SOLICITATION FOR LETTERS OF INTENT
USC BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INITIATIVE
DUE BY 5 PM, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2003

Purpose
Solicitation of Letters of Intent for a new Biomedical Research Initiative Investment intended to increase USC’s biomedical research productivity by supporting the development of competitive applications for federally funded program project (P01) or center-level research grants.

Awards
Up to $1,000,000 is available in FY04 to support four or more projects with budgets up to $250,000. Funds awarded during the current fiscal year may be carried forward into FY05.

Eligibility
Applications may be submitted by either the Unit Head/Director or full-time USC faculty, regardless of academic unit, who conduct research that is biomedical in nature or oversee biomedical research efforts in their units. One or more applications may be submitted per unit.

Criteria
Competitive proposals are expected to:
• Provide evidence of matching support from one or more academic units (be clear on the amount to be provided and include a letter of commitment for support from each of the appropriate unit dean(s)/director(s)). For proposals that have recurring costs, a plan for how these costs will be met in future years should be included. Letters of support will NOT be needed until full proposals are submitted.
• Be directed toward near-term submission of a proposal for federal support of a program project or center-level research grant (including a timeline for submission of the PO1 or center application)
• Provide a mechanism to expand the University’s research capacity to support development of program/project center capacity such as: (A) hiring of intermediary or senior level faculty, and/or (B) development of core research facilities

In addition, although any proposal in the area of biomedical research will be considered, preference will be given to those proposals that address research in one of the following priority areas: cancer research, neuroscience, reduction of health disparities across racial and/or ethnic groups, bioengineering and/or regenerative medicine, clinical and/or translational research

Specifications:
Letter of Intent no longer than 3 pages that responds to the following points:
(1) What is the theme of the research program or center?
(2) Who is the PI?
(3) Who are the members of the investigative team
(4) What RFA or PA do you intend to apply for, and estimated timeline?
(5) Which studies or research projects will be undertaken as part of the P01 or Center Grant application?
(6) What resources are needed to prepare this application?

Deadline
Letters of Intent (2-3 pages) along with a separate listing for 3-5 recommended external reviewers must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President for Research by November 17, 2003 (send via e-mail to pweiss@gwm.sc.edu). Please attach biosketches for the PI and all lead investigators.
Review Process
LOIs will be reviewed by the Biomedical Research Initiative Steering Committee and the Vice President for Research. It is anticipated that the deadline for submission of full applications will be April 1, 2004. However, deadlines will not be finalized until after the LOIs have been reviewed. External reviewers will evaluate the full applications.

Review Criteria
1) Scientific Merit
2) Clarity and specificity of the plan for the development of a P01 or center grant application with a timeline
3) Potential for future extramural funding
4) Expertise and research productivity of applicant(s)
5) Quality of the plan for establishing or expanding a collaborative relationship among investigators

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