

**Health Sciences & Services Authority
Request for Proposals
2009 Health Sciences Grant Competition**

**Increase Local Infrastructure Capacity for
Bioscience Research**

Executive Summary

The Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) of Spokane County, a Washington State grantmaking authority, was established to promote bioscience-based economic development and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health. The HSSA invests funds to create and support a nationally competitive health care cluster in Spokane County catalyzing connections between higher education and health care that lead to high wage jobs, long-term sustainability, and economic diversification. HSSA will fund the very best projects through a competitive, well-monitored and accountable process.

In this 2009 grant competition, the HSSA will award up to \$675,000 in one or more two-year grants that **increase local infrastructure capacity for bioscience research**. Applicants should request the budget amount and duration that are appropriate for the work. The lead applicant must apply by the required date to the HSSA, The University District, 665 N. Riverpoint Boulevard, Suite 124, Spokane, WA 99202. Administrative questions should be directed to the HSSA at grantadmin@hssaspokane.org or by calling (509) 358-2113.

Introduction

Background

The Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) was created by the Washington State Legislature in 2007 (RCW 35.104) to promote bioscience-based economic development and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health. Based on these facts, the HSSA was established by resolution of Spokane County in 2007 and a subsequent Memorandum of Understanding with the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board in mid-2008. The Authority has the same boundaries of Spokane County. Under the legislation, the HSSA is empowered to:

- Leverage public monies with amounts received from other public and private sources in accordance with contribution agreements, to promote bioscience-based economic development, and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health;
- Solicit and receive gifts, grants, and bequests to promote bioscience-based economic development, and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health;
- Hold funds received by the Authority in trust to promote same; and

- Make grants to entities pursuant to contract to promote bioscience-based economic development, and to advance new therapies and procedures to combat disease and promote public health. Grants are to specify deliverables.

Applicant Organizations and Eligibility

Applications for HSSA 2009 funding are invited from Spokane County-based public and nonprofit organizations, singly or in collaboration with other public and nonprofit organizations or with for-profit companies.

The applicant organization is responsible for submitting the application and for leading and/or facilitating the project, administering the grant and disbursing HSSA funding. An application may include one or more co-applicant organizations. A co-applicant organization employs personnel key to the design, conduct, and reporting of the project and receives a portion of the grant award under a subcontract. Throughout this request for proposals (RFP), the terms “applicant” or “applicant organization” refer to the organization sponsoring the increase to local capacity for bioscience research.

Within this RFP, the terms “collaborating organization” or “collaborator” refer to an entity that will contribute to the proposed project, but will not share in HSSA grant funds. There is no limit to the number of applications that may be submitted from an applicant organization.

Eligible organizations are those that are actively engaged in increasing local capacity for bioscience research in Spokane County, and have the personnel, resources, and experience necessary to accomplish projects outlined in this RFP. Eligible applicants include the following:

- public and private universities
- nonprofit research organizations
- public health departments
- public and private hospitals and clinics; and
- health-care systems.

For-profit entities and organizations from outside of Spokane County are not eligible to apply individually for funding, but as justified are encouraged to join an eligible applicant as a co-applicant or collaborating organization.

Applicants are responsible for consulting amendments to be sure they have the latest information.

Questions to Consider Before Applying for HSSA 2009 Health Sciences Funds

Competition in this grant cycle will be rigorous given the anticipated demand for supportive infrastructure for biosciences research. Preparation of a proposal can be time consuming, so applicants are advised to read this RFP carefully and to review the questions below before deciding to apply. If an applicant cannot make a strong case with regard to each of the following questions, it is unlikely that his or her applications will be successful.

- What are the compelling reasons why this project won't be accomplished without HSSA's investment?
- What will be the benefit to Spokane County (and the State of Washington) from HSSA's investment in this proposal:
 - In terms of increasing local capacity for bioscience research?
 - In terms of improving health or health care?
 - In terms of contributing to the growth of the economy?

Applicants' answers to these questions will be evaluated as part of the proposal review process.

Submitting an RFP does not commit HSSA to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred in preparing a submittal. HSSA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all submittals, or to cancel, at its discretion, this request for qualifications at any time.

Application Process

Compliance with this RFP and assurance that application materials are accurate, complete, and timely is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Applications that do not adhere to content requirements, are incomplete or incorrect, or are late will not be reviewed.

Applicants must complete two steps: a mandatory letter of intent (LOI), followed by a proposal. LOIs and proposals are submitted by e-mail to grantadmin@hssaspokane.org. In addition, a hard copy may be mailed to HSSA, The University District, 665 N. Riverpoint Boulevard, Room 124, Spokane, WA 99202-1665.

No application should include information that might compromise the applicant's subsequent ability to secure patent or other intellectual property protection.

Key Dates

RFP Release	June 15, 2009
Letter of Intent Due by 12 Noon	July 1, 2009
Proposal Due by 4 PM	July 31, 2009
Review of Proposals/Interviews	Aug. 1-31, 2009
Board Review	Sept. 2, 2009 (Board Meeting)
Awards Announcement	Sept. 18, 2009 (or sooner)
Funding Start Date	Upon completion of Grant Agreement

Letter of Intent (LOI)

All applicants must submit a mandatory LOI stating their intent to submit a proposal by noon on July 1, 2009. Submitting an LOI does not require the prospective applicant to submit a proposal. However, no proposal will be reviewed unless an LOI as been received.

The LOI is not a pre-proposal. The LOI helps HSSA prepare for review of the proposals. If an LOI describes a project or program that is clearly not suited for HSSA 2009 funding, the applicant will be notified of that determination.

The applicant should be aware that the LOI is subject to public disclosure, which is addressed further on page 10 herein.

In addition to other information, LOIs include the following:

- a descriptive, non-confidential title for the project;
- contact information for the lead applicant organization;
- a list of co-applicant organizations;
- an abstract of 500 words or less, stating the objectives of the project, its key components,, and how it specifically responds to this grant competition goal; and
- up to five keywords descriptive of the project. A single 'keyword' may be a short phrase.

The LOI should be e-mailed to grantadmin@hssaspokane.org. Upon receipt of the LOI by HSSA, an e-mail acknowledgement will be sent confirming receipt.

Proposal Requirements

The proposal is expected to consist of the same subject matter as that is within the LOI.

The proposal requires the applicant to input under the following headings:

- Face Page
- Lead Applicant Organization Information
- Co-applicant Organization Information
- Proposal Overview
- Proposal Format
- Proposal Outline
- Required Attachments

Face Page

The face page contains essential information for identifying, processing, and tracking the proposal. The face page also contains the signature of the authorizing individual, the person with authority to commit the applicant organization to implementation of the proposed project.

The face page must include the:

- name of the applicant organization;
- project title;
- applicant's key person's (involved with this proposal) name and contact information;
- names of co-applicant organizations;
- dates of requested project support;
- budget amount being requested;
- name and contact information of the authorizing individual; and
- lead applicant authorizing signature.

Proposal Overview

The following information is to be provided:

Resubmissions. If the proposal is a resubmission of a previously unfunded proposal to HSSA, the applicant must indicate this and identify the competition in which the proposal was last considered.

Abstract. Applicants must provide an abstract of 500 words or less, in prose understandable to a lay audience, stating the objectives of the proposed project, its distinctive methods, and its most important scientific, economic, and health benefits. The text of the proposal abstract may be different than the text of the LOI abstract.

Keywords. Applicants must provide up to five keywords that are descriptive of the project. A single 'keyword' may be a short phrase.

Patents and Inventions. Applicants must describe any invention disclosures they have made and any patent applications filed or license agreements executed or pending related to the subject matter of their proposal.

Proposal Format

The narrative must be no longer than 10 pages and conform to the following format requirements:

- 8-1/2" by 11" portrait-oriented page dimensions;
- Single spaced with all margins measuring at least 1";
- At least 12 point font in Times New Roman or Arial (not proportionally reduced);
- Three-ring binders are preferred (for copying ease for evaluators); and
- In the upper left-hand corner of each page, inclusion of a header and the page number, using the form: 'Page x of xx.'

All tables, charts, or graphs are in addition to the 10-page narrative. When contemplating the submission of information in color, applicants should be aware that proposal reviewers may be performing their reviews using black and white hard copies. References and other required attachments are to be included at the end of the narrative, and are not counted as part of the 10 pages. A maximum of two pages of references will be accepted. The proposal narrative should include sufficient information needed to evaluate the beneficial returns of the project, independent of any other document. Website references and other attachments are acceptable but may not be reviewed.

Proposals that do not comply with these length and format requirements will not be reviewed.

Proposal Outline

A. Background, Significance and Relevance to HSSA Goals

Briefly describe the background leading to the present infrastructure need, critically evaluate existing local capacity that supports bioscience research, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. Ensure that all the following questions are answered:

- What bioscience research infrastructure problem does this proposal address?
- What is the significance of this problem in Spokane County?
- How is this problem currently being addressed?
- What approaches other than that being proposed are under development to alleviate the problem?
- How does your proposal or research lead to a solution for the problem?

- Why is HSSA funding essential to accomplish the work being proposed?

B. Preliminary Studies

Provide any relevant community analysis or other preliminary studies pertinent to this proposal, including relevant data.

C. Challenges

Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed project and alternative approaches to achieving the project's aims.

D. Timeline and Milestones

Provide a timeline for the proposal. Identify major milestones, propose target dates for their accomplishment, and define the criteria by which achievement of each of the milestones will be assessed, all of which will need to be aligned with the HSSA in the negotiation of a Grant Agreement.

E. Personnel

Identify key project personnel: principal investigator, co-investigators, and other individuals who will be responsible for key aspects of the project. Define their roles, and explain how their work will be coordinated.

F. Outcomes and Sustainability Plans

Describe how the project will contribute to the broad, long-term strategic initiatives of HSSA related to this grant competition – **to increase local infrastructure capacity for bioscience research**. Ensure that the following questions are answered:

- How will it increase infrastructure capacity that supports bioscience research?
- What is the estimated timeline for translating the results of the project for the benefit of health and health care?
- What is the potential for this project to foster economic growth?

Describe the next steps in capitalizing on the project's success, including both the near-term and long-term outcomes the project is designed to achieve. Describe the following:

- the potential for economic impact and growth;
- the potential for follow-on funding;
- commitments from the lead applicant, co-applicant and collaborating organizations or other interested parties to translate the project's results into practical application.

Required Attachments

The following information is to be provided under a Required Attachments heading:

Budget. The budget must be appropriate for the scope and goals of the proposed project. Costs must be reasonably associated with the conduct and completion of the proposed project. All should be listed as direct costs, including costs typically associated with general facilities and administration.

The following budget categories are provided:

- **salaries**, to include wages, benefits and stipends. Salaries should be calculated on the basis of individuals' percent effort in the project.
- **equipment**, to include equipment with a unit cost greater than \$5,000 that is specifically required for the project. Include only items of property with an expected service life of more than one year.
- **administrative costs**, to include other administrative costs that support the project, including clerical and fiscal support. If it is impossible to break down administrative costs that are charged on an institution-wide or central basis, you may apply that portion of the indirect cost rate to the total project budget (after subtracting equipment to be purchased) and include its value in administrative costs. Departmental or other "local" administrative costs must be calculated as direct costs before inclusion. At the time of award, the applicant organization will be expected to provide the details of the components that comprise administrative costs.
- **facilities costs**, to include using existing facilities for the program. Do not apply an existing indirect cost rate to the total project budget to calculate facilities costs. At the time of the award, the applicant organization will be expected to provide the details of the components that comprise facilities costs.
- **supplies**, to include consumable materials and supplies required for the project, including equipment having a unit price of \$5,000 or less. Expenses for personal computers are not allowable unless primarily used for this project.
- **services**, to include work performed by entities other than the applicant or co-applicant organizations in support of the project. Services are provided as a regular part of such entities' normal business operations. Services include project consultants.
- **subcontracts**, to include the expenses of project research performed by co-applicants. For proposals listing for-profit collaborating companies as co-applicants, the companies will be expected to pay for their own internal costs associated with research and development activities performed on a best-effort basis. Monies may be subcontracted from the applicant organization to a company for products and services provided as deliverables to the project.
- **travel**, to include expenses required for field work, attendance at meetings and conferences, and other travel required for the proposed project, including per diem allowance, subject to the applicant's usual accounting practices.
- **other**, applicant to itemize costs falling outside of the typical budget categories above, including education fees for trainees.

Budget Justification. Describe the complete funding plan, detailing any support from other sources. Highlight and explain the need for any extraordinary expenditures. Describe any other infrastructure capacity-building support received or applied for that is related to the subject matter of the project being proposed to HSSA. Detailed budget figures are to be provided elsewhere.

Facilities and Equipment. Describe the facilities, equipment, and resources available for the project. If new equipment is part of the proposal request and will be available to support other efforts outside the scope of the HSSA-funded proposal, explain how time will be allocated to it.

Biographical Sketches. Applicants must provide biographical information on key personnel.

Key Personnel Roster. Applicants must supply a roster of the research and administrative personnel involved in the project.

Letters of Support. Letters of support are required to confirm the commitment of time and resources to the project from key personnel and organizations, as well as desired (but not necessary) from supporters from the community-at-large.

Intellectual Property Certification. HSSA grants support research that may lead to discoveries having commercial potential. The intellectual property (IP) certification is required for HSSA to assess how IP developed under the project will be owned and managed.

Proposals must clarify whether applicant organizations have policies regarding ownership and management of IP developed by their employees. If a party other than the applicant, co-applicant or collaborating organization(s) will own or have rights to IP developed under an HSSA-funded grant, the applicant must provide an explanation of and justification for such provision.

Applicants must describe how IP developed under an HSSA grant will be managed for commercialization. Applicant organizations with established IP management infrastructures can meet this requirement by referencing the policies, practices, and structure they already have in place. Organizations without an IP policy or an established infrastructure to manage IP should contact the HSSA before submitting their proposal to discuss how they plan to manage and commercialize IP associated with the proposed project.

Evaluation

Following the proposal deadline, all proposals will be screened for compliance with this RFP. Those that are judged to be compliant will proceed to review.

Review Process

A subcommittee of the HSSA Board will evaluate and score each proposal based on individual merits. To assist its evaluation, the subcommittee may, at its sole discretion, seek outside expertise. All reviewers are subject to the HSSA's confidentiality policy. Once all proposals are scored, they will be ranked and awards made by the HSSA Board as provided herein.

HSSA reserves the right to invite applicants for a personal interview or to require a site visit as part of the review process.

Names of reviewers will not be made available to applicants. Applicants and their representatives may not contact reviewers regarding submitted applications. Any such contact or attempt to contact may result in the disqualification of that applicant's proposal from the competition.

Evaluation Criteria

All funded proposals will be expected to have the potential to contribute to HSSA's strategic initiative to increase local infrastructure capacity for bioscience research that supports innovative advances in medical diagnosis, treatment and health service delivery in Spokane County.

Selection of Awards

An established Board Subcommittee to review proposals will recommend proposals to the HSSA Board of Directors for funding. The Board will individually review all proposals. The Board's award selections will be based on the Board's individual review of the proposals, the Subcommittee's recommendations, the availability of funds, and the goals of the grant competition. Consistent with these and with its enabling legislation, the Board will consider the following in making award decisions:

- **Quality** of the proposed research;
- Its potential to **improve health outcomes**, with particular attention to the likelihood it will **lower health care costs**;
- Evidence of **sustainability** through additional extramural funding;
- Its potential to **provide health care benefits**; and
- Its potential to **stimulate employment**; and
- Evidence of **public and private collaboration**.

In addition, the Board also may consider the significance of the **proposal's contribution toward infrastructure**.

Specific to this grant competition, a combination of results may be considered to include identification and development of necessary infrastructure to support health and bioscience research such as:

- follow-on funding;
- infrastructure development;
- stimulation of collaborations;
- number of technology license agreements;
- patent applications, patents received;
- new business start-ups;
- number of workers hired by companies deploying products or services based on research and technology funded by HSSA investments; and
- contribution to improved health and health care.

Grant Agreement

Awards are subject to grant agreements that will be negotiated between the grant recipient organizations and the HSSA. Research funding will be disbursed to applicant organizations on a cost-reimbursement basis subject to the achievement of mutually agreed upon milestones and timelines. The grant agreement will include the right of HSSA to withhold payments if progress reports have not been provided or milestones have not been met in a timely fashion.

Additional Information

RFP Updates

The HSSA reserves the right to amend or terminate this RFP after its release. Any clarifications or changes in guidelines or requirements will be reduced in writing and sent to those submitting responses to the RFP.

Applicants are responsible for consulting amendments to be sure they have the latest information.

Confidentiality and Public Disclosure

Information in grant applications is received by HSSA with the understanding that it shall be used or disclosed solely for evaluation of applications or as required by law. HSSA holds all applications confidential in accordance with its confidentiality and subject to the public disclosure laws of the State of Washington. (For more information about Washington public disclosure law, applicants are referred to RCW 42.56 and to the amendments to the exemption provisions in RCW 42.56.270(14).)

Applicants responding to this RFP are hereby put on notice that their responses are public records and may be subject to public disclosures under the state's Public Disclosure Act codified in chapter 42.56 RCW. Provided, however, the Public Disclosure Act contains various exemptions with regard to some information contained in the RFP. They include:

(18) Financial, commercial, operations and technical and research information and data submitted to or obtained by a health sciences and services authority in applications for, or delivery of, grants under RCW 35.104.010 through 35.104.060, to the extent that such information, if revealed, would reasonably be expected to result in private loss to providers of this information is exempt from disclosure.

Please MARK all information provided in your proposal which falls into the above provisions or any other applicable provisions in the Public Disclosure Act which you feel are applicable to your proposal in response to the HSSA RFP. You will be notified of any public disclosure request with regard to your proposal and be afforded an opportunity to provide further information specifying why the information is exempted from disclosure under the above provision or any other application exemption from disclosure.

Typically, when it receives LOIs and proposals, HSSA will release to the public the name of the sponsor, the applicant organization, the title of the project, the dates of the proposed grant period, the funding amount requested, and miscellaneous contact and demographic data. For unfunded applications, HSSA will not release the abstract or narrative of the proposed work, the budget, or any identifiers regarding co-applicant organizations, as disclosure of these items might be reasonably expected to result in private loss to the applicant organizations.

Once a proposal has been funded, HSSA will release to the public certain additional information from the application, including an abstract of the work and the names and contact information of any co-investigators or co-applicant organizations.

In response to a public disclosure request for a funded application under Washington State law, HSSA may provide further information from the application to the requestor, but only to the extent that provision of such information would reasonably not be expected to result in private loss to the providers of such information.

If HSSA receives a public records request for a funded or unfunded application, it will notify the applicant organization of such a request in a timely manner in order to allow the organization the opportunity to assert objections to disclosure in any applicable proceeding.

Conflict of Interest

When performing HSSA-funded research or increasing infrastructure capacity for research, it is essential that the personal interests of investigators or the proposal proponents do not impede their judgment or compromise their objectivity. Even the perception of a conflict of interest has the potential to erode the public's confidence in the research process. It is essential that applicant organizations have a financial conflict of interest policy in place and that all proposals submitted to HSSA have been vetted according to that policy. In accepting an award, the applicant organization will certify to HSSA in the grant agreement that potential financial conflicts of personnel participating in the funded research or infrastructure project have been disclosed and that all conflicts have been eliminated or mitigated. Applicant organizations that do not have a financial conflict of interest policy should consult with HSSA early in the application process to discuss how the financial conflict of interest review will be performed.

Human Subjects and Vertebrate Animal Research Requirements

If a project will include research involving human subjects, the research site must operate under an appropriate Office of Human Research Protections-approved assurance for the protection of human subjects. Its procedures must also comply with all Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) human-subjects-related policies. In accepting an award from HSSA, an organization certifies that it has a system that complies with federal, state and local government regulations to protect the rights, well-being and personal privacy of human subjects in research and that any HSSA-funded research involving human subjects has been reviewed and approved by the applicants human subjects oversight bodies.

For research involving vertebrate animals, the applicant organization must ensure that all performance sites hold Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare-approved assurances. In accepting an award from HSSA, an organization certifies that it has a system that complies with federal, state and local government regulations to humanely, efficiently, effectively and legally use live vertebrate animals in research. Further, it certifies that any HSSA-funded research involving vertebrate animals has been reviewed and approved by the applicable animal use and care oversight bodies.

Any HSSA-funded research involving human subjects or vertebrate animals will need to have been reviewed and approved prior to execution of the grant agreement.

Intellectual Property

Project involving multiple collaborating organizations must be supported by an agreement that makes explicit provision for the disposition of IP rights among the organizations. Such an agreement must clearly allocate the rights that the organizations will have in any IP developed during HSSA-funded research and identify which of the organizations will be responsible for commercialization. The IP rights disposition agreement does not need to be submitted with the proposal but must be in place before the grant agreement is signed. One example of an appropriate agreement for this purpose can be found in the Federal Small Business Technology Transfer Research Program – “The Allocation of Rights in Intellectual Property and Rights in Intellectual Property and Rights to Carry out Follow-On Research, Development, or Commercialization”:

Reporting Requirements

HSSA grants are an investment by Spokane County and the State of Washington in the future of its citizens. Full and timely reporting of the progress and results of funded research by principal investigators has great importance for calculating the returns on that investment.

Reporting requirements, specific for each funded proposal, will be finalized in the grant agreement. HSSA requires the following reports: semi-annual progress reports, annual financial reports, final project and financial reports, and post-project annual reports for a period of five years. Site visits to and in-person briefings from principal investigators may be used by HSSA as tools to track the progress of funded projects.

Publicity

HSSA reserves the right to publicly disseminate information about its granting activities. HSSA communications to the public may include lists of LOIs and proposals received, the names of principal investigators and applicant organizations, project titles, the field(s) in which the research will be conducted, descriptions of proposals funded, and reports about project progress and outcomes. Recipient organizations and principal investigators will be expected to provide the HSSA with reasonable assistance in communicating funded research and its impacts to the public.

Funding Start Date

Funds will not be authorized for expenditure by HSSA until the grant agreement between HSSA and the recipient organization is completed.

Contact Information

For further information about HSSA or this RFP, e-mail grantadmin@hssaspokane.org or call 509-358-2113.