

CALL FOR PROPOSALS  
2021 HSCI MUSCULOSKELETAL DISEASE PROGRAM PILOT GRANTS

AWARD AMOUNT

**Up to \$100,000 for entire project period  
Project period not to exceed 2 years**

POSTED DATE

**Friday, October 8, 2021**

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION

**Friday, November 12, 2021**

ANTICIPATED AWARD DATE

**January 1, 2022**

The Harvard Stem Cell Institute (HSCI) Musculoskeletal (MSK) Disease Program invites applications for pilot grant funding. The purpose of this program is to provide funding for innovative projects in the field of musculoskeletal stem cell and regenerative biology. HSCI strongly encourages proposals with a translational focus, or which are otherwise poised to accelerate the development of new stem cell-based therapies or cures for musculoskeletal injuries or disease. However, proposals at all stages of development are welcome, as are proposals that encompass a collaboration between two MSK labs where at least one of the labs is member of the HSCI. The HSCI MSK Program intends to award up to two grants in response to this call for proposals, contingent upon the number and quality of the proposals received, as well as the availability of HSCI MSK Disease Program funds.

As part of the application process, applicants will be asked to determine whether their proposal is either basic or translational science. In determining whether a proposal falls into either the basic or translational science category, please consider the aim(s) of your proposal.

In general, proposals that fall into the category of translational science are those which aim at:

- Producing new therapies and/or therapeutic products (e.g. cellular products, large/small molecules, biomaterials, etc.), or
- Discovering the mechanisms, pathways, or models underlying such therapies/therapeutic products, or
- Manufacturing and testing stem cell-based therapies using studies designed to fulfill all applicable institutional, state, and federal regulatory requirements

Any pilot grants awarded during this cycle will be funded at up to \$100,000 in total costs (including indirect costs, maximum 20% of total direct costs-basis), for the total project period not to exceed two years. For example, \$100,000 for a one-year project, or \$50,000 each year for a two-year project.

Basic science proposals will not be reviewed separately from proposals categorized as translational science. All proposals will be reviewed by the HSCI MSK Disease Program and the Executive Committee. The HSCI reserves the right to not award any seed grants in this cycle.

## Application Due Date: Friday, November 12, 2021

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All principal investigators working in the field of musculoskeletal stem cell and regenerative biology, and affiliated with Harvard, are welcome to apply. Junior investigators are especially encouraged to apply. In applications from two collaborating labs, at least one of the labs must be affiliated with the HSCI and both labs must be affiliated with Harvard. In order to be awarded an HSCI pilot grant, both investigators must meet all of the following criteria (as verified by a research/finance administrator at each investigator's home institution):

- Have Principal Investigator status at their home institution
- Have independent laboratory space assigned to them in their own name (i.e. not assigned space via another investigator)
- Have independent funding sources in their own name (i.e. start-up funds or sponsored awards)
- Have any necessary approvals for proposed research in place no later than January 1, 2022.

### APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

All proposals submitted in response to this call for proposals must contain the following components, each of which must include the enumerated elements:

1. Proposal Title & Abstract (1 pg. max.)
  - 1.1. Proposal title, PI(s) name(s), PI(s) home institution(s)
  - 1.2. Abstract (lay-oriented language, 2,500 characters, incl. spaces, max.)
2. Research Proposal (3pgs. max., with pages numbered)
  - 2.1. Background/Rationale
  - 2.2. Specific research aims
  - 2.3. Preliminary studies (if applicable)
  - 2.4. Anticipated research milestones

\* Pages listing references do NOT count against 3 pg. limit
3. Annual Budget Pages
  - 3.1. Total annual costs may not exceed \$100,000, including indirect costs for up to two years
  - 3.2. Indirect costs may not exceed 20% of total direct costs
  - 3.3. Submit separate budgets which show the amount of funding called for each PI, whether PIs have different home institutions or not

\* Equipment is not allowed on HSCI seed grants  
\* Travel may not exceed \$1k  
\* HSCI budget template strongly encouraged (template available upon call)
4. Budget Justification (1 pg. max.)
  - 4.1. Justify all proposed budget items at the line-item level of detail
  - 4.2. Describe effort committed by all personnel on budget, even if no salary called
  - 4.3. PI is required to commit effort on the project
5. PI Biosketches (4 pgs. max. per biosketch)
  - 5.1. NIH format
  - 5.2. List recent financial support, indicate if directly applicable to the proposed project
  - 5.3. May include up to 10 listings of recent/relevant publications
6. Letter of Institutional Review & Approval

6.1. Must be signed by an authorized institutional representative (as determined by investigator's home institution's policies for research proposal submission) as confirmation that the home institution has reviewed and approved the research and budget

\* For a proposal in which PIs have different home institutions, a letter from each institution is required

## 7. Appendices (optional)

7.1. One copy each of no more than two relevant publications may be attached to the proposal

## SUBMISSION PROCESS

The 2021 HSCI MSK Disease Program Pilot Grant application can be found at:

<https://hsci.formstack.com/forms/2021mskseedgrant>

Applicants must complete the online application by the submission deadline.

- Complete all required fields
- Upload all proposal documents in PDF format
- Proposal components should be ordered according to the order listed above
- Proposals must be submitted by 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time on Friday, November 12, 2021.
- You will receive an email confirmation of your submission; save this email for your records

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applications will be reviewed by the HSCI MSK Disease Program and Executive Committee in November, and all applicants will be notified of the outcome of the review process in mid-December. Successful applicants will be issued a pilot grant with a funding start date of January 1, 2022. Project period is for January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 for one year durations and January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023 for two year durations (total funds available remain the same).

## REVIEW CRITERIA

The goal of the HSCI MSK Disease Program is to improve human health by supporting basic, translational, or clinical work in any field of musculoskeletal stem cell biology. Factors for reviewers' consideration include: scientific quality, relevance to the HSCI MSK Disease Program mission, career development and recruitment/retention, value for money, potential to promote collaboration within the HSCI community, and regulatory issues.

The HSCI Executive Committee will evaluate proposals primarily for their potential to advance these goals. However, the HSCI will also consider the potential of the proposal to secure funding from other sources as-is, and/or the potential of the proposed research, if successful, to secure follow-on funding from public, philanthropic, or commercial sources.

## INQUIRIES

Questions about the HSCI MSK Disease Program may be addressed to Robert Perez, HSCI Grants Officer, at [robert\\_perez@harvard.edu](mailto:robert_perez@harvard.edu).

Thank you for your interest in the HSCI MSK Disease Program.