
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Brain Health Consortium (BHC) **Collaborative Seed Grant (CSG)** program, sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise (REDKE) at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), is offering seed grants to support collaborative research at UTSA. These grants support a broad range of trans-disciplinary research that may yield fundamental insights into the mechanisms underlying brain disorders.

Additional points will be given to proposals that:

- Involve research performed across two or more BHC affiliated colleges (COS, COE, COLFA, COEHD, and HCaP);
- Use innovative approaches spanning stem cells/precision medicine, neuroscience, biomedical engineering, psychology and behavior; and/or
- At least one PI/Co-PI is **full member** of the Brain Health Consortium.

CSG funding through this program is intended to strengthen project competitiveness for long-term extramural funds. Successful applicants must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as a final reporting requirement (within 1 year of completion of the CSG award).

ELIGIBILITY & APPLICATION LIMITS

- Both single PI and multi-PI or other collaborative team projects are allowed.
- PIs/Co-PIs must be full-time, tenure track or tenured faculty at UTSA in residence at the time of application. *Other personnel or students, including individuals outside UTSA can be incorporated into a project team, however, only those who are UTSA employees or UTSA students can be funded through the CSG program.*
- A faculty member may be designated as PI (primary applicant) on only one proposal each application cycle. However, an individual may serve in a Co-PI or other collaborative role on more than one application each cycle.
- It is the PI's responsibility to ensure all team members are eligible and not exceeding application limitations.
- Applicants submitting a proposal closely related to a project previously funded by BHC/REDKE must demonstrate that the new application is substantially different from prior awards.

The following are ineligible for funding through the FY22 CSG program:

- Faculty who have any outstanding reports under previously funded BHC/REDKE awards
- Projects serving as gap funding to bridge support between external grants or contracts
- Projects proposed for REDKE seed grant funding that do not have a distinct scope. If more than one application is submitted to this or other REDKE seed grant programs, all like applications may be deemed ineligible.

AWARD INFORMATION

- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 1-2*, subject to availability of funds

- **Maximum Total Funding Per Project:** \$30,000
- **Performance Period:** October 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022**

* See Peer Review section for further detail regarding award distribution.

**Funding not spent by July 1, 2022 will automatically revert back to VPREDKE. This excludes salaries and wages, which can continue to be expensed through July 31, 2022. No project extensions will be allowed.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

March 5, 2021	Request for Proposals (RFP) released
March 12, 2021	Application available in InfoReady
April 2, 2021	Intake Form due to respective RSC
April 19, 2021	Applications due in InfoReady (by 5:00pm CST)
June 2, 2021	Awards announced
October 1, 2021	Grant performance period begins (funds available)
March 1-15, 2022	Project Update Meeting requested by REDKE
June 1, 2022	All funds must be spent or salaries/wages encumbered (<i>see Award Information section above</i>)
June 30, 2022	Grant performance period ends (<i>unspent funds will be swept July 1</i>)
August 31, 2022	Final project report due
August 31, 2023	Extramural grant submission report due

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

There is a two-part routing and submission process for this opportunity.

1. Route application through a Research Service Center (RSC), utilizing the UTSA Routing and Cayuse systems. This benefits UTSA PIs and Co-PIs, as it allows this activity to be tracked within REDKE proposal and award dashboards. [Contact your respective Research Service Centers \(RSC\)](#) to complete an [Intake Form](#) at the start of proposal development to initiate Research Service Center coordination.
2. Submit application through REDKE's [InfoReady site](#) by **5pm CST on April 19, 2021**. [InfoReady applicant guide with video available here](#).

Regulatory Compliance:

Projects are subject to [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#), [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#), [Institutional Biosafety Committee \(IBC\)](#), export control, conflict of interest, and campus safety regulations and approvals. The PI is expected to have thoroughly investigated all [regulatory components](#) of the intended research and to have discussed relevant components in the proposal. Prior to making an award, required protocols must be in place.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Application components required at the time of submission are listed below. **If components are missing and/or formatting is not compliant, the application will not be reviewed.**

Formatting requirements for items with an asterisk (*) below: single-spaced, no less than 12pt Times New Roman font, 1" margins all around.

Component	Maximum Length
1. Abstract	250 words (<i>enter in InfoReady</i>)
2. Project Description*	5 pages
3. Key References*	1 page
4. Plan for Extramural Support*	2 pages
5. Budget	<i>Use seed grant template</i>
6. Budget Justification*	1 page
7. Biographical Sketch from PI/Co-PIs*	2 pages
8. Current, Pending, and Recent Support*	No limit (<i>use seed grant template</i>)
9. Signed Grant Agreement	<i>See end of this document</i>

1. ABSTRACT (250 WORD LIMIT)

InfoReady will prompt you to include a clear executive summary (or abstract) that summarizes the essential content of the proposed research effort, including the objectives, benefits, and significance.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (5 PAGE LIMIT, including figures)

The project description attachment must include, in this order:

- General background
- Scientific merit and significance of the research: Address how this project is a new direction or a different perspective from the PI's (or team's) existing research efforts and the potential impact on the researcher and discipline
- Impact of this research on society and application areas where this research can or will be applied
- Specific goals, objectives and anticipated results
- Description of methods, including anticipated barriers/technical difficulties and how these will be addressed
- Description of resources needed for this project (equipment, materials, etc.), with indication about their availability

NOTICE REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY: It is important that you consult the [Office of Commercialization and Innovation](#) before disclosing details of any research that may be patentable. Any confidential information in this proposal must be clearly identified by marking "Confidential" at the top and bottom of each page where the confidential information appears.

3. KEY REFERENCES (1 PAGE LIMIT)

Attach a list of references relevant to the project.

4. PLAN FOR EXTRAMURAL SUPPORT (2 PAGE LIMIT)

Attach a specific plan for pursuit of extramural funding after completion of this project. Submission of at least one extramural proposal is required as part of the grant award terms and must be completed within one year of the completion of the award term. Your plan for extramural support must include the following:

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- *Sponsor/Program:* What extramural funding program(s) do you plan to pursue? List specific program(s), deadlines you will target, and how you will leverage results of this seed grant for external support.
 - *Objectives:* What will the extramural proposal seek to accomplish and how is it specifically supported by this seed funding? Describe how this work represents a new area for you and what the potential societal impact is.
 - *Team:* Who are your team members from UTSA and other partnering organizations? Briefly describe their skills related to the project. More people can be involved in your extramural funding proposal team than are budgeted in this seed grant.
 - *Pre-review:* Who will read and comment on your extramural proposal before it is submitted? Having a colleague review your application prior to submission significantly increases the likelihood of being funded.

5. BUDGET (UTILIZING UTSA TEMPLATE)

Budgets must be submitted solely on the UTSA approved budget template ([Internal Seed Grant Budget Template](#)). Contact your respective [Research Service Center](#) (RSC) for assistance with completing the budget template.

6. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (2 PAGE LIMIT)

Details for all proposed expenditures must be described in a budget justification attachment. This document must convey an integrated understanding of the types of resources (labor, materials, other) necessary to complete the proposed research project. For each line item, provide detailed calculations at how you arrived at totals/estimates, and note whether funds will be expensed during the academic year (October – May), summer (June) or both.

Budget Considerations

Funds can be used for the following:

- Salaries and/or wages for faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students. *This program is exempt from the 1% effort requirement in UTSA's HOP. However, if a faculty member does request funded effort, each faculty member is limited to no more than 1 summer month of effort.* For most T/TT faculty, 1 summer month is the equivalent of 1/9th of your base annual academic salary contract amount. *Fringe benefits are paid centrally and should be excluded from the budget worksheet.*
- Materials and supplies (*any item with a cost of less than \$5,000/unit; must be justified as needed for project success*)
- Expenses for field work, data collection, archival research, training, educational purposes and/or presentations on research, creative or scholarly activities directly related to the proposed project
- Consultant fees
- Contracts for activities outside of UTSA (*must be clearly and convincingly described as necessary for successful execution of the proposed project*)
- Domestic travel (data collection, conference presentation, meeting with a collaborator). *Travel must adhere to [UTSA Financial Management Operational Guidelines](#) and [GSA per](#)*

diem rates.

Funds **cannot** be used for the following:

- Fringe benefits
- Equipment (*unit cost of \$5,000 and useable life of greater than one year*)
- International travel
- Non-UTSA employee travel
- Stipends, scholarships and/or tuition
- Indirect costs (F&A) costs
- Payment of salaries to non-UTSA personnel
- Refreshments. *Includes food/refreshments for participants, business meals. Excludes meals while on travel.*
- Hosting conferences, workshops or seminars
- Travel to visit program officers

If additional resources are available to support this project through other sources, the budget justification should include a list of these resources, noting when the resource will be available and who it will be provided by. **Examples include** lab or studio time, equipment, computer resources, and research assistantships made available through a department, as well as support obtained from external sources.

Note - If awarded, applicants may transfer up to 25% of the award between spending categories (line items) without written permission from REDKE, as long as the category is contained in the original budget approved by the CSG Review Committee.

7. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH (2 PAGE LIMIT)

Biographic sketch attachments must be included for PI and any Co-PIs. [NIH](#) or [NSF](#) format must be used.

8. CURRENT, PENDING, AND OTHER RECENT SUPPORT (NO LIMIT, USE SEED GRANT TEMPLATE)

Details for all current, pending and other recently funded (within last 3 years, if already complete) projects must be described in an attachment. The following must be included for each project:

- Label of Pending, Current, or Other Recently Funded
- Project Proposal Title
- Source of Support (i.e., sponsor name)
- Total Award Amount
- Total Award Period Covered (e.g., 9/1/20 – 8/31/21)
- Person Months Per Year Committed to Project (i.e., academic and/or summer months)

9. GRANT AGREEMENT (SEE END OF THIS DOCUMENT)

Each PI (applicant) and Co-PI (co-applicant) must have this document signed by their

Department Chair, acknowledging that they have also read all responsibilities and obligations of the applicant and their Department.

PEER REVIEW

Applications will be reviewed by an internal CSG Review Committee established annually by the BHC. This committee is appointed by BHC staff and will have a peer-review panel comprised of faculty members from colleges affiliated with the BHC: COS, COE, COLFA, COEHD, and/or HCAP.

- Peer-reviewers will be from a variety of academic backgrounds. As such, *proposals should be clearly written in a way that the goals, rationale and methods of the proposed work can be understood by all reviewers.* Avoid discipline-specific terminology/jargon as much as possible.
- The CSG Review Committee will review proposals and make recommendations to the BHC director.
- **Proposals will be evaluated based on the weighted criteria below.** The PI is expected to include all required proposal components and to fully and clearly address each criterion.

<u>Review Criteria</u>	<u>Max Point Allocation</u>
Did the proposal involve research performed across two or more BHC affiliated colleges (COS, COE, COLFA, COEHD, and HCaP)?	10
Does the proposal use innovative approaches spanning stem cells/precision medicine, neuroscience, biomedical engineering, psychology and behavior?	10
Is at least one PI/Co-PI full member of the Brain Health Consortium?	10
Did the proposal describe in sufficient detail and provide strong justification for the scientific merit and significance of this research?	10
Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the project objectives?	10
Did the proposal address whether the project is a new direction from the applicant's (or team's) existing research efforts and the potential impact of this new direction? Does research overlap with currently funded projects?	10
Are the goals, objectives and anticipated results stated clearly and are they reasonable, given the funds, and time provided?	10
Did the proposal address a feasible plan to obtain extramural funding to support the project in future years?	5
Did proposal describe the broader impact to the field and to society?	5
Are potential difficulties, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented?	5
Did the proposal specify the resources needed for this project (labor, equipment, materials, etc.) and indicate their availability?	5
Did the proposal outline a spending plan and thoroughly address each expenditure with a clear justification and calculations? Do expenditures align with proposed scope of work?	5

Did the applicant (or team) convey through their biographical sketches that they have appropriate experience and training? And, have they demonstrated an ongoing record of accomplishments that have advanced their field(s)?	5
Total Points Possible	100

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

The PI (applicant) is responsible for the administration of grant funds. All grant expenditures must conform to state and university regulations and approvals. In particular, the PI must be certain that over-expenditures do not occur, and that all funds are fully expended according to programmatic deadlines. All work must be completed within the performance period.

INTERIM AND FINAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A Project Update Meeting/Report will be requested by REDKE staff in March 2022. Applicants awarded funding under this opportunity will be required to submit their final report to REDKE using the UTSA Seed Grant Reporting Form, capturing both quantitative and qualitative output. Awardees will be provided final reporting instructions prior to the end of their project. The PI (applicant) is responsible for submitting a Final Grant Report no later than **August 31, 2022**. A final report must be filed with REDKE in order for members of the project team to be considered for future REDKE Seed Grant funding.

Extramural Grant Submission Required

Awardees must produce a new proposal for extramural funding as part of the final report within one year of completion of this project. In exceptional cases, where seed funding may prove the project non-competitive, a waiver of the extramural application requirement can be requested from REDKE. If neither an extramural proposal nor waiver is submitted, no new REDKE research funds will be made available to the PI (applicant) or Co-PIs (co-applicants) until an extramural proposal or waiver is submitted. **The applicants must submit a report to the REDKE describing the extramural grant submission details by August 31, 2022.**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Ana Laredo
 Research Program Coordinator
 Office of Strategic Research Initiatives
 Email: seedgrants@utsa.edu

Collaborative Seed Grant Program (Grant Agreement)

If this research proposal is funded, I agree that my acceptance obligates me to:

1. Maintain program eligibility throughout the award/performance period, including residence and employment with UTSA. If there is any change in employment or residency status, the PI and/or their direct supervisor (department chair or dean) must notify REDKE staff at seedgrants@utsa.edu.

2. Include the following acknowledgement on all publications resulting from this grant award.

“This project was funded (full or in-part) by The University of Texas at San Antonio, Office of the Vice President for Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise.”

3. If human subjects, animals, or biohazardous materials will be utilized in the research, protocols to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), or Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) must be approved prior to funds being released.

4. Secure prior written approval from the Brain Health Consortium if the research to be conducted differs from that described in the proposal that was funded. Requests for such approval should be submitted to:

Jenny Hsieh, PhD
Director, Brain Health Consortium
Email: jenny.hsieh@utsa.edu

5. Submit at least one extramural proposal for funding to support the future progress of the project, within one year of the completion of the CSG award period.

6. Adhere to the assigned CSG PROGRAM TIMELINE:
October 1, 2021 – Grant performance period begins (i.e., funds available)
March 1-15, 2022 – Project Update Meeting Requested by REDKE
June 1, 2022 – All funds must be spent or salaries/wages encumbered
June 30, 2022 – Grant Performance Period Ends (Unspent funds swept on July 1)
August 31, 2022 – Final project report due
August 31, 2023 – Extramural grant submission report due

7. Respond to all inquiries and communications from the Brain Health Consortium and Office of the Vice President for Research, Economic, Development, and Knowledge Enterprise related to this funded project.

8. Participate as a reviewer on the CSG Grant Review Committee(s) during award period.

Principal Investigator (PI)

Signature: _____

Project Name: _____

Date: _____

PI Supervisor – I agree with PI’s obligation & responsibilities for this funding opportunity.

Approved by: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____