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Funding Opportunity Announcement

TSC Alliance Biosample Seed Grants

TSC Alliance announces a funding opportunity for 2021 Biosample Seed Grants to support research using blood, tissue, and/or cells, DNA, or RNA isolated from samples in the TSC Biosample Repository. The award may support laboratory supplies, personnel costs, services, or equipment necessary to conduct the proposed research.

The TSC Biosample Repository houses human biological materials linked to detailed clinical data in the TSC Natural History Database. High-quality biosamples and their associated clinical data enable researchers to discover biomarkers, establish human cell lines or tissue arrays for drug testing, and search for clues to understand why TSC is so different from person to person.

As of September 1, 2021, the TSC Biosample Repository has received:

- 362 buccal cell samples for DNA isolation
- 541 blood samples from which plasma and white blood cells have been isolated
- 154 tissue samples
 - Please email biosample@tscalliance.org for an up-to-date tissue inventory if interested in utilizing tissue samples
- 440 blood samples and 389 DNA samples from TSC Clinical Research Consortium projects, some of which may be available via application to the projects' Biosample Use Committee

REQUIREMENTS/ELIGIBILITY

- To build the dataset associated with each biosample and avoid duplication of work in the future, applicants will be required to share data generated on each sample back to the TSC Biosample Repository.
 - Data can be embargoed for a period of time to be defined in the Material Transfer Agreement to provide time to publish, protect intellectual property, etc.
- This opportunity is open to all investigators at established academic or research institutions worldwide.

Hope no matter how complex

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- Researchers at start-up pharmaceutical or biotech companies are eligible if they are unable to utilize TSC biosamples in absence of seed funding.
- Researchers residing in the United States need not be U.S. citizens to apply.
- We welcome applications from tenure-track faculty or equivalent, non-tenure-track faculty, and postdoctoral (PhD or MD) fellows.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Compile the following into a single PDF file and upload to Dropbox **no later than 11:00 pm Eastern (US/Canada) on Wednesday, November 10, 2021**. If you encounter any difficulty with Dropbox, please email zfuchs@tscalliance.org AND biosample@tscalliance.org.

- **DROPBOX LINK:** <https://www.dropbox.com/request/5qgBkjFyrTEGohvPSrti>

Required components:

- 1) Complete the Application for Biosample Access. The “Study Information” section may be up to two pages in length to fully explain the rationale, objectives, and experimental design. Preliminary data are expected, especially to demonstrate feasibility of the approach.
- 2) Include a “Statement of Impact” up to a half-page in length describing how this seed funding will advance your research. For example, where will this lead if the experiment is successful, or how will these results be used to apply for a larger grant?
- 3) Include a one-page budget and justification for direct costs requested. Limited salary support may be included if required by the institution, but salary support must be strongly justified given the short-term nature of seed funding.
- 4) Principal investigator’s NIH-style biosketch or short CV, not exceeding 5 pages.
- 5) IRB approval letter, exemption letter from an institutional official or department chair, or statement that the project has been submitted to your IRB and is awaiting a decision.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria used to evaluate and prioritize applications for seed funding will include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Relevance to TSC. Biosamples may be used in studies together with samples from individuals with related disorders for the mutual benefit of multiple disorders, including TSC.
 - However, biosamples will not be provided for use as “control” samples in studies primarily focused on other disorders.
- Impact on TSC research and the TSC community.
- Leveraging data from the Natural History Database linked to each biosample to enhance experimental design, interpretation of results, and impact of the study.

FUNDING NOTICE

Successful applicants will be notified by Tuesday, December 7.

QUESTIONS

Please contact Zoë Fuchs (zfuchs@tscalliance.org) or Gabrielle Rushing (grushing@tscalliance.org) with any questions on the process.