions which can be set by a Principal Investigator / Project Director because of the general nature of their Security Access Level. As an Agency Administrator (i.e., PI) you only have access control authority for Agency Administrators and Agency Staff at your institution. Although your Agency Authorized Official does not show up in the list of Application Contacts on your proposal, this is not necessary to submit your proposal.

24. If the Agency Authorized Official contact name and information are included in not the application, who will be contacted when/if the application is funded? How will you know which Agency Authorized Official to contact if that information is not included in the application? How will TEDCO know whether a PI or an Agency Authorized Official submits the application?

- The Agency Authorized Official is not listed explicitly in the text of an application but is associated with a proposal in TEDCO Funds when the proposal is submitted. TEDCO will notify the associated Agency Authorized Official when a proposal is funded. The Agency Authorized Official who submits a proposal will be notified if an award is made. Since PIs do not have authorization in TEDCO Funds to submit proposals, only Agency Authorized Officials may submit proposals.

25. May the figures referenced in the preliminary section be placed in the appendix?

- Figures which are referred to in the text of the Research Plan must be part of the page-limited Research Plan section of the MSCRF proposals for both RFAs. Additional figures with explanatory text may be placed in the Appendix.

26. I have had trouble uploading proposal documents even though they are in PDF format.

- The TEDCO Funds server is running a Windows-based system and does not recognize the file type without a three letter extension. If you are using a Macintosh system you may rectify this problem by appending .pdf (for PDF documents) to the file name.

27. I have listed the Co-investigators and other support staff on the appropriate pages. Is there a need to attach the bio sketches? I have been unable to find such a page.

- Bio sketches for Co-investigators and other Key Personnel should be included in the Appendix. There is no need to include bio sketches of other personnel who are not key personnel. There is no mandatory format for bio sketches but the NIH format is acceptable.

28. If a researcher is writing up a grant application through a University in order to be hired by the University, what is the best way to explain they are only a co-

investigator for administrative purposes and will be PI if the University wins the award?

- Each university has its own policies on who is authorized to submit grant proposals on behalf of the university. If a university allows a prospective faculty member to submit grants through the university then that person should make that fact clear in the Project Description and the research plan.
29. **How should university Principal Investigators manage the internal review process for MSCRF proposals? Is it acceptable to use the NIH forms for page, budget pages, resources, and page 1 of the biosketches?**
- TEDCO does not establish university policy regarding use of forms and internal processing of grant proposals. TEDCO Funds ensures that university policies are adhered to by allowing each university to designate Agency Authorized Officials who may submit proposals on behalf of the university. You should seek the guidance of your university research administration office. The face page, resource page and biosketch pages can be submitted in the NIH format if you prefer. The budget pages for TEDCO Funds are online and do not require an additional format.
30. **What is TEDCO considering as a face page for the application? The RFA states that we must mail a signed, paper copy of the application in addition to the electronic proposal. How do we generate the paper copy? Who needs to sign it?**
- There is no face page for a TEDCO Funds application. The information on the NIH face page is contained in the TEDCO Funds online application forms. Hard copies should be the PDF generated by TEDCO Funds and should be accompanied by a cover letter from an authorized official of the applicant.
31. **The RFAs state that the overall content of the application will include "checklist, personal data and key personnel report." There is no reference to where in the application these items should be included. What kind of report is TEDCO looking for at this stage**
- There is no checklist per se, the TEDCO Funds Application Information pages fulfill this function. Personal data should be included in the Biosketch in the Appendix. The Key Personnel application information page is the key personnel report.
32. **Where should applicants put the calendar months of effort for each key individual on the Key Personnel page?**
- The Key Personnel information page should only list key personnel. Specific effort for each individual funded on the project, whether on the Key Personnel list or not, should be included in the detailed description section for each budget line item.
33. **Where should applicants list existing and pending grant support within the application form? Is this required or not?**
- Applicants should list existing and pending grant support in the Appendix. It may be provided in the PHS 398 style format or appended to the Biosketch.
34. **I am an Applicant Staff member who is assisting a Principal Investigator/ Project Director in completing a stem cell proposal, but I do not have access to the proposal I am trying to work on. How do I gain access?**
- There are three levels of access granted to applicants for stem cell funding: Agency Authorized Official, Applicant Administrator and Applicant Staff. An Agency Authorized Official is authorized to submit proposals on behalf of the applicant and has access to all proposals from that applicant. An Applicant Administrator (the access level granted to Principal Investigators / Project Directors) has the authority to initiate proposals but not to submit them. PI/PDs also have access to edit proposals *which they have initiated* and to grant access at the Applicant Staff level to assistants. An Applicant Staff member only

has edit access to proposals to which they have been assigned by an Agency Authorized Official or the Applicant Administrator (PI/PD) *who initiated the proposal*. To gain access to a proposal an Applicant Staff member must be assigned access by an Agency Authorized Official or the PI/PD of the proposal.

35. **Does TEDCO follow the NIH salary cap rule?**
 - Yes.

36. **In the 15 page-limited Research Plan, do I include the section on "Business Impact to MD Biotech and the Ethics", or is this supposed to be a part of the Translational Plan?**
 - The section on Business Impact on Biotechnology in MD and on ethical considerations must be part of the Research Plan section of the proposal. The Research Plan section is limited to 15 pages total but there are no page limits on individual sections within it.

37. **Is there need to be a specific section within the 15 page Research Plan on Budget & Budget Justification which includes the Budget Overview Table (which I would simply be cutting & pasting from the web site)?**
 - Yes. This section need include only that budget justification that has not bee included in the online budget page.

38. **Is it possible to put a short movie into either the PDF or its appendix? Our research involves some compelling time-lapse video microscopy and 3D confocal microscopy that is best presented with a short time-lapse.**
 - You can not add a movie to the application, please add a link to a website that contains the movie.

39. **Do we need to send a hard copy of the grant (PDF), in addition to the online submission? If yes, how many copies?**
 - Only one copy is to be mailed to TEDCO, the hard copy will be used in the case of electronic malfunction only.

40. **It appears that in the updated (10/7/08) FAQ list new questions that have been added and the number of questions has not changed. Have some questions been deleted?**
 - In the process of answering new queries, the FAQ list has been updated and some questions have been consolidated to keep related information together. It is important to read the FAQ document in its entirety to get the most up to date information.