


<p><b>Name of Policy:</b> Research bridge funding</p> <p><b>Policy Number:</b> 3364-81-01-02-007</p> <p><b>Approving Officer:</b> Dean, College of Medicine</p> <p><b>Responsible Agent:</b> Vice President for Research Administration Assoc. Vice President for Finance &amp; Planning</p> <p><b>Scope:</b> All University of Toledo Campuses</p>	 <p><b>Effective date:</b> 01/01/2008</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> New policy proposal	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor/technical revision of existing policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Major revision of existing policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Reaffirmation of existing policy

(A) Policy statement

The College of Medicine will provide faculty members who have not received funding on a competitive renewal application after a period of demonstrated research productivity an opportunity to apply for temporary bridge funding to maintain a productive research laboratory while full support is sought from outside agencies.

(B) Purpose of policy

Extramural funding for health/biomedical research has become exceptionally competitive in recent years and in some instances, the result is a lapse in funding for meritorious renewal applications to NIH and other research sponsors. Investigators with a history of research productivity whose competitive renewals do not receive funding initially, but who are likely to successfully compete for renewed research funding in the near future with an amended application may apply for research bridge funding as outlined below.

(D) Procedure

Eligibility:

1. Any full-time faculty member, tenured and tenure track, who is the Principal Investigator (PI) on a grant funded for at least three consecutive years (on the same grant or project) preceding the bridge funding request by a national agency with a bona fide scientific peer review (e.g. NIH, NSF, American Heart Association) and whose application for continued support from that or another funding agency with a bona fide scientific peer-review has not been funded will be eligible for bridge funding. Eligible faculty who have been the project PI for a component of a Program Project Grant are also eligible.
2. Bridge funding will only be provided for the continuity of a particular research project and is not intended to support pilot studies or previously unfunded research. Grants that are primarily for a demonstration project, a training program, or a postdoctoral fellowship are ineligible.
3. Applicants for bridge funding must have submitted a competitive renewal application during the last year of the extramural funding cycle. If funding runs out without a renewal

application for continued funding having been submitted and scored, then the PI is not eligible for bridge funding. Furthermore, applicants must demonstrate that they are making substantial efforts to re-establish funding. Applicants must also have tried unsuccessfully to obtain supplementary awards or bridge funds from NIH or other funding agencies that may offer such support.

4. Applicants must show that they have lost, or will lose, a substantial portion of their peer reviewed extramural funding (>50%) within six months of the bridge funding application and that they have insufficient research incentive funds in their own accounts to sustain the research project.
5. Research projects that previously received a bridge funding award are not eligible for additional support for five years.
6. Only one request for bridge funding may be made for any given application that has been subjected to external peer review. If, subsequent to an unsuccessful request for bridge funding, a revised application is externally reviewed and review comments provided to the applicant, a second request for bridge funding may be made, as based on the revised application.

#### Bridge Funding Awards:

Bridge funding awards will be limited to \$50,000 and a maximum of one year or until the grantee re-establishes funding from other sources, whichever comes first. The applicant's department will be responsible for supporting 30% of any award. For example, a request of \$50,000 will be supported by the College of Medicine in the amount of \$35,000 and by the department of the applicant in the amount of \$15,000. An additional \$25,000 in "Core Cash" may be provided by the College if the core services are required for the applicant's research. In the event that the PI's extramural grant is funded during the period of bridge support, unexpended funds in proportion to the time remaining in the bridge award period will be returned to the College of Medicine and department.

Awards may be used to support supplies, equipment, lab personnel (excluding graduate students), and animal care. Bridge funding may not be used to support salaries and benefits of tenured and tenure track faculty members, travel to scientific conferences, graduate student stipends, administrative costs (e.g. department surcharges for service contracts) and budget deficits. Salaries and benefits of the PI and co-PI currently supported by the expiring grant will be supported by the College of Medicine during the bridge funding period. The above restrictions on allowable costs only apply to the institutional component of Bridge Funding Awards, not the department component.

The College of Medicine bridge fund is designed to be self-sustaining. Therefore, annually 50% of the departmental research incentive award that would have been awarded to the department pursuant to policy 03-010 for a grant renewed following a bridge funding award will be deposited to the College of Medicine Bridge Fund to fund other investigators. Indirect cost

funds remaining after 75% of the bridge fund award supported by the College of Medicine is paid back will be distributed according to the current policy.

Awarded funds must be spent according to the budget provided by the investigator. Use of funds for other activities will result in cessation of the award.

Application Process:

Applications for bridge funding must include 5 copies the each of the following:

1. A cover letter clearly stating the basis for the request and the ways in which the PI has met the criteria for eligibility.
2. A three-page summary of the research for which bridge funding is requested. This should not contain extensive experimental detail. Rather, it should describe: (a) the specific aims; (b) the significance of the work; and (c) how the bridge funds will be used to address specific concerns raised during peer review, in order to support submission of an improved application.
3. A list of the PI's funding for the last five years (including statement of grant award from the funding agency, when available).
4. A list of any interim or supplemental funding provided by the NIH or other agency.
5. A description of any pending grant applications aimed at re-establishing funding (include abstract and specific aims of each pending application, as well as a list of agencies where proposals have been sent or will be sent in the next 12 months).
6. A copy of the most recent competing renewal application that was submitted to the extramural sponsor.
7. A copy of all Summary Statements or critiques (the 'pink sheet' or other reviewer's comments) for all previous submissions of the renewal application, an explanation of the chronology of any prior submissions including priority/percentile scores and any relevant correspondence from the sponsor regarding their decision not to fund the most recent renewal application.
8. A three page (maximum) response to the summary statement that clearly indicates how the concerns raised by the reviewers will be addressed in a subsequent grant application.
9. A statement to: (a) explain how the requested research bridge award will strengthen the intended resubmission; and (b) clarify the date for submitting the intended resubmission to the extramural sponsor.
10. A budget page detailing how bridge funds will be utilized (PHS 398 Detailed Budget Form). The budget should reflect the real operational needs of the laboratory to remain functional at

a minimal level required to enable the lab's continuance and the generation of data to support an improved application to the extramural agency.

11. The budget page for the final year of the previously funded, but lapsed, grant.
12. A 2-page NIH-style biographical sketch for the PI and any co-PI's, including copies of the five most recent publications.
13. A letter of support from the applicant's Department Chair that includes: (a) an assessment of the likelihood of future funding; (b) a candid assessment of the options for continuation of the research in the event extramural funding is not obtained; (c) evidence that the department is contributing to the continuance of research operations in an appropriate manner (e.g., graduate student support, access to essential equipment, allocation of sufficient lab space), and 4) a description of any mentoring efforts to help the PI improve the grant application. Where appropriate, Center Directors may also submit letters of support.

Bridge funding awards will be made three times annually on January 1, May 1, and September 1. Eligible applications for bridge funding must be received by the Vice President for Research Administration before November 1, March 1, and June 1 of each year in order to be eligible for evaluation and consideration for the next funding cycle. When possible, applications should be in the form of a single PDF document.

Bridge fund awards will be transferred to the PI's account in four equal quarterly payments, each payment upon receipt of a letter to the Dean of the College of Medicine signed by both the investigator and the chair, verifying that additional external funding has not yet been secured. The department component of bridge funding may be expended from any non-operating account selected by the Chair, but a report of those expenditures associated with the specific bridge-funding project for each quarter must accompany the quarterly request letter submitted to the Dean of the College of Medicine.

#### Review Process:

Applications containing all required elements will be reviewed and ranked by an ad hoc panel appointed by the Dean of the College of Medicine, with advice from the Vice President for Research Administration and the Chair of the Research Advisory Council (RAC). Members of the review panel should have documented experience reviewing NIH grants and should have active or past NIH grant support. In reviewing requests for bridge funding, the primary objectives will be to keep experienced research teams together, and to support projects with the best chances of obtaining funding within a reasonable time frame (e.g., one or two review cycles).

In evaluating the latter criterion, the review panel will consider the assessments provided by the PI's Department Chair and Center Director, the scores and comments from the granting agency, and the overall productivity of the PI. The review panel is not expected to conduct an in-depth merit review of the unfunded grant application, since the NIH study section has already done this.

Financial need will also be an important factor in allocating bridge funds. For example, investigators who have lost one grant but retain other substantial grants may receive lower priority than those who have lost their sole source of grant support.

Requests that provide evidence of a cost-sharing commitment beyond that required for eligibility by the applicant's Department or Center may receive a higher priority for funding.

In addition to financial need and likelihood of success, special consideration may be given to applications from individuals whose research program is aligned with one of the strategic goals (FASTS) of the College of Medicine.

The number and amount of the awards will depend on the availability of funds and are made at the discretion of the Dean of the College of Medicine. Depending on the number of applications received and the size of the bridge funding pool, it is possible that some meritorious applications will not receive funding. In such cases the unfunded applications may be forwarded to the next cycle.

#### Outcome Report:

At the end of the term of bridge funding, recipients will be required to submit an outcome report. The outcome report must include:

- a 2-3 page summary outlining the work completed with the funds
- a report of expenditures
- a list of papers published
- a list of all submitted and funded grant applications resulting from the work.
- If external funding was not obtained, an explanation of the circumstances (including copies of reviews) should be included with the report.

Reports should be submitted to the office of the Vice President for Research Administration where they will undergo preliminary review for completeness. The reports will then be forwarded to the office of the Dean. Failure to submit a complete and timely outcome report will render the investigator ineligible for any future bridge support.

<p>Approved by:</p> <p>Jeffrey Gold, M.D.</p> <hr/> <p>Name Dean, College of Medicine</p> <hr/> <p>Title</p> <hr/> <p>Date</p> <p><i>Review/Revision Completed by:</i></p>	<p><b>Policies Superseded by This Policy:</b> <b>None</b></p> <p><b>Initial effective date: 01/01/2008</b></p> <p><b>Review/Revision Date:</b></p> <p><b>Next review date: 01/01/2011</b> (three years from most recent revision/review date)</p>
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